

**UNDP Management Response**

**Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in Solomon Islands Project Phase II**

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**Overall comments:** Overall management is satisfied with evaluation findings and the recommendations. The recommendations made are critical in not only ensuring continuity for support to strengthen the electoral process in SI after the departure of RAMSI but also highlighted considerations for increase focus on sustainability and the need for an exit strategy for the project. Other important recommendations made regarding strengthening of operational management through adoption of strategic and programmatic focus for project delivery will enhance creation of synergies amongst other related projects and establishing an enabling environment for addressing issues. Underscoring these is the need for political will to improving the integrity of the electoral processes and the credibility of the administration process.

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1:</b> Continued support to the institutions and principles of strengthening the electoral processes in the Solomon Islands				
<b>Management Response:</b> The recommendation is relevant and we agree with it. Given the fact that improving the quality of the electoral process will encompass several competing but important areas (voter registration, electoral administration including voter education and electoral reform process) which cannot be addressed within a short period, therefore it is essential that support is continued for these key electoral institutions and processes in Solomon Islands throughout the electoral cycle.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
The support for key areas to improve the quality of the electoral process (voter registration, electoral administration including voter education and electoral reform process) are continued in phase II of the project.	July 2017 – June 2020 as per SECSIP II project document.	Implementing Partner (UNDP)	ongoing	i) SECSIP II implementation ongoing since July 2017. ii) Funds available for project funding gap.
<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2:</b> Clearly articulate the strategic vision for the project in the project document and ensure that the project maintains that focus during implementation.				
<b>Management Response:</b> Agree with the recommendation. The OSIEC corporate plan 2015-2018 provides the framework for achieving the strategic vision of the project which are aligned to the agreed key components of the project. This will ensure that the project maintains the focus of implementation.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
The agreed five components of the project when implemented will contribute to a stronger electoral commission and representative democracy through sustainable voter registration system, electoral, legal and administrative reforms and capacity building of national and local networks for civic engagement and voter awareness including coordinating mechanisms for enhancement of women’s political.	July -December 2018	Implementing Partner (UNDP)	On going	Progress of 2017 AWP, 2018 AWP and 2019 AWP.

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3:</b> Adopt a strategic and programmatic focus for project delivery by synergizing project activities and building on activities to increase performance and contributions towards the higher level outcomes.				
<b>Management Response:</b> Agree with recommendation. A strategic and programmatic focus for project delivery will be adopted to create synergies amongst related projects, especially in voters civic education components of the project and other related ones such as peace building project and anti-corruption project to increase performance to project outcome. With the transition after RAMSI exit, consolidation of peace dividends after the ethnic tensions will contribute to enhancing inclusiveness and credibility of national general election outcomes.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Civic engagement requires long-term investment and a generation change as citizens learn how the state can complement the existing wantok system of governance, therefore the strategy and approach should then be strategically punctuated by shorter term voter registration education and voting education exercises being also supportive of wider efforts emphasizing the importance of taking part in elections as a nation-building process. This means civic and voter education strategies must align with existing structures and networks at the local level and special consideration to be given to ensuring women and people living with a disability targeted and enfranchised.	July 2017 – June 2020	Implementing Partner	Partially implemented	Development of a broad strategic framework that promotes voter education awareness on key electoral and political reform process adopted.
<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4:</b> Take ESSP and the planned AEC assistance into consideration in the design of SECSIP II and avoid duplication of efforts.				
<b>Management Response:</b> Agree with the recommendation. A strengthened coordination mechanism (Technical Advisory Committee-TAC) will be instituted in OSIEC under the leadership of MHA (Permanent Secretary/Chief Electoral Officer) to ensure joint work planning and strategy development for maximization and efficient use of resources and to avoid duplication of electoral assistance through SECSIP II and Electoral Systems Support Programme (ESSP). Also as part of preparations for the upcoming National General Elections, which will need wider electoral coordination amongst stakeholders, and hence the need for establishment of sub-committees on special topics as required.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
The design of SECSIP II was inclusive of ESSP, OSIEC and other electoral actors to improve relevance and longer-term prospects for sustainable outcomes for the project. Internal information sharing amongst advisers is ongoing on weekly basis and more formally, on monthly basis to harmonize multi-lateral and b-lateral electoral assistance.	July 2017 – June 2017	Implementing Partner	ongoing	Need to develop an internal communication and coordination strategy including reporting guidelines.

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5:</b> Maximize UNDP's strategic advantage including its ability to convene and provide a safe space for discussions to advance the policy dialogue and leverage the policy work being done through other related projects which have the same objectives, and linking these efforts to SDGs and the national discussions on how to achieve these goals.				
<b>Management Response:</b> Good recommendation and the idea of maximizing UNDP's strategic advance and the link to national discussions is a step in the right direction, given the policy sensitive nature of the governance issues and ownership of implementing the SGDs (5 & 16) at national level. Can be implemented in partnership collaboration with other UN agencies and stakeholders.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
This will provided through building/establishing partner initiatives with other UN actors (UN Women, UNICEF, World Bank), government agencies and civil society organizations. The project will seek to coordinate with activities of other UNDP actors including those being implemented by the Peace Building Project in Solomon Islands as well as with other regional projects from UNDP Pacific Office located in Suva working in the areas of parliamentary support, political parties and anti-corruption.	July 2017-june 2020	Implementing Partner	ongoing	
<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6:</b> Increase focus on the sustainability elements of assistance.				
<b>Management Response:</b> Strongly agree in view of the need for sustainability and perhaps on a phased exit strategy approach given the complex nature and dynamics of promoting electoral inclusiveness in Solomon Islands.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) A three year broader graduate program is will be established would see employees rotated between the OSIEC, Parliament, the PPC and gain some experience in the provinces with special consideration should be given to the inclusion of women at all levels in the staffing structure of OSIEC. The first round of graduates would be able to directly support the 2019 General Elections</li> <li>ii) Hiring of national UNVs to fill relevant positions within OSIEC</li> </ul>	Nov 2017-June 2020	Implementing Partner	started	<p>Discussion to be held with MPS, MHA, MOF and PMO to establish agreement.</p> <p>Cabinet paper on sustainability on the use of BVR for sustainability of voter registration system.</p>

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 7:</b> Strengthen project management and M&E efforts.				
<b>Management Response:</b> Strongly agree. Project governance and management arrangement for phase II has been improved with inclusion of additional officers both at the management and operational levels to ensure effective financial management for project implementation and tracking and monitoring of project performance.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
Recruitment of Project Coordination Specialist and UNV M&E Reporting Officer in phase II has been initiated and expected mobilization should be before end of December 2017.	July -1December 2017	Implementing Partner (UNDP)	In progress	Project Coordination Specialist expected at duty station in October 2017.  Recruitment of UNV M&E officer pending shortlisting and interviews.
<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 8:</b> Provide opportunities for the Government of Solomon Islands (GSI) to reaffirm its commitment to improving the integrity of the electoral process and its administration, and for the measures needed to ensure that integrity (legal reforms, electoral justice and the provision of adequate resources for the EMBs and processes).				
<b>Management Response:</b> Agree with recommendation, although project activities may only have indirect impact on Government commitment to improving the integrity of the electoral processes and its administration. However targeted training and seminar sessions for relevant senior government officials would be beneficial.				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
i) Government officials (PPC & SIEC) and Political Party representatives' participation in the Regional Political Parties Dialogue: Does the Pacific need Political Parties? held in Fiji. ii)Round table discussions with Government official on specific related topics including in-country workshops.	19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> September 2017  2017-ongoing	Implementing Partner (UNDP)	Completed  ongoing	Pending Dialogue report from UNDP Fiji.