



I Background

The United Nations assisted Iraq with the establishment of an electoral management body in 2004 (initially named the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, now known as the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)), and subsequently supported the development of the institution's capacities to administer electoral processes. Public confidence in the political system, its representatives and in electoral processes has diminished, particularly after the 2018 legislative election.

Iraq initiated a range of electoral reforms in response to public clamour for change. It has legislated a new IHEC Law which changed the composition and appointment of the Board of Commissioners and mandated significant changes to its officials and staff at both the national and field offices level. A new electoral law was also passed in 2020 that overhauled the electoral system, from list proportional representation to single non-transferable vote. The law also increased the number of constituencies to 83, corresponding to the number of seats for female parliamentarians. Amidst these changes to the electoral commission and the electoral law, Iraq has also called for an early Council of Representatives (CoR) elections, scheduled for 10 October 2021.

The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), through its Office of Electoral Assistance (OEA), has been working closely with the new IHEC commissioners to enhance their knowledge and understanding of electoral management. The new IHEC Law also provided for the replacement of senior, mid-level and junior managers both at IHEC headquarters and its governorate offices; this measure affected around 40 percent of personnel, impairing IHEC's existing technical capacities to manage electoral processes. Accordingly, the UN has been widely urged to enhance its electoral assistance activities, not least as a confidence-building measure. Language on enhanced UNAMI electoral support has been included in UNAMI's mandate for 2020-21.

Accordingly, and in response to Iraqi request, UNAMI in coordination with UNDP prepared an electoral support project entitled "Support to Iraq's Electoral Process". Following its approval by the United Nations Under Secretary General for Political Affairs and the UN's focal point on electoral assistance, the project is now in the process of implementation. It consists of two phases, corresponding to the request from the IHEC and the Iraqi authorities for support in building IHEC's institutional capacities and for direct assistance in the organization of early parliamentary elections.

On 10 October, Iraq held early Council of Representatives elections in all governorates. Special voting took place on 8 October to accommodate voting for, inter alia, the Iraqi Security Forces, internally displaced persons, as well as prisoners and detainees. The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) opened a total of 57,944 polling stations for both the regular voting on election day and the special voting. The total turnout is 43%, with 9,602,876 voters who casted their votes on election day out of the 22,118,368 registered voters. On the evening of 16 October, IHEC released the full preliminary results in its website and in its social media sites. In consideration of the complaints and challenges submitted against the preliminary election results, IHEC is conducted the sorting and manual counting of polling stations that are subject of these challenges.

On 1 December, after finalizing the manual counting, IHEC officially submitted the final list of the winners to the Federal Court for certification. On 27 December, the Federal Supreme Court (FSC) took a decision and rejected all lawsuits submitted against the final results and certified the final results. On 27 December, the Federal Supreme Court ratified the results of 2021 CoR elections. Later, on 30 December, IHEC published the list of winning candidates on its social media for each GEO level.

With the conclusion of elections in 2021, project continues its support to IHEC with the great focus on strengthening the capacity of the institution through scrutinizing lessons learned from COR elections in 2021 and understanding the needs of the institution for further support.

The first quarter of 2021 started with series of lessons learned exercises on each functional department level of IHEC, with constant collaboration and guidance of project advisors. The activity concluded in comprehensive Lessons Learned Workshop during 20-30 March with participation of IHEC staff on HQ and governorate levels as well as advisors from the project.





II Progress Table

INTENDED OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS
OUTPUT 1: Strengthened technical capac	ities of IHEC to deliver elections in a credible, p	rofessional manner.
Output 1.1. Operational and administrative capacities of IHEC to deliver Council of Representatives elections are improved.	1.1.1 Support to electoral preparations through capacity-building programmes for staff that instill values and principles underpinning transparent elections.	The activity was completed in 2021 following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR elections.
Baseline:		
The 2019 IHEC law required important changes to IHEC's senior leadership and their functions. Many key IHEC staff are		
new and inexperienced in their roles. Meanwhile, it is widely recognized that the next legislative elections must be conducted professionally, to win a higher level of public trust. Polarization and societal divisions underscore the need for IHEC to create conditions for an inclusive and participatory electoral process. The use of technological solutions increased the cost of organizing elections in the	1.1.2 Development and delivery of operations planning and management training for IHEC senior management.	The activity was completed in 2021 following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR elections.
		This activity was discussed in the lessons learned workshop. More specific capacity development activities will be implemented as part of the capacity development phase.
past; their sustainability and overall contribution to transparency and public trust was questionable. Therefore, this project aims at assisting IHEC's decision-		This activity was discussed in the lessons learned workshop. More specific capacity development activities will be implemented as part of the capacity development phase.





INTENDED OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS
making processes through accurate assessments and sound technical advice in preparation for early elections next year.	1.1.5 UN support for electoral security planning through participation in the High Election Security Council meetings.	
Indicators: Percentage of trained IHEC staff who feel that they are more effective in their jobs because of training and capacity development opportunities Percentage of IHEC staff (HQ and governorate offices) aware of gender mainstreaming provisions relevant to their respective areas/departments Number of fully functional teleconferencing facilities established Number of lessons learning exercises		
held at IHEC HQ and field offices Targets for 2021: 1.1.1. 5% of senior managers trained	1.1.6 Procurement and installation of conferencing capacities to facilitate management of meetings and trainings in IHEC HQ and GEOs during the COVID-19 emergency.	The activity was completed in 2021 following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR elections.
 1.1.2. 4% of IHEC aware of gender mainstreaming provisions. 1.1.3. One fully equipped conf facility established. Responsible Parties: IHEC, UNAMI, UNDP Total Budget: \$ 1,245,186 	1.1.7 A lessons-learned workshop (facilitated by international experts) to identify challenges encountered along the electoral process and recommend solutions.	IHEC and OEA held two-weeks of joint lesson learned workshops conducted in Sulaymaniyah for a total of 233 IHEC GEO and HQ staff. - 20-24 March - Preparatory Workshops - 27-30 March - General Lessons Learned Workshop During the preparatory workshops, OEA Heads of Section from Operations, Training and Procedures, Logistics/Procurement, Voter Registration, Election Data and Results Management, Security Coordination, Field Coordination and Public Outreach Department met together with key GEO and HQ staff from the relevant sections including UNAMI OEA advisors from Baghdad and regional offices. A total of 168 IHEC HQ and GEOs staff, comprising 17 females and 151 males, participated in the workshops. At the workshop, OEA Advisors and IHEC staff on HQ and GEO level discussed at length challenges, achievements and recommendations for each section. Following these sessions, IHEC staff from each participating department prepared presentations for the general lessons learned workshop that was held in the following week.





INTENDED OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS
		During General Lessons Learned Workshop, a total of 65 IHEC HQ and GEO staff, 6 females and 59 males, participated. The feedback received from IHEC indicated that topics, content, discussions and organization were well received and delivered at a high standard. With the support of UNAMI OEA, IHEC is working on preparation and finalization of the final report on Lessons Learned Workshop. In addition to this, all UNAMI OEA regional advisors were engaged from 28 February to 16 March 2022 in post-elections discussions and organized workshops in all 19 IHEC GEOs to review public outreach (PO) activities leading up to the October 2021 Council of Representatives (CoR) elections. Among other topics, the workshop discussed and reviewed the following: the way the media units in GEOs covered activities of other departments (Logistics, Security, Training, Voter Registration, and Legal); shortcomings and challenges of the media unit; ways of ensuring that public outreach activities enhance voter participation including that of women and youth as well as voters in insecure areas; and how the GEO media units should improve their engagement with other stakeholders in building trust of electorate in IHEC in general. A total of 250 participants, 48 females and 202 males, attended the events held in the GEOs. Although discussions were mainly on PO activities, staff from administration, logistics and warehouse, VRC affairs, training section, IT and data entry sections also participated in some GEOs.
		OEA PO team supported the Public Outreach Department (POD) counterparts in the discussions and preparations of all unit's presentations for the preparatory lessons learned workshop (LLW) that took place from 20 to 22 March 2022. During the preparatory Lessons Learned Workshop, each unit (including GEOs) presented key activities with achievements, challenges, and recommendations. Unfortunately, some from POD units didn't fully incorporate some key recommendations suggested by the OEA PO (especially on the need for strengthened coordination and infosharing – both horizontal and vertical, improved decision-making mechanisms and structural/TOR revision). On 27 March, the POD presented its summary of challenges and recommendations, as well as achievements and results reached during the general Lessons Learned Workshop. However, as previously occurred, the recommendations did not cover some key organizational and coordination issues (mentioned above) and did not fully capture all POD sections/units with regards to their capacity building needs and priorities.
		OEA PO developed and finalized the design and contents of all visibility materials used for the preparatory and general LLWs (event logo, banners, roll-ups, interview back-drop, notebooks, file folders, table name tags) that were approved by IHEC Chairperson on 13 March 2022. [See Annex 1].
		OEA PO developed and implemented a media plan for IHEC and UNAMI PIO to cover both preparatory and general LLW in Arabic, Kurdish and English. The media plan included social media and web contents, press releases, photos and videos. In addition, IHEC chair was interviewed by UNAMI Public Information Office and Al Iraqyia TV recorded and reported on the closing day of the general LLW. [See Annex 2].





INTENDED OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS
	1.1.8 Support to IHEC in Upgrading the Capacities of its Central Servers for Biometric Voter Registration.	This activity will be undertaken in 2022 as a post-election review and lessons learned workshop and drafting of a plan for future Voter Registration Strategy. The initial review for upgrading the BVR has been initiated and the progress will be reported in Q2.
	1.1.9 Establishing In-House Biometric Voter Card Printing Capacity	Following the Lessons Learned Workshop of the 2021 COR elections held in Sulaymaniyah, IHEC is working on the technical specifications for new Biometric Registration Project which includes the installation and configuration of printing capacity within IHEC premises. Draft of a feasibility study has been shared with UNAMI OEA for inputs.
	1.1.10 Package of Upgrade for IHEC GEO and HQ Network Capacities	Upgrade of IHEC HQ network has started. The technical specifications for servers, laptops and desktops computers were finalized and the procurement process of the equipment has been initiated. The equipment operating at the IHEC HQ level will support GEO ICT activities as well.
	1.1.11 Support with E-Day COVID-19 Mitigation Measures for Polling Staff	The activity was completed in 2021 following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR elections.
Output 1.2. The technical capacity of IHEC staff at HQ and governorates offices is developed through a comprehensive capacity development strategy. Baseline: The project will provide training and support to strengthen governorate electoral offices (GEOs) in devolved results management. It will also provide specialized training to GEO staff in Information and Communication technology (ICT), electoral operations and procedures. Strengthening the GEOs' capacities will contribute to enhancing	1.2.1 Design of a comprehensive capacity development strategy and action plan and monitoring and evaluation activities to assess its effectiveness.	After conducting the LLW, UNAMI OEA held discussions with IHEC on the next action steps and activities to be implemented in the coming months. This will start with a needs assessment exercise to identify the needs and areas for the capacity building, based on which IHEC, with assistance of UNAMI OEA, will develop and implement a comprehensive capacity building plan, an action plan as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess its effectiveness.
	1.2.2 Design of an induction package and delivery of induction training for newly recruited GEO staff. Gender-responsive electoral processes will be integrated in the induction.	This activity was implemented in 2021 election cycle. However, it is expected to be completed in 2022 in coordination with various sections in IHEC as part of the capacity-building plan.
	1.2.3 Training for master trainers at IHEC HQ and governorate level, including on gender perspectives.	The activity was completed following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR elections.
the overall quality of the electoral process, as it will standardize processes and procedures throughout IHEC structures around the country.	1.2.4 Training on devolved results management, and specialized training in Information and Communication technology (ICT).	The activity was completed following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR elections.





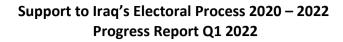
INTENDED OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS
Indicators: • Number of induction trainings held	1.2.5 Training on electoral operations and procedures.	This took place in 2021 as per IHEC's planning and training schedule. However, based on needs assessment and the capacity building plan, UNAMI OEA will conduct various trainings on electoral operations and procedures and these will be reported in the next quarter.
 Number of master trainers trained (gender disaggregated) Number of thematic trainings held at HQ and field offices 	1.2.6 Training on reporting and monitoring, using gender indicators on elections management.	The activity was completed during the 2021 electoral cycle. However, based on needs assessment and the capacity building plan, UNAMI OEA will conduct various trainings around the topic that will be reported in the next quarter.
 IHEC develops comprehensive capacity development strategy and action plan Number of IHEC staff trained at HQ and field offices (gender breakdown) Targets for 2021: 1.2.1. Five induction trainings held 1.2.2. Twenty five master trainers were trained (25% of them women). 1.2.3. Three thematic trainings held at HQ and field offices. 1.2.4. One comprehensive capacity development strategy and action plan developed by IHEC. 1.2.5. 165 IHEC staff trained at HQ and field offices. Responsible Parties: IHEC, UNAMI, UNDP Total Budget: \$205,200	1.2.7 Procurement and installation of conferencing facilities to supporting GEO remote training and meetings during the COVID-19 emergency. 1.2.7.1 Procurement and installation of conferencing facilities to supporting GEO remote training and meetings during the COVID-19 emergency. 1.2.7.2 Procurement of Communication and IT Equipment	1.2.7.1 As previously reported, UNAMI OEA facilitated the discussions between the IHEC and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Iraq which resulted in the provision of teleconferencing equipment for IHEC HQ and the 19 governorate electoral offices. All necessary equipment was installed in all GEOs during Q1 & Q2 2021. IHEC outsourced the internet connectivity to enhance the communication between the IHEC HQ and governorate electoral office and make use of the teleconferencing facilities during the electoral process. 1.2.7.2 UNAMI OEA has procured Communication and IT Equipment to upgrade the communication network between IHEC HQ and Governorate Electoral Offices.
Output 1.3 The electoral legal framework is strengthened Baseline: The project will provide legal and technical advice to help develop clear and concise regulations, procedures, code of	1.3.1 Review of existing IHEC regulations and instructions to align with international best practices.	With the technical assistance of UNAMI, Iraq successfully held its CoR elections on 10 October 2021 in accordance with the Elections Law No. 9 of 2020. 329 members of the CoR were elected and the election results were certified by the Federal Supreme Court of Iraq on December 27, 2021. The primary legislation regulating the Council of Representatives (CoR) elections consists of the Constitution of Iraq, the Council of Representatives Election Law (Law No. 9 of 2020), the Independent High Electoral Commission Law (Law No. 31 of 2019), the Law on the Political Parties (Law No. 36 of 2015) as well as regulations and procedures adopted by IHEC. Article 20 of Iraq's Constitution establishes the fundamental nature of elections and voting in the Iraqi political system. Furthermore, Iraq is party to





INTENDED OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS
conducts, electoral policies and other necessary directives emanating from the new IHEC and electoral legislation. UN advice will focus on universal principles underpinning credible, inclusive and participatory elections, as well international best practices. The project will support IHEC's public outreach activities so that the new regulatory electoral framework (and other relevant documents) are publicly accessible. Indicators: Number of legal provisions/policy measures amended to be more inclusive Number of awareness raising interventions conducted on enhanced inclusive and participation		key international and regional legal instruments, including the International Convention on Political and Civil Rights. Overall, the legislation provided an adequate framework for conducting democratic elections. However, despite the overall success of the election process, several shortcomings influenced the intensity of the process. These shortcomings include but not limited to: gaps in the CoR and IHEC laws for different stages of elections such as candidate registration; complaints and appeals; campaign finance; delay in adoption of regulations and instructions; and lack of terms of reference and clear structure of the Legal Committee. After October 2021 Elections, OEA continued to assist IHEC to strengthen electoral legal framework and improve regulations, procedures, codes of conduct, political policies and other necessary directives in Iraq. The 2021 CoR Elections provided an important lesson to be taken into account for improving future election administration in Iraq and be recorded for the institutional development of IHEC. OEA assisted IHEC in organizing one day workshop on lessons learned on electoral legal framework from October 2021 COR Elections on 17 March in Erbil. A total of 10 participants comprising members of the IHEC Legal Committee attended the workshop. The overall goal of the Workshops was to enable IHEC Legal Committee to assess and analyze the electoral legal framework and identify shortcomings encountered during the 2021 COR Elections, to come up with mechanisms to avoid similar shortcomings in future elections, and to improve the quality of the legal support to the IHEC in compliance with the national legal framework as well as international standards and best practices.
		The topics covered
Targets: 1.3.1. 15 legal provisions/policy measures amended to be more inclusive. 1.3.2. 35 awareness raising interventions conducted on enhanced inclusivity and participation.		 Electoral Legal Framework Voter registration IHEC regulations and instructions Registration of political entities and candidates Electoral campaign Out of Country Voting
Responsible Parties: IHEC, UNAMI, UNDP Total Budget: \$ 91,800		Outcomes of the workshop, as captured in a Lesson Learned Report, include the following: Recommendations to the Board of Commissioner (BoC) on improving the legal and regulatory framework for CoR Elections Recommendations to the BoC to strengthen capacity and resources of the IHEC Legal Committee as well as coordination and communication with the rest of the BoC and IHEC departments.







INTENDED OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS
	1.3.2 Advocacy and support and provision of technical advice in designing legislation and/or policy measures to promote the political participation and representation of women, youth and marginalized groups.	
	assistance on monitoring and enforcement of existing electoral legislation; provide support in awareness raising of special	As of 31 March 2022, a total of 31 lawsuits have been submitted to the Federal Supreme Court (FSC) challenging election against IHEC. The cases challenged constitutionality of some provisions of the CoR Election Law and IHEC Regulations and Procedures and therefore requested cancellation of election results. To date, 29 lawsuits were dismissed, one pending and one case has been endorsed by the FSC. In addition, 14 lawsuits have been submitted to the FSC challenging some provision of the Election Law and also process of nomination and election of President of Republic of Iraq. OEA has been providing advice, assistance, and technical support to the IHEC's Legal Officers representing IHEC during the court proceedings. Furthermore, OEA have been analyzing decisions of the FSC and preparing a summary of possible legal implications on the electoral legal framework which could be used for future elections. This summary will form the basis for further discussion with IHEC, Parliamentary Committees and Office of the President.





OUTPUT 2: Enhanced transparen	ncy in the electoral process through gre	ater public outreach and informationn sharing by IHEC.
Output 2.1. IHEC acts in a transparent manner through improved communication (DONATELLA) Baseline: The holding of credible, inclusive and participatory elections largely depends on transparency and its impact on public confidence. Voter apathy and low turnouts are partly a consequence of lack of trust in electoral processes, institutions and the integrity of results; hence, the need to strengthen the capacities of the electoral commission to deliver credible electoral processes and improve public perception.	2.1.1 Support to the development of IHEC's comprehensive communication and media strategy for elections.	A communication and public outreach strategy has been developed and implemented (see previous progress reports). IHEC continues to externally communicate with the audience, especially through social media.
 Indicators: Comprehensive communication and media strategy for elections in place Number of viewers/users of IHEC's website and other social media platforms Number of staff using project supported institutional email system/internal communication strategy and operational guidelines for field offices in place. 		







Targets: 2.1.1. Comprehensive communication and media strategy for elections in place. 2.1.2. 34, 000 viewers/users of IHEC's website and other social media platforms. Responsible Parties: IHEC; UNAMI; UNDP Total Budget: \$ 196,560	2.1.2 Provision of technical advice and support on IHEC's website and social media strategy to disseminate information relevant to the electoral process.	UNAMI OEA continued to provide technical support to IHEC web and mobile applications team on various aspects of social media. In the first quarter of 2022, IHEC published 55 contents on its social media directly reaching over 1 million people through its official social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Viber, and Telegram groups). Out of the 55 contents, seven were educational contents in video format, the video views with over 300,000 views in total. IHEC digital media, with the support of UNAMI, created a new chatbot (a program that simulates a human conversation), which will allow people to receive auto responses from IHEC. OEA PO also advised to compile the most frequently asked questions on social media and publish them in FAQ format. With OEA PO's advice, a new social media campaign called "followers' questions" was launched publishing the most asked question with appropriate answer. **Table 1.1** **Table 2.5** **Table 2.5** **Table 3.5** *
	2.1.3 Provision of technical advice to create a systematic and effective internal communications system (including setting up a corporate IHEC emailing system and improving connectivity between HQ and GEOs).	No activity was conducted during the reporting period.
Output 2.2. IHEC promotes inclusiveness in all phases of the electoral process and in its working environment, with a special focus on the participation	2.2.1 Conduct an internal assessment of IHEC's gender policies, to identify gaps in existing practices and identify opportunities for gender mainstreaming.	No activity was conducted during the reporting period.





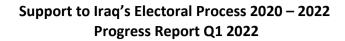
The project will support IHEC respons with strategic guidance and gender technical advice on gender- resource	policy which defines operational objectives, sibilities and targets on equality - on human ces, operations and staff y development.	
increase opportunities for women within its structure and in designing and implementing monitoring mechanisms of	responsive electoral	No activity was conducted during the reporting period.
other) quotas. Additionally, the support	Provision of guidance and to the IHEC's gender cal point.	No activity was conducted during the reporting period.





2.2.2. 5 trainings held on importance of women and youth participation. Responsible Parties: IHEC, UNAMI; UNDP	2.2.5 Provision of training and support for awareness-raising strategies to help IHEC promote youth and marginalized groups' participation and representation in electoral processes.	Among other groups, through its awareness campaign, IHEC has also been targeting women, youth and marginalized groups such as minorities and people with disabilities. Specific messages, graphic and video products and direct activities have been developed and conducted with the support of UNAMI OEA (see previous reports).
Total Budget: \$ 80,147		
OUTPUT 3: The conduct of key ele	ectoral operations for the 2021 parlian	mentary elections is improved
Output 3.1. Support to IHEC's operational and administrative preparations at the central and governorate offices	3.1.1 Support to the voter registration process for more accurate voters' lists.	
Baseline:		The voter registration process faced several challenges due to the obsoleteness of the registration kits and software. UNAMI OEA advised IHEC to find remedial measures to safeguard the data of the voters.
The project will support IHEC's administrative and operational preparations for early elections at the central and governorate offices. The interventions under	3.1.2 Development of Election Day procedures and training manuals, including production of innovative training tools.	, i







this activity are aimed at strengthening IHEC's capacity for election day readiness and contributing to increased public trust and confidence in IHEC's ability to register voters and conduct election day activities in an efficient, transparent and credible manner.	3.1.3 Assistance in the formulation and implementation of election cascade training plans.	,
 Indicators: Assessment of application of new technologies in VR processes, with actionable 		







recommendations, produced Number of trainings conducted on use of new technologies Number of operational trainings on procedures and rules of VR Provision of advisory support to IHEC in procuring and overseeing an independent audit of the election results management system Percentage of IDPs registered as voters with technologies Gender disaggregated voter registration data available Targets: 3.1.1. Assessment of application of new technologies in Voter Registration processes, with actionable recommendations, produced (3). 3.1.2. Two trainings conducted on use of new technologies. 3.1.3. Three operational trainings on procedures and rules of VR. 3.1.4. Nine advisories provided to IHEC in procuring and overseeing an independent audit of the	3.1.4 Support for the preparation and management of a Results Management System.	Activity was completed in December 2021. UNAMI OEA had prepared a list of training and capacity building activities aimed enhance the skills of the staff on RMS development. A list of training activities had been prepared and shared with IHEC Management for approval.
use of new technologies. 3.1.3. Three operational trainings on procedures and rules of VR. 3.1.4. Nine advisories provided to IHEC in procuring and overseeing		
an independent audit of the election results management system. 3.1.5. 120, 000 IDPs registered as voters.		





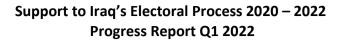
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3.1.6. Gender disaggregated voter registration data is available.	3.1.5 Training and ongoing support to IHEC staff on Results Management, seats allocation and Information and	The activity was completed in 2021. However, following the lessons learned activities, UNAMI OEA has been assisting IHEC in the preparation of training activities for staff of Data Management and Data Centers aimed at enhancing their skills. A training schedule is being prepared in close collaboration with IHEC counterparts for the implementation of the activities in the next reporting quarters.
Responsible Parties: IHEC, UNAMI, UNDP	Communication Technology.	
Total Budget: \$ 378,000		
Output 3.2. Support to civic and	3.2.1 Administration of a small	This activity was concluded in 2021. The 2021 call for proposals for civil society organizations (CSO) engaged in civic
voter education initiatives.	grants programme to support civil society groups in the	and voter education funded. 47 Low Value Grants implemented by 31 CSOs that were completed on 9 October and reached out to 3.6 million beneficiaries countrywide. The 31 grantees submitted their final reports (narrative and
Baseline:	implementation of countrywide	financial) by 9 November. All narrative reports were cleared by December 2021.
A comprehensive voter education	voter education campaigns.	
strategy should be applied		
countrywide to reach all		
segments of the voting		
population, in order to ensure		
understanding of voting		
procedures and the value of		
widespread participation in		
electoral processes.		
The project aims to improve		
public awareness and confidence		
in the electoral process and		
thereby to increase public		
participation. The project		
identifies outputs related to		
transparency and voter		
education, the involvement of		
civil society actors as vectors of		
voter education, promotion of youth and women participation		
in elections, promotion of		
national cohesion, and mitigation		
of hate speech.		
Indicators:		
Administration of a small		
grants programme to		





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support civil society groups in the implementation of countrywide voter education campaigns	3.2.2 Support for the production of voter education materials.	Among other groups, through its awareness campaign. IHEC has been also targeting women, youth and marginalized groups such as minorities and people with disabilities. Specific messages, graphic and video products and direct activities have been developed and conducted with the support of UNAMI OEA (see previous reports).		
 Number of voter education materials produced 	3.2.3 Support for a youth	OEA PO helped in developing a large variety of awareness products and messages targeting youth and first-time		
 A comprehensive youth motivational campaign using social media is developed, with a specific focus on young people (first time voters) 	motivational campaign using social media.			
Enter into an Agreement with CSO in support of the work of CSO and national media				
Targets:				
3.2.1. A call for proposal				
completed to administer small				
grants to civil society groups to				
implement countrywide voter				
education campaigns.				
3.2.2. 120 voter education				
materials produced.				
3.2.3. Two comprehensive youth				
motivational campaign using				
social media developed, with a				
specific focus on young people				
(first time voters).				
3.2.4. 48 grants issued to civil				
society organizations to support				
the work of CSOs and national				
media.				
Responsible Parties: IHEC, CSOs, UNAMI, UNDP				
Total Budget: \$ 16,492				







Output 3.3. Improvement of IHEC's structured engagement with stakeholders.	3.3.1 Support for regular IHEC briefing of electoral stakeholders, such as political parties, media and civil society groups:	IHEC, in coordination with the Ministry of Education, conducted a school event at Al-Qastal school in Baghdad. A mock election was conducted to educate the students regarding democracy and elections. More than 200 boys and girls participated during the mock elections. Plans were underway to conduct more school activities in the future to create awareness on electoral issues. Video link of the event - https://www.facebook.com/IHECOfficial/videos/379920563696798/
Baseline:		•
This activity is aimed at encouraging IHEC to maintain a consistent, periodic communication channel with all		Assistance and guidance provided to IHEC Electoral Relations. UNAMI OEA supported the organization of a media workshop (see previous reports). Going forward, support will be provided on building capacity of IHEC POD. This support would include enhancing engagement with stakeholders.
electoral stakeholders and to make publicly available relevant information on the electoral preparations.	3.3.2 Support for the establishment of a well-equipped, fully functional IHEC Media Centre	No media center had been established by IHEC for the elections.
Indicators: Number of information working groups/meetings with key stakeholders in electoral processes A fully functional IHEC Media Centre is established	3.3.3 Support for the establishment of IHEC Governorate Results Display Centers (D-RDC) complementary to National Results Announcement Centers (NRAC) in Baghdad.	The activity was completed in 2021 following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR elections.
Targets: 3.3.1. Three information working groups/meetings with key stakeholders in electoral processes. 3.3.2 A fully functional IHEC Media Centre is established. 3.3.3. 19 Governorate Electoral Offices (GEOs) and 1 national results acceleration center established.		
Responsible Parties: IHEC, Electoral Stakeholders, UNAMI, UNDP		





Total Budget: \$ 116,576		
Output 3.4. IHEC promotes inclusiveness in all phases of the electoral process for a conducive electoral environment.	3.4.1 Training for female candidates.	This activity was completed in 2021 following the conclusion of the October 2021 COR Elections.
Baseline: IHEC needs to ensure that all of Iraq's electorate is given an equal opportunity to participate in an informed manner in the upcoming elections. It must also promote a peaceful electoral environment.	3.4.2 Support to IHEC in developing an electoral Code of Conduct.	This activity was completed in 2021. Details are in the report for Q3 2021.
 Indicators: Number of trainings provided to women candidates Electoral Code of Conduct is developed Number of specialized trainings to counter hate speech delivered to political actors and media 		
Targets:		





3.4.1. Three trainings provided to women candidates. 3.4.2. Electoral Code of Conduct is developed for 2021. 3.4.3. Two specialized trainings to counter hate speech delivered to political actors and media. Responsible Parties: IHEC, UNAMI, UNDP, UN WOMEN Total Budget: \$ 588,847	3.4.3 Delivery of specialized training to counter hate speech.	No specific training activities were conducted by IHEC during the reporting period. Activities which covered the topic of countering hate speech were reported in Q3 2021.
Output 3.5. Strengthen IHEC's electoral adjudication mechanism and appeals process. Baseline: Support will be focused on providing IHEC with the necessary tools to interpret the legal framework in its operational procedures. Legal and technical advice will be provided to develop clear and concise regulations, procedures, codes of conduct, electoral policies and best practices for democratic elections in all phases of the electoral cycle. For transparency purposes, all these legal and regulatory documents will be made accessible to the electorate. The project will	3.5.1 Review of IHEC complaints adjudication system.	adjudication system. Among them was the complaint and appeal process, which had been characterized with very high number of appeals and several important rulings from Electoral Judicial Panel (EJP). IHEC Complaints and Appeals Section worked under intense pressure to deliver within a very short period when investigation of the election day complaints coincided with the complaint classification process, as well as drafting legal responses to hundreds of appeals submitted to EJP. Lack of clear procedures and rules on how to deal with the various legal cases and the lack of coordination between the BoC and other departments of IHEC with the Complaints and Appeals Section hugely contributed to the challenges and failures encountered during the complaint adjudication process. The 2021 CoR Election provided an important lesson for improving the administration of future elections in Iraq and an opportunity for institutional development of IHEC. After the elections, OEA continued to strengthen IHEC's electoral adjudication mechanisms and appeal process and supported IHEC in organizing a one day Lessons Learned Workshop targeting the IHEC Complaints and Appeals Section and Secretary General of IHEC on 1st March 2022 in Baghdad. The overall goal of the workshop was to discuss the challenges of the 10 October 2021 COR election and review the activities of the Election Commission with respect to the above topics and recommend solutions to the problems that were faced on the election day and during the entire electoral cycle in general. The Workshop assessed and analyze practical challenges and shortcomings of the 2021 COR Elections complaint adjudication process and proposed recommendations on how to avoid similar shortcomings in future elections. The Workshop further proposed ways of improving the quality of legal support to the IHEC in compliance with the national legal framework as well as with international standards and best practices. A total of 15 participants, 4 females and 11 males, attended the workshop and the t
provide legal and technical advice to support improvement of IHEC		 Complaints and appeals on registration of political entities and candidates Complaints and appeals on electoral campaign





electoral adjudication mechanisms and appeals process. It will promote clear procedures for submitting complaints through the electoral preparation phases, including a well-structured appeals process.

Indicators:

- Review of IHEC complaints adjudication system is completed
- Support to development of appeals regulation - the framework for the appeals process is set
- Number of specialized trainings on the complaints adjudication system and appeals system delivered
- Public information campaign for electoral stakeholders and electorate is designed and delivered

Targets:

- 3.5.1. A review of IHEC complaints adjudication system completed.
- 3.5.2. Framework for the appeals process established.
- 3.5.3. A specialized training on the complaints adjudication system and appeals system delivered.
- 3.5.4. Three public information campaigns for electoral stakeholders and electorate are designed and delivered.

- E-day Complaints, challenges and appeals
- Classification and Investigation Committees
- Communication between the National Office and the GEOs
- > Relationship between the Complaints and Appeals Section and the BoC
- Appeals, Challenges and Manual Recounting

The Workshop achieved the following:

- ➤ A list of draft recommendations to the Board of Commissioner (BoC) on improving the legal and regulatory framework for complaint adjudication
- A list of draft recommendations to IHEC Secretary General on strengthening capacity and resources of the Complaints and Appeals Section
- > A proposal on how the Complaints and Appeals Section should improve its coordination and communication with the rest of the IHEC departments.

In addition, OEA assisted IHEC to organize a 3-day workshop on Lessons Learned from 10 October 2021 Elections on Complaints and Appeals Process with the participation of IHEC staff of Complaints and Appeals Section and Legal Staff of Governorate Electoral Offices (GEOs) on 13-16 March 2022 in Erbil with 45 participants. The overall goal of the Workshop was to enable IHEC Complaints and Appeals section and GEO Legal Staff to assess and analyze practical challenges and shortcomings of the 2021 CoR Elections' complaint adjudication process, to conclude on future steps and avoid similar shortcomings, and to improve the quality of the legal support to the IHEC in compliance with the national legal framework as well as with the international standards and best practices. Topics covered during the workshop include:

- Electoral Legal Framework
- IHEC Regulations and Procedures
- Operational issues
- Coordination with the IHEC National Office
- Structure of the Legal Divisions at the GEOs

The achievements of the workshop were:

- An analysis of challenges faced by the different GEOs as well as by the Complaints and Appeals Section of the IHEC;
- A greater awareness, understanding of the challenges faced during the electoral process of 2021 COR elections,
- Praft recommendations of possible solutions to the challenges faced during the 2021 COR elections.

3.5.2 Support to development of appeals regulation.

Despite the overall success of the appeal process, several shortcomings clogged the process. Among them was the complaint and appeal process, which was characterized with very high number of appeals and several important rulings from EJP. EJP was under intense pressure to deliver within a very short timeframe. In addition, lack of clear procedures and rules on how to deal with the various legal cases, lack of coordination between the BoC and EJP contributed to the challenges and failures faced during the complaint adjudication process. After the elections, OEA continued to strengthen EJP's electoral adjudication mechanisms and appeal process. OEA organized a one-day workshop on lessons





Responsible Parties: IHEC; EJP; UNAMI; UNDP Total Budget: \$ 140,400		learned on challenges and appeals from October 2021 Elections with the participation of EJP Members. A total of 15 participants, 4 females and 11 males, participated in the workshop which covered the following topics: > Electoral Legal Framework > Electoral Campaign > Electoral Dispute Resolution system in Iraq > Complaints and Appeals
		The overall goal of the Workshops was to enable EJP analyze electoral complaint adjudication system and framework and identify shortcomings, propose recommendations for avoiding similar shortcomings in future elections, and recommend ways of improving the quality of the appeals process compliance with the national legal framework as well as with the international standards and best practices. The workshop accomplished the following: Recommendations to the EJP on improving the electoral dispute resolution framework and system. Recommendations for strengthening capacity and resources of the EJP as well as coordination and communication with the IHEC and other relevant institutions.
	3.5.3 Specialized training on the complaints adjudication system and appeals system	During the reporting period, OEA had been implementing Capacity Building activities for IHEC and GEO Legal Staff members to improve their understanding of the electoral legal framework and dispute resolution, international electoral standards, principles, and best practices.
	3.5.4 Public information campaign for electoral stakeholders and electorate	
Output 3.6. The project is effectively and sustainably managed and implemented, under national ownership. Indicators: Number of staff in place to enable implementation of	3.6.1 Recruitment of top quality, experienced project personnel	In the quarter, the following positions were at different stages of recruitment process. These positions are aimed at enhancing project delivery: - National Logistics Officer - GEO Liaison Officer - National GEO Liaison Associate - Reporting Officer - NEO for North Central Region





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the project (disaggregated by technical and management roles) Procurement of equipment, transport and communication means is completed A substantive project monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism is in place	3.6.2 Oversight of, and close engagement with, the project by UNAMI senior leadership and UNAMI's Office of Electoral Affairs. 3.6.3 Procurement of equipment, transport and communication means: to include COVID-19 protective equipment and ensuring security for staff deployments.	Devices and supplies were procured to strengthen Covid-19 prevention measures within IHEC HQ, 19 Governorate Electoral Offices and 1,079 Voter Registration Centers. These included Disinfection and Temperature Detection Tunnels; Air Purifier and Filtration Units; First aid Kits; Face Masks; and Sanitizing Gel among others. Event management services were procured to conduct a 2-week lessons learned workshop from 20-30 March 2022 in Sulaymaniyah Iraq. The purpose of the lessons learnt workshop was to identify all the challenges faced during October
Targets: 3.6.1. 100 staff in place to enable implementation of the	аерюутень.	2021 electoral process and provide practical recommendations to enhance the future electoral processes. See the details in 1.1.7.
project (85% technical, 15% management). 3.6.2. 70% of procurement of	3.6.4 A substantive project monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism.	
equipment, transport and communication means completed. 3.6.3. A substantive project monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism is in place. Responsible Parties: UNAMI; UNDP	3.6.5 Full collaboration and co- operation with IHEC staff, its leadership and other Iraqi stakeholders.	The OEA continued to collaborate with the IHEC leadership, departmental staff and other key stakeholders on several areas including the review of the October 2021 COR elections and the capacity building support.
Total Budget: \$ 13,069,240		





OUTPUT 4: Improved capacities of media stakeholders, in Iraq, to provide gender-sensitive, inclusive media content on the Iraqi elections, as well as content that counters disinformation, hate speech, and enhances voter education.





Output 4.1. Journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, trained online and mentored on professional election coverage according to international standards.

4.1.1 Training journalists on professional election coverage according to international standards.

Output 4.1 was completed in 2021, for more details refer to the Annual Report for 2021.

Baseline:

Mainstream media stakeholders are largely perceived as biased as they are often aligned with one sect or group. Hate speech is utilized to malign minorities and marginalized groups, and the media often perpetuate negative stereotypes. Disinformation and hate speech have also featured in Iraqi elections previously, such as the series of defamation campaigns in social media that targeted women candidates in the 2018 parliamentary elections.

Media stakeholders lack professional capacity in providing impartial and inclusive media content that is solid in promoting gender and youth empowerment and in promoting social cohesion. No institutional fact checking of statements or information from public figures feature in the Iraqi media landscape.

Indicators:

 Number of journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, who have been trained online on professional election coverage according to international standards

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 (disaggregated by age, gender and geographic distribution). Number of journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, who have been mentored by subject matter experts from online training workshops or partner CSOs. 		
Targets: 4.1.1. 40-50 journalists have been trained online and mentored on professional election coverage according to international standards, across Iraq and KRI. 4.1.2. At least 20 journalists have received one-to-one mentorship by subject matter experts/trainers or partner CSOs.		
Responsible parties: IMS		
Total budget: \$50,734		





Output 4.2. Journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, trained online on recognizing and combating hate speech, and gender-sensitive reporting.

Baseline: Training on election coverage has been provided to Iraqi journalists on an ad-hoc basis, in the lead up to previous elections. In 2009/2010 UNESCO provided training on election coverage to journalists (scope unknown). In 2017-2018 CFI provided training for journalists across Iraq and KRI related to the institutional and administrative framework of the elections, and the verification and identification of "fake news".

Indicators:

- Number of journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, trained online on recognizing and combating hate speech, and gender-sensitive reporting.
- Number of journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, who have been mentored by subject matter experts from training workshops or partner CSOs.

4.2.1 Training of journalists on recognizing and combating hate speech, and gender-sensitive reporting.

Output 4.2 was completed in 2021, for more details refer to the Annual Report for 2021.

Targets:





4 2 4 20 40 incompliate trained	
4.2.1. 30-40 journalists trained	
online on recognizing and	
combating hate speech, including	
gender-sensitive reporting.	
4.2.2. At least 15-20 journalists	
have received one-to-one	
mentorship by subject matter	
experts/trainers.	
Dosponsible mouties, INAC	
Responsible parties: IMS	
Total budget: \$0	
Total buuget. 30	





Output 4.3. Journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, trained online on the production of inclusive media content that aims to elevate the voices of women voters and potential candidates, youth, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.

4.3.1 Training Journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, on the production of inclusive media content that aims to elevate the voices of women voters and potential candidates, youth, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.

Baseline:

In 2019, IMS provided some training on inclusive media coverage and gender-sensitive reporting for journalists of media partners. Training workshops are stalled in 2020 due covid pandemic. The existence of media content that maligns minorities and marginalized groups, including women is evidence that training and awareness on this issue continues to be a necessity.

Indicators:

- Number of journalists from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, who have trained online on the production of inclusive media content. (disaggregated by age, gender and geographic distribution).
- Number of journalists from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, who have been mentored by subject matter experts from training workshops or partner

Output 4.3 was completed in 2021. For more details see the Annual Report for 2021.





CSOs. (disaggregated bage, gender and geographic distribution)	
Targets: 4.3.1. 30-40 journalists have been trained online on the production of inclusive media content. 4.3.2. At least 15-20 journalists have received one-to-one mentorship by trainers/experts.	
Responsible parties: IMS	
Total budget: \$0	





Output 4.4. Media content on voter education, and relevant IHEC messaging on electoral process, produced and disseminated through social media campaign promoting active and inclusive participation in the central process.

Baseline: IHEC needs to intensify its voter education and outreach activities on the new electoral system, to address prevailing misconceptions mainly due to past practices associated with the previous electoral system.

Indicators:

 Social media campaign publishing IHEC messaging and other voter education content developed.

Targets:

4.4.1. One social media campaign developed (The media development NGO partner gathers IHEC messaging and develops a "Get out and vote" social media campaign promoting active and inclusive participation in the electoral process.).

Responsible parties: UNAMI

Total budget: \$116,544

4.4.1 Media content on voter education, and relevant IHEC messaging on electoral process, produced and disseminated through social media campaign promoting active and inclusive participation in the electoral process.

IHEC continued to produce and publish media contents. Also, through the newly established Coordination and PR unit (media support), UNAMI OEA support had switched to capacity building and this will be the main focus going forward.





Output 4.5. Fact-checking of statements or information espoused by power holders related to the Iraqi elections conducted to counter disinformation or misinformation, and especially targeting Iraqi youth.

4.5.1 Number of factsheets or factchecked statements made by powerholders and related to the Iraqi elections produced and published on social media.

IHEC continued to produce regular information for the audience. Weekly statements from the Spokesperson were also published.

Baseline: Zero. (Fact checking in Iraq is almost non-existant or in its infancy. UNESCO/CMC establish an automatic factchecking tool platform to fight disinformation, but only in relation to covid-19 to begin with. Tech4peace aim to report on 'websites and social media pages that spread false news/propaganda promoting violence/terrorism' but content related to elections is unclear).

Indicators:

 Number of factsheets or fact-checked statements made by power holders and related to the Iraqi elections produced and published on social media.

Targets:

4.5.1. 150-200 content pieces consisting of factsheets or fact-checked statements made by power holders in relation to the Iraqi elections published on social media.





Responsible parties: UNAMI		
Total budget: \$11,269		





Output 4.6. Qualitative media monitoring and reporting conducted and discussed among stakeholders on content in both Arabic and Kurdish media related to gender, minorities, youth etc., as well as IHEC's performance in election administration and objectivity/fairness toward all candidates.

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Baseline: The first media monitoring reports will provide a baseline from project outset. The final media monitoring will show the trend in quality of content and track IHEC.

Indicators:

 Number of media monitor reports produced tracking the quality of content in relation to the elections and tracking the IHEC's performance.

Targets:

4.6.1. 6-10 media monitoring reports produced by CSO's/Iraqi academics tracking the quality of content produced in relation to the elections, and tracking the IHEC's performance, with subsequent roundtable evaluation with editors and journalists.

Responsible parties: IMS

Total budget: \$0

4.6.1 Production of media monitoring reports tracking the quality of content produced in relation to the elections, and tracking the IHEC's performance, with subsequent roundtable evaluation with editors and journalists.

Output 4.6 was completed in 2021, for more details please see the Annual Report for 2021.