

2017 Programme on Reform of Governance, Rights and Empowerment for Sustained Stability (PROGRESS) Annual Report



1.) Overall Project status



PROGRESS aims to ensure “*Democratic Governance and civil society institutions and processes are strengthened to undertake peaceful resolution of disputes, deepen democratic governance, respect for human rights and active citizenship participation*”:

Output 1: Government of Lesotho, political parties, civil society and other stakeholders supported to muster and sustain a consultative process to deliver comprehensive and participatory reforms.

Output 2: Technical and expert support provided to stakeholders with regard to the national reform agenda (constitution, public service, judiciary, security sector, parliamentary, etc.)

Output 3: Non-state actors provided with support and facilitated to undertake advocacy and capacitated to actively participate in the reform process.

Output 4: Key institutions of governance supported to better deliver on their mandate and universal personal and human rights promoted and monitored.

Output 5: Process and technical support provided to national stakeholders to develop a sustainable national capacity for conflict prevention and peaceful management and resolution of conflicts.

Output 6: Youth participation and inclusion enhanced through the mainstreaming of their activities/agenda in government, civil society and UN programming.

Responsible Party:	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Coordinating Ministry:	Ministry of Development Planning
Implementing partners:	Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho Ministry of Law, Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights Ministry of Gender, Sports and Youth Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL) Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offenses (DCEO)

Brief Description

Through the Programme on Reform of Governance, Rights and Empowerment for Sustained Stability (PROGRESS) in Lesotho, UNDP aims to support its national partners in the further entrenchment of democratic principles and stability.

1. Support the execution of a credible, participatory and inclusive reform agenda in Lesotho through provision of process, technical and advisory support;
2. Enhance the participation of citizens in all the stages of the reform process through facilitating citizens' inputs, support to joint government-civil society forums, and supporting alternative and complimentary forums for civil society organizations;
3. Deepen a culture of good governance and human rights protection through strengthening the capacity of key institutions of governance (parliament, election management body, the Human Rights Unit and the National Human Rights Commission) and ensuring civil society participation;
4. Support the development of a sustainable national capacity for conflict prevention and peaceful management and resolution of conflicts through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder national mechanism for peace under the framework of a 'national peace architecture';
5. Enhance youth empowerment and participation through UN-wide youth-targeted programming around priority areas of the Sustainable Development Goals and through youth mobilization, sensitization and education on the country's reform agenda.

2017 Targets

Support to the Reforms Agenda

Capacity building activities for IEC to manage and deliver Elections

Training of Senate Committee Chairpersons and Clerks

Conduct Public gatherings on Public Participation on Senate Committee's roles

Training for the National Assembly SDGs committee. Members

Training for Committee Chairpersons and Clerks

Support to operationalize the National Human Rights Commission

Implementation of UPR recommendations; National Mechanism for state party reporting in place

Implementation of selected areas of NACSAP by DCEO and relevant stakeholders

Consultations on establishment of a National Peace Architecture / Peace Infrastructures with Government and other stakeholders

Hold trainings for youth facilitators on developmental issues in Lesotho and review the Youth Policy

2.) Programme Management

The Governance and Peace-Building Unit (GPU) held the first Steering Committee Meeting of the year in February where activities for 2017 were finalized and later consolidated into an Annual Work Plan. During this meeting, the Ministry of Gender, Sports and Youth was included to be part of PROGRESS implementing partners after being moved from SPU. It should also be noted that the Chairperson of the Steering Committee Meeting indicated to all implementing partners during the meeting that in the event that Snap National Assembly Elections take place this year, funds allocated to IPs would be moved to support the IEC hold such elections. As had been anticipated, Parliament was dissolved on March 6 following a successful vote of no confidence on the Government and elections were announced and scheduled for June 3. The preparations for the afore-mentioned elections had adverse effects on programme implementation due to the fact that funds were moved to the IEC and most activities were put on hold until July. The planned April Steering Committee Meetings was not held due to preparations for the elections, however, other meetings took place as planned in July and December.

The Foresight and Scenarios Project was launched in April in collaboration with the National University of Lesotho (NUL). The project, in the review period, saw a review of scanning materials by a multiple of stakeholders from civil society, business, and academia. The process led to a scenario building workshop later from which the foresight

and scenarios building produced a planning tool intended to aid the Ministry of Development Planning in the development of the National Strategic Development Plan II. The NUL is exploring the utilization of this tool to rejuvenate and build capacity of the university's Moshoeshoe Institute of Leadership. Also, UNDP through the GPU partnered with Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), to conduct a Citizen Participation Survey. The survey aimed to respond broadly to the lack of evidence on the status of citizens' satisfaction with their participation in democratic processes and development initiatives in Lesotho by gathering and making available robust data on various aspects around civic education and public participation. The survey findings were printed and shared with relevant stakeholders and the public at large.

Challenges:

The holding of the Snap National Elections in June created challenges by the reallocation of the funds that were earmarked for other IPs had a knock-on effect on overall delivery for PROGRESS. This was exacerbated by the holding of the Local Government Elections immediately after the National Elections.

Slow decision making or low prioritization by implementing partners, had adverse effects on programme implementation.

Both Houses of Parliament did not undertake any activities this year due to the fact that the Legislature closed three times and there was no time for training programmes and UNDP was requested to postpone to next year.

Lack of progress in efforts to establish and operationalize the National Human Rights Commission.

Human Rights Unit was extremely short on staff hence inevitably disorganized.

No transparent/reliable structure within the Department of Youth to keep record of communication, meetings, budget spending and activities. UNDP is the centralized authority and alternative source of such tasks that are supposed to be the responsibility of the Department of Youth.

UN Agency Politics: when working on the Youth Policy Implementation Action Plan, agency politics with UNFPA often hindered effective implementation of the activity as the head of agency would not allow the activity to carry out without their staff being present. This delayed the entire process by one month.

Most challenges encountered by UNDP, the IEC and the partners were related to the fact the country went for elections somewhat unprepared, as the elections had been moved forward by three years.

In the initial conflict management meetings, Mafeteng district Principal Chiefs tended to send low level representatives to these meetings, while they attended to other business

The Reforms roadmap development was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and supported by the office of the Government Secretary. Consultations and review meetings were a challenge to coordinate due to competing priorities.

3.) 2017 achievements

Activity 1: Support to the Country's Reform Agenda **Reforms Agenda**

The reforms agenda seeks to respond to pressing and persisting challenges of governance in Lesotho. Following a request by the Lesotho Government to UNDP for the latter to provide and facilitate technical expertise in the development of a Reforms Road Map, UNDP engaged a team of regional and international experts in the areas of consensus building, human rights, constitutional, security sector, and public service reforms. A National Reforms document was developed with UN experts and GoL technical team. The document was approved by Cabinet and subsequently submitted to the SADC Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation together with the SADC Executive Secretary. The document became a reference point for International Development Partners other stakeholders.

Meaningful participation of all citizens in the reform process by having access and making inputs at all stages of the process, will not only make the process credible but equally inclusive and nationally owned. The LCN held workshop on the envisaged National Reforms where the UNDP Resident Representative gave a key note address. The workshop was attended by various stakeholders including political parties, faith based institutions, NGOs, GoL and Members of Parliament.

Activity 2: Strengthening the capacities of Key institutions of governance

Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

As a result of the UN Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) recommendations, UNDP engaged a Logistics Specialist, an advisor for Analysis and Mitigation, an IT expert and a graphic designer to provide technical assistance to IEC in preparation of the Snap National Elections held on June 3.

The Logistics Specialist provided advice and technical support to the IEC Logistics Unit in planning and management at the national, district, constituency and local levels. The expert provided technical support in the distribution, transportation, storage, and collection of election materials from the Maseru to the interior, of the country and back; in addition, he developed structures and tools for monitoring and management of electoral material including sensitive election material such as ballot papers. His support ensured that all electoral materials were delivered on time including remote areas inaccessible by road. The CO also recruited a Senior Advisor – Analysis and Mitigation who provided proactive analysis and early warning on potential problem spots in the electoral process, and advised the IEC to

prevent or address the issues in a timely manner, and prevented them from becoming serious political problems.

An IT Expert was brought on board by UNDP who provided technical expertise to the IEC in the upgrading of election result display system and trained the IT section in this area. His support ensured that a highly secure and robust election result display system that could also display real time cumulative national figures was designed and installed and used on polling day. A graphic designer was also engaged and designed a series of electoral materials which contributed positively in supporting the electoral processes and effective voter outreach campaign.

The technical expertise provided by UNDP consultants created an enabling environment for the IEC to manage and deliver free, fair, credible and transparent National Assembly Elections in June 2017 as confirmed by local and international observer missions. The Governance and Peace-building Unit (GPU) hosted a series of consultations with the Heads of Churches and the leadership of the Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL) to forge a strategy of engagement with all political party leaders. This kept them informed of political developments and facilitated planning among the church leaders of strategic responses. Strategy development with CCL and Heads of Churches led to inclusion of prominent senior citizens called the 'Elders Group' to tap into the experience and wisdom of retired Basotho national and international civil servants. "Prayer breakfast" sessions with political leaders became an essential forum for resolving numerous volatile issues that arose as the election neared.

UNDP also provided funds for the IEC to hold an Internal Evaluation Workshop on the 2017 Snap National Assembly Elections. It is a legal requirement that within three months of the conduct of elections, the IEC undertakes a review of the elections to assess its performance. This review did not happen during the prescribed period due to the fact that immediately after conducting the June 3 2017 Snap National Elections, the IEC immediately got involved with the preparation of the September 30 2017 Local Government Elections, hence the Internal Reflections Retreat took place in December where a Draft Plan of Action was also developed and agreed upon.

National Assembly

No activities undertaken in 2017 due to dissolution of Parliament in March in preparation for the June 3 Snap National Assembly and closure sine die in August in preparation for September 30 Local Government Elections.

Ministry of Law, Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights (Human Rights Unit)

Disability Rights in Africa Conference

UNDP supported the Ministry of Law-Human Rights Unit to attend the 2-day Disability Rights in Africa Conference in Pretoria, SA, to strengthen the Ministry's capacity in domesticating the CRPD (Convention on Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) in Lesotho's legal framework and developing a platform to draft the CRPD State Party Report.

UPR Mid-Term Progress Report Validation Workshop

In partnership with the Ministry of Law, Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP facilitated a one-day workshop with 70 stakeholders to validate the UPR Mid-Term Progress Report. The outcome was a finalized UPR Mid-Term Progress Report which was submitted to OHCHR Geneva in January 2018.

HIV and the Law National Action Plan' Technical Working Group

In partnership with the Ministry of Law, Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights and the UNDP Regional Service Centre (South Africa), UNDP facilitated monthly HIV and the Law Technical Working Group meetings to discuss and finalize 3 priority areas (*1. Ending Child Marriage; 2. Domestic Violence Bill; and 3. Sensitization of key population/gender equality in the Judicial Sector*) for the National Action Plan and plan the National Action Plan Workshop which is to be held in March 2018.

International Human Rights Day Event

In partnership with the Ministry of Law, Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Gender and Youth, UNDP organized a full-day event to commemorate International Human Rights Day at the Maseru Central Correctional Institution, Maseru, with a focus on prisoners' rights. The outcome was higher awareness of prisoners and their conditions/challenges in prisons (including overcrowding, health issues, discrimination etc) and several initiatives launched to further support their needs in 2018 (monthly female sanitary pad donations, education programs for juveniles at the juvenile training centre etc).

Senate

No activities undertaken in 2017 due to dissolution of Parliament in March in preparation for the June 3 Snap National Assembly and closure sine die in August in preparation for September 30 Local Government Elections.

Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offenses (DCEO)

UNDP provided support to the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Offenses (DCEO) to hold a symposium on corruption resulted in increased public awareness of corruption and legal frameworks that are available to prevent and to combat it. In addition to the symposium, UNDP also supported an anti-corruption walk where the Prime Minister and the UNDP Resident Representative delivered remarks. The symposium and anti-corruption walk increased collaboration among the three law enforcement agencies the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) and the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA). During the symposium, the Director General of the DCEO officially announced the rolling-out the Asset Declaration Initiative supported by UNDP which is significant area in the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan (NACSAP). It was also revealed that some member of the Cabinet had already submitted their Declaration of Assets Forms.

Support to Non-State Actors

Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN)

UNDP provided funds to the Lesotho Council of NGOs to conduct election observation. UNDP's support enabled LCN to deploy 167 elections observers in the districts of Botha-Bothe, Maseru, Mohales'Hoek, Quthing and Qachas'Nek. In total LCN deployed over 500 elections observers, through the additional support received from Open Society Initiative for Southern African (OSISA). The objectives of the LCN election observation were to enhance the credibility and legitimacy of the electoral process; and to promote sound democratic practices with a view to enhance public confidence in the electoral process.

Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL)

As part of its efforts to promote good governance and political stability in Lesotho, UNDP in collaboration with CCL, invited all political parties contesting the 2017 National Assembly Elections to demonstrate their commitment and dedication to democracy, the rule of law, and the conduct of peaceful elections; by signing an Electoral Pledge on May 17, 2017. All the major parties signed that document at the UNDP House and pledged to honour the Constitution and Laws of Lesotho; to observe the Electoral Code of Conduct; to honour the Institutions of governance of Lesotho; to do everything within our ability to uphold peace and harmony among all Basotho during the campaigns and after; to accept the outcome of the 3 June 2017 elections when **declared free and fair by duly authorised independent observers**.

Activity 3: Support to the development of sustainable mechanism for peace and enhancing gender and youth empowerment

UNDP provided financial and technical support to the Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL) Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) working in a volatile area of Mafeteng, District and its key community of Ribaneng. The community in that area has witnessed horrific gang killing exacerbated by conflict around vulgar music lyrics and problems over ownership and patent rights of traditional musicians. The violence between rival gangs from Mafeteng has become a trans -border conflict involving displaced communities and illegal miners in South Africa. UNDP supported efforts at building peace infrastructure. In collaboration with CCL and CCJP, UNDP provided support in the establishment of the Ribaneng Peace Committee. Among its first tasks, the Committee organized a district wide dialogue with stakeholders ranging from traditional chefs, police, district authorities were convened to:

- sensitize the leadership on the plight of the Ribaneng community.
- To work collaboratively with CCJP, UNDP, RPMC and the Mafeteng District leadership in strategic approach to conflict in Ribaneng and Mafeteng district.

This was the first attempt in a collaborative approach for key stakeholders and first activity and milestone facilitated by the Ribaneng Peace Committee.

A meeting by area chiefs, District Administrator, district security chiefs (local police, army, correctional services, and national intelligence), Members of Parliament (MPs), Principal

Chiefs, and a Cabinet Minister from the Office of the Prime Minister was held in early December. The overall objective of the meeting was to review, and share peacebuilding plans and security plans for the district of Mafeteng ahead of the Christmas holidays.

Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR)

Youth-led Organizations Mapping Exercise

In partnership with the Ministry of Gender and Youth, UNDP organized and coordinated a 2-week nationwide mapping exercise of youth-led organizations. Each district mapped around 50 organizations and analysed the data to assess the various current challenges youth organizations face. The analysis report is also being utilized by all agencies conducting youth-relevant programs for reference and project baseline purposes.

Survey Training

UNDP facilitated a one-day training for the Ministry of Gender and Youth district officers on how to collect data and draft/conduct surveys in the field. The training helped strengthen the capacity of district officers and provided the Ministry with additional materials and training guides for future reference.

Data Analysis Training

UNDP facilitated a two-day data analysis training for the Ministry of Gender and Youth district officers post-mapping exercise to effectively analyse the collected data and surveys to draft district/national analysis reports. The outcome was the finalized map of youth-led organizations, 1 comprehensive database of all youth-led organizations, 1 national report and 10 district reports.

Youth Policy Drafting and Review

UNDP supported/assisted the Ministry of Gender and Youth in the drafting of the renewed Youth Policy, especially regarding provisions on democratic governance and leadership, peacebuilding participation and gender/youth issues. The finalized Youth Policy was approved by the Cabinet in December 2017 and will be printed and disseminated in 2018.

Youth Policy Implementation Action Plan Drafting and Review

In partnership with UNFPA and the Ministry of Gender and Youth, UNDP facilitated three Youth Policy Implementation Actions Plan Drafting workshops throughout November-December, to review the Action Plan from the previous Youth Policy and update/revise items where necessary.

Cross cutting / innovation

A new Lesotho Foresight and Scenarios Project was launched in April in collaboration with the National University of Lesotho (NUL). The launching of the project was attended by a multiple of stakeholders from civil society, business, Government of Lesotho and academia. The process led to a scenario building workshop later from which the foresight and scenarios

building produced a planning tool intended to aid the Ministry of Development Planning in the development of the National Strategic Development Plan II. The NUL is exploring the utilization of this tool to rejuvenate and build capacity of the university's Moshoeshoe Institute of Leadership.

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Reports on the various activities undertaken by implementing partners are available.

4.) Legend



- On target**
- Areas to watch**
- Areas to address**
- On Hold**