

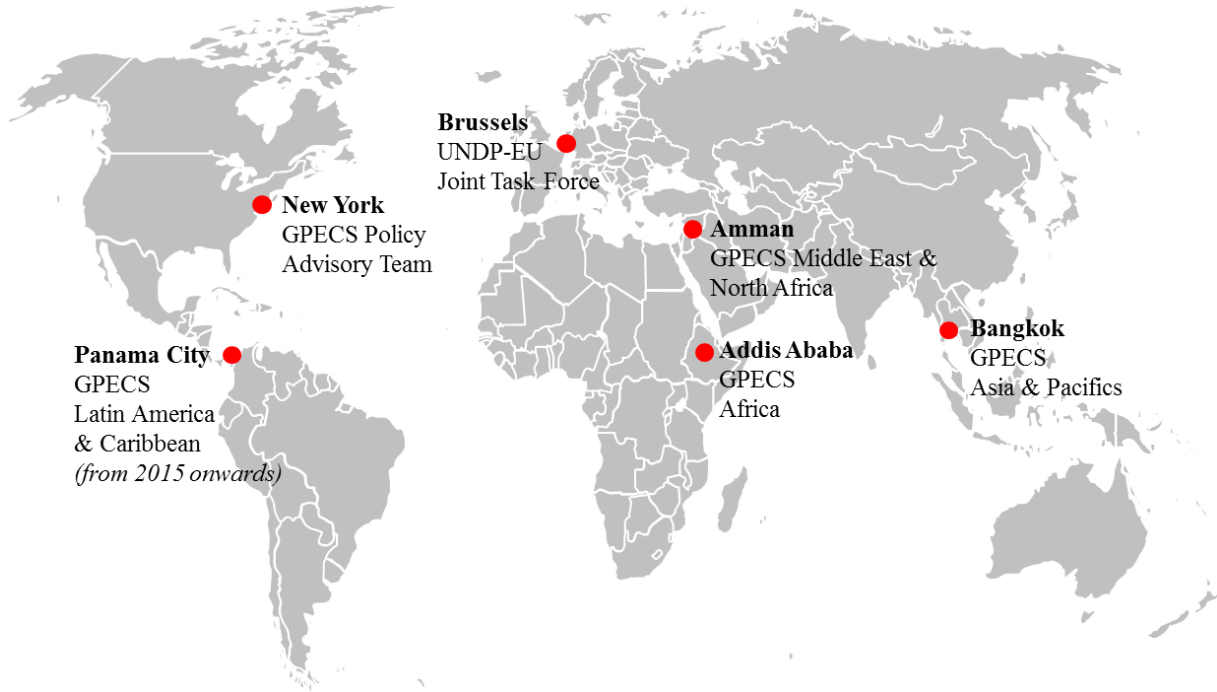


GPECS



Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support

Annual Report 2014



Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAEA	African Electoral Authorities
ACEEEO	Association of European Election Officials
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections
CAR	Central African Republic
CDP	Country Development Plan
CENI	National Election Commission (Burundi)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CO	Country Office
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAD/DPA	Electoral Assistance Division of the UN Department of Political Affairs
EC	European Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community Of West African States
EMB	Electoral Management Body
FAFA	Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the EC and UNDP
GPECS	Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support
HEC	High Elections Commission (Egypt)
IDEA	[International] Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
INE	Mexican National Electoral Institute
JTF	Joint EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LAS	League of Arab States
LTO	Long-term Observer
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NGO	non-governmental organization
OAS	Organization of American States
OIC	Organization of Islamic Conference
SCER	Supreme Committee for Elections and Referendum (Yemen)
SADC-ECF	Southern African Development Community – Electoral Commission Forum
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation
TfF	Train the Facilitators
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peace-keeping Operations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNV	United Nation Volunteers
USG	Under-Secretary General

1. Background

The Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS – 2009 - 2015) was designed to provide long-term support for improving and strengthening countries’ electoral processes and institutions throughout the electoral cycle. Therewith, GPECS centered a process-driven, instead of an event-driven approach. The ‘electoral cycle approach’ was formally adopted as UNDP’s best practice programming strategy in the 2007 ‘Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide’ and continues to be central to UNDP’s electoral assistance. The approach prioritizes supporting the core issues that impact on the electoral process (pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral) and wider democratic governance per se, including electoral system reform, electoral management design, boundary delimitation, political party charters, media training and women and youth participation. The approach ensures that electoral support is no longer a one-off event but that it is provided within the framework of the overall electoral cycle and integrated into the broader development and democratic governance agendas of the requesting country. GPECS is implemented at the global, regional and country levels with an emphasis on including women’s electoral and political participation.

In order to fulfill its objectives on country, regional and global level, the programme operates in a decentralized and global manner. GPECS consists of an Electoral Policy Team based in UNDP HQ New York, liaising with other UN agencies (DPA/EAD, UNDPKO, UNESCO, UNOPS, UN Women), and leading international actors in the field of electoral assistance, as well as providing regional and country support. The UNDP-EU Joint Task Force (JTF) is another central element of the GPECS structure. UNDP-EU JTF is mainly tasked with liaising with the European Commission, based in Brussels, and Regional Advisor Teams based in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Jordan and Panama (from 2015 onwards), which provide support to UNDP country offices and electoral assistance programmes.

Initiated in 2009 as a multi-year programme, GPECS has been funded through a generous contribution from the Government of Spain and since 2013 from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) for the regional component of Arab States¹. In addition, other small contributions have been received to support specific activities throughout the life of GPECS, namely Canada CIDA, the European Commission, International IDEA and UNICEF.

2. Leadership, Advocacy, and Capacity Development at the Global Level

During 2014, the GPECS Global Component has continued to be UNDP’s main tool for the formulation and implementation of electoral policy and electoral assistance. GPECS supports UNDP’s participation in the Inter-agency Coordination Mechanism in Electoral Assistance (ICMEA), which is chaired by the Electoral Assistance Division in DPA. ICMEA is the main vehicle for the development of UN electoral policy in the UN system and it is composed by all main UN agencies, departments, and funds involved in electoral processes. During the reporting year two new policies were developed through ICMEA with UNDP collaboration and signed by USG Jeffrey Feltman in his capacity as UN Focal Point for Electoral Assistance. The first document, finalized in June 2014 focuses on “UN Support to the Design or Reform of Electoral Management Bodies”. This policy outlines important considerations in relation to the design or reform of electoral management bodies and a variety of the most widely used

¹ UNDP Regional Electoral Support, Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region (UNDP Project number 76419).

electoral management options. It also recalls relevant principles of UN electoral policy and provides measures in order to guide UN electoral assistance providers on how to support national authorities in designing or reforming EMBs². The policy is complementary to the policy directive on "Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance" issued in 2012.

The second policy, signed on 1 December 2014 focuses on "United Nations statements and public comment around elections". This policy directive clarifies the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the UN system in issuing statements or making public comment, and provides guidance on key considerations, content and the consultation process required. The purpose of the policy is to ensure coherence, consistency and predictability of public messaging by the UN around elections³.

Likewise, GPECS throughout has continued to play an important role in advancing electoral knowledge based on the needs identified in UNDP electoral assistance country level projects or through global and regional conferences and seminars. For example, the online courses for practitioners on various topics related to Electoral Assistance developed by the EU-UNDP JTF were successfully completed by 453 people in 2014.

During the reporting year, the following publications, tools, and e-learning resources were produced by GPECS:

- Launch of the eLearning course on ***Sustainability of Electoral Processes*** in English, Arabic, French and Portuguese⁴. This e-learning follow the publication on the same name that resulted from the 2013 Global Conference on the Sustainability of Electoral Processes that took place in Maputo, Mozambique in 2013;
- Publication of a ***Guide to Support Electoral Administrators and Practitioners to Evaluate Election Results Management Systems*** in English and Arabic⁵. The publication provides a technical overview on the systems for managing election results, challenges faced by EMBs and solutions identified at the regional and global level. In addition, eLearning course on ***Results Management Systems*** in English and Arabic was developed⁶;
- Publication of a summary report on ***Reinforcing Credibility and Acceptance of Electoral Processes: The role of Electoral Stakeholders and Electoral Administrations***, in English, Arabic and French⁷. This publication was developed following in Thematic Workshop for Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) in Jordan, jointly organized by the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force and GPECS Arab States, which brought together more than 250 practitioners and EMB staff from all continents and subsequently produced a knowledge document, which reached around 100 electoral administrations and around 3,000 people through social media. This publication is accompanied by an e-learning tool

² UN Support to the Design or Reform of Electoral Management Bodies, http://toolkit-elections.unteamworks.org/?q=webfm_send/570

³ United Nations statements and public comment around elections, http://toolkit-elections.unteamworks.org/?q=webfm_send/692

⁴ See e-learning courses: http://elearning.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?lang=en_utf8

⁵ See: http://ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=561&Itemid=&lang=en

⁶ See e-learning courses: http://elearning.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?lang=en_utf8

⁷ See: http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=174&Itemid=181&lang=en

that allows a broader target audience to benefit from the content of the publication through a user friendly format;

- Publication of the ***African Union Election Observation Methodology*** based on the Electoral-cycle Approach
- Publication of ***Arabic Lexicon of Electoral Terminology***, in Arabic, English, French. The Regional Lexicon of electoral terminology, including nearly five hundred entries in Arabic, French and English must be especially highlighted. This tri-lingual work of reference provides a clear and accurate explanation of key terms, capturing regional language variations across the countries. The Regional Lexicon was developed in partnership with eight participating countries (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Tunisia, and Yemen) and extensively discussed and debated in workshops in Lebanon and Iraq, as well as with election experts and electoral authorities from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine and Tunisia⁸.
- Joint publication between the National Electoral Institute of Mexico (INE) and UNDP on ***Election Campaign Regulations in 18 Latin American Countries***. Available in English and Spanish⁹. The publication was added in key global networks, such as the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network and it is a key resource on this important area.
- Publication on ***Promoting Gender Equality in Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned in Comparative Perspective***, including case studies from Bolivia, Burundi, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Tunisia. Available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish¹⁰;
- Publication on ***Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation***. Available in Arabic, English, French, Spanish, Romanian and Russian. The launched of this publication will be done during 2015.
- The publication of the ***Media and Elections: A Guide for Electoral Practitioners*** in English, French, Arabic and Spanish¹¹.

3. Regional Knowledge Development, Exchanges and Capacity Development

GPECS regional advisors primarily support UNDP country offices in their region with national electoral projects, but they also engaged on developing regional knowledge, fostering exchanges and south-south cooperation, and capacity development initiatives. These regional activities are tailored to the needs and demands emerging from the different regions.

In an effort to strengthen regional capacities for electoral assistance, GPECS **Africa** contributed to the conduction and validation of a review study for improving the African Electoral Authorities Association's (AAEA) constitution, as well as the association's strategic goals and operational

⁸ See: http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/library/Dem_Gov/arabic-lexicon-of-electoral-terminology.html

⁹ See: <http://aceproject.org/ero-en/misc/undp-ine-election-campaign-regulations-in-18-latin/view>

¹⁰ See: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/electoral_systemsandprocesses/promoting-gender-equality-in-electoral-assistance0/

¹¹ See: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/electoral_systemsandprocesses/media-and-elections--a-guide-for-electoral-practitioners.html

orientations (February 2014). Subsequently, GPECS Africa contributed to the facilitation of the AAEA's Steering Committee meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (May 2014). Furthermore, a comprehensive curriculum has been developed for the Training of Trainers on African Union (AU) Long-Term Election Observation in order to strengthen the unit's capacities. This resulted in the deployment of AU Long-Term Observers (LTOs) in Algeria, Malawi and Tunisia, which all held elections in 2014.

In the **Arab States**, GPECS advocated for the formation of a regional forum of electoral management bodies (EMBs). The objective of such a forum is to enable the EMBs to share experiences, identify solutions to common challenges and improve regional coordination and dissemination of information and advice. An agreement in this regard was already reached at a regional meeting held in April 2014. The EMBs expressed their interest in the formation of a joint regional forum, as well as the need to set the rules and mandates for such an association. A preparatory committee consisting of members from each of the EMBs was formed during a follow-up meeting held in June. This event was organized to advocate for - and encourage discussion on how - the region can strengthen engagement and cooperation. EMB staff from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen participated in the meeting and volunteered for membership in the preparatory committee. Subsequently, an online communication tool was developed by the electoral commission of Jordan, which allows the members to engage regularly in discussions on substantive electoral topics as well as on the operational aspects of the formation of a regional association.

In an effort to encourage the harmonization of electoral knowledge and understanding across key regional organizations engaged in the field of elections, GPECS **Arab States** initiated contact with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). With membership from all League of Arab States (LAS) countries, the OIC provides an important platform for engagement on electoral matters in the region. A scoping mission to review the capacities and needs of LAS with regard to the establishment of an Electoral Expert Roster took place in January 2014. This mission concluded that LAS requires further expert advisory support for developing the roster. GPECS discussed avenues for cooperation with the OIC at a first meeting held in Saudi Arabia in February during which GPECS delivered a BRIDGE showcase module to raise awareness and expose the OIC to the BRIDGE methodology and the training modules available on electoral processes. This meeting set the stage for follow-up discussions with the OIC on potential engagement on electoral matters. Subsequently, LAS and UNDP conducted a "Train the Facilitator" (TtF) workshop in Beirut, Lebanon in September with the aim to accredit a high-quality group of facilitators for developing the LAS's long-term training and professional development programme. Twenty-four participants joined the training workshop: eleven from LAS, nine from UNDP, two from SCER Yemen, one from HEC Egypt and one OIC. Eleven of the twenty-four participants were females. The training resulted in the semi-accreditation of 23 participants, including 11 from LAS, who successfully completed the extensive training program and subsequent evaluation. GPECS will facilitate the full accreditation of these participants through the organization of further BRIDGE trainings to ensure the availability of a pool of regional electoral experts that can be called upon across the different countries to support capacity building initiatives on electoral issues. As a further result of the training, LAS adopted BRIDGE as the main methodology to be employed by the organization in training election observers.

GPECS **Asia and the Pacific** developed the Secure and Fair Elections (SAFE) security course to build the capacities of EMBs to identify security risks, and to be better prepared to address those risks. The course was developed from scratch and aspects of stakeholder engagement, coordination of security, EMB, MOI and justice actors, the impact of new technology, and risk analyses were put into the framework of a post-graduate teaching methodology. International IDEA and the Electoral Integrity

Project were brought in as partners to share their experience, and the course was run for EMB officials from Afghanistan and Nepal. The course is being adapted based on feedback from the first implementation of it, and will be adapted to be rolled out next year in Asia and the Arab States.

In the **Latin America and the Caribbean region**, GPECS partnered with the National Electoral Institute of Mexico on a regional study on campaign regulations in eighteen countries in the region. Analyzing the existing laws and regulations in the region and highlighting the challenges of establishing a “level-playing-field” on the one hand and assuring the flow of private funds into the democratic system on the other hand, the publication offers a general and comparative overview of the current situation and outlooks related to electoral campaign regulations in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. The publication is available in Spanish and English and hence widely accessible to EMB staff and other stakeholders throughout the LAC region.

Strengthening the professional capacity of electoral management bodies (EMBs) through advisory services, programming support and knowledge products is a central element of GPECS’ initiatives and has been vital to the successful delivery of free and credible elections in complex, post-conflict environments and sensitive political transitions as well as in more stable countries. For example, Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections (BRIDGE) training workshops were conducted in Burundi; these were directed to members of CENI, delegates from civil society organizations, political parties, the media, and the donor community. This training did not only increase the capacities of the individual participants, but also increased the level of trust and cooperation between political parties, the media, civil society and the national EMB. In order to guarantee inclusive elections, trust and cooperation between the different actors is of utmost importance. Hence, this training was an important event in the preparation of the 2015 Burundi elections.

Promoting Regional Exchange and South-South Cooperation

GPECS Arab States also engaged in building regional capacity on electoral issues by propelling South-South cooperation. In this regard, a **partnership agreement** with the International Centre for Training and Research of Mexican National Electoral Institute (INE), which is highly experienced at providing electoral capacity building assistance to countries in different regions of the world, was signed in December 2014. This agreement followed several meetings and exchange programs and covers a two year period during which numerous activities are envisioned, including an exchange of experiences between LAS and the OAS on electoral observation and technical assistance, as well as seminars and courses on results transmission for EMB officials. The agreement builds on the work of INE with transition countries such as Libya, Tunisia and Egypt between 2011 -2013. The agreement paves the way for cross-regional exchange and capacity building initiatives that bring together electoral stakeholders from across the world. The specific activities to be supported under this agreement will be finalized through close consultation with EMBs and regional actors including the LAS in the first quarter of 2015.

One of the means of enhancing regional capacity and knowledge on electoral issues is through trainings. In this regard GPECS Arab States relied on the BRIDGE curriculum which has been designed by and for election administrators to better understand the electoral process. BRIDGE is a partnership between five leading organisations; International IDEA, UNDP, the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD), IFES and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). In order to strengthen South-

South Cooperation and partnerships among EMBs, as well as between EMBs and media and civil society, GPECS also contributed to a BRIDGE training on civic education and voter information for EMB officials and representatives of NGOs and media from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Iraq, Libya, Moldova, Palestine, Romania, Tunisia and Ukraine, jointly hosted by the Romanian Permanent Electoral Authority and UNDP Romania.

4. Electoral Cycle Support at the Country Level

During 2014, GPECS did not received new Expressions of Interest or provided funding to country projects. However, the GPECS team provided electoral support to 59 countries in 2014: Afghanistan, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Comoros, Djibouti, DRC, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Palestine, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Romania, Sao Tome e Principe, Solomon Island, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Suriname, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Uganda, Yemen, and Zambia. Support included in-country and remote support in policy and programming support, including needs assessments, project formulation, technical advisory and review missions, expert referrals, and capacity development (see Annex 1 for more detail information).

The overall impact of the advisory support and policy guidance provided by GPECS to country offices was threefold: a) the appropriate and timely formulation of UNDP electoral assistance projects (in many cases financed partially or entirely by the European Commission (EC)); b) the enhancement of the capacity of UNDP to deliver more effective electoral assistance by using the electoral cycle approach; and c) strengthened capacities of UNDP country offices for the mobilization of resources to implement electoral assistance projects.

A global and unprecedented effort was made by the international community with UNDP in the lead, in regard to the presidential polls in Afghanistan. Following the second round of elections and the subsequent allegations of fraud from both sides, an audit process of all ballots from the presidential run-off was conducted in June 2014. This politically highly sensitive and extremely labour intensive exercise required an extraordinary coordination effort of UNDP country offices, regional and central bureaus and the wider UN family. Complex and massive endeavours were delivered by UNDP, including the mobilization and deployment of over 150 UN auditors to Kabul in less than 10 days, as well as the setting up of an entire operational system to go through approximately 23,000 ballot boxes in a fluid and highly tense political environment. This audit, which was supported by GPECS through technical and policy advice, was truly unique in terms of mobilisation and outreach. While these efforts were country-support in definition, due to its uniqueness in terms of political stakes, international media coverage, and involvement of electoral experts around the world, this elections can almost be considered as global elections. Furthermore, the audit and the subsequent agreement on a national unity government, made a significant contribution to the prevention of post-electoral violence. The lessons-learned from this intervention will have global relevance for future electoral disputes.

Likewise, the GPECS team in Africa has been involved in significant support. The team provided advisory services and desk support to numerous UNDP Country Offices (COs), namely support to project formulation (Burundi, CAR, DRC, Lesotho and Liberia), participation in and planning of Electoral Needs Assessment Missions (NAMs) (Kenya, Lesotho, Niger and South Africa), programming support to kick start the projects (CAR, Chad, DRC, Niger and Nigeria) and support to the drafting of Country

Programme Documents (Mali and Madagascar).

The electoral advisory team based for the Arab States provided support to Lebanon, where the UNDP programme was not only supported in regard to programming implementation, but also in specific fields, such as legal drafting, media and elections, and gender and elections and Tunisia. Furthermore, GPECS provided crucial support to some of the region's most fragile and conflict affected countries such as Libya, Iraq, Somalia and Sudan. Furthermore, Tunisia, which held the first free presidential elections ever in 2014, Djibouti, Jordan and Palestine were supported directly through policy and programme support.

The GPECS Asia and the Pacific Advisor completed needs assessments in collaboration with the Department of Political Affairs' Electoral Assistance Division (DPA EAD) in Myanmar and assisted in electoral cycle support project formulation and revisions in Pakistan and Tonga. Furthermore, support to the delivery of the electoral audit in Afghanistan was provided. GPECS assisted in the identification and recruitment of 143 electoral experts and participated in the actual audit process. Furthermore, desk support to fourteen countries in the Asia-Pacific region, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, India, Nepal, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Tonga, and Solomon Islands, was delivered with the aim to strengthening their electoral and democratic governance work. This work ranged from recommending consultants and commenting on Terms of Reference to in-depth analysis on UNDAFs and project documents in order to ensure that long-term sustainability as per the electoral cycle approach was accurately reflected.

The Brussels based **EC-UNDP Joint Task Force** provided advisory services to eleven countries and one regional project; assisting with the formulation, as well as with the implementation of (new) projects in cases the EU was expected to contribute to UNDP's electoral assistance projects. In-country-support missions were conducted to Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay and Somalia. Furthermore, countries received advisory services from Brussels, such as assistance in the formulation of projects, including the development of the respective budgets (CAR, DRC, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Somalia), support to project implementation, including assistance on management relationships, reporting and troubleshooting (Afghanistan, Chad, DRC, Mali, Tunisia and the regional SADC-ECF project) and assistance in resource mobilization (CAR, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Paraguay). Furthermore, needs assessments to CAR, Chad, Comoros, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Malawi, and Togo were conducted. During these missions, the electoral cycle methodology was promoted in relation to designing new election projects. In accordance to the recommendations of the NAMs to Liberia and Lesotho, assistance was provided to the COs in the drafting of project documents which reflected the electoral cycle model, including efforts to increase the political participation of women and disadvantaged groups.

In the Latin America and the Caribbean region, the GPECS team provided in-country and remote support were, among other provided to Chile, Guyana, Haiti, Mexico, Paraguay, where a NAM took place, and Surinam. Furthermore, electoral assistance programmes in Moldova and Kyrgyzstan have received comprehensive support through GPECS JTF and the Global GPECS advisors.

5. Promoting Inclusive Political Participation – Women's Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming

GPECS has been particularly successful in promoting gender mainstreaming in UNDP electoral

programmes, increasing knowledge and programming practices on women's electoral participation through the development of knowledge products, capacity development tools and advisory services. Since inception, the programme has promoted women's political and electoral participation as voters, candidates, and electoral administrators. The programme has been recognized as one of the best examples of gender mainstreaming in the organization through targeted interventions on gender and mainstreaming gender in broader electoral assistance. In 2014, 61.9 percent of the electoral projects score 2 or higher in the UNDP gender marker¹², indicating that gender equality is significant or a principal objective in those projects.

One of the focus regions for increasing the political participation of women in electoral processes and administration are the Arab States. Hence, knowledge products focusing on enhancing the participation of women, youth and other marginalized groups in the electoral process were distributed to Country Offices in the region for their use in programming. One such product was the 'Media and Elections Guide', which was distributed to Country Offices and received many positive comments. Two other important knowledge products published in 2014 were the "Promoting Gender Equality in Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned in Comparative Perspective" report, which contains comprehensive case studies from Bolivia, Burundi, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Tunisia and was translated into Arabic, French and Spanish, as well as the "Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation", which was translated into Arabic, French, Spanish, Romanian and Russian. Both documents were handed out during a UNDP/UN Women Workshop focusing on women's participation in electoral administration in Egypt and are going to be more widely distributed during 2015. Further events taking place in Cairo, were two BRIDGE workshops on 'Gender and Elections' organized by GPECS in cooperation with UN Women in order to enhance awareness on the role of women in elections. These BRIDGE trainings helped in reaching out to interlocutors such as civil society counterparts, EMBs and UNDP staff, and increasing the capacities of Arab networks in the region by accrediting Arab-speaking facilitators and expanding the facilitator roster in the Arab states within UNDP.

Furthermore, GPECS supported the participation of Arab states at the 23rd Annual Conference of the Association focused on two topics: 'Participation of Women in Electoral Processes and Public Life' and the "Planning of a General Election". The event provided an ideal opportunity to expose EMBs from the Arab region to the activities of a successful regional association such as the ACEEEO. The event offered opportunities for regional and cross-regional consultations and networking, as well as for learning about recent developments in election technology.

In 2014, GPECS Arab States prioritized youth and used the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) programme to engage with young people. Relying on UNV's expertise and lessons learned from across the region, GPECS collaborated with UNV to organize the first Regional Youth Forum in Morocco. The main objective of the forum was to convene three key stakeholders: governments, CSOs and youth, as well as media and other notable guests to engage in dialogue regarding the participation of youth in political processes. Through a participatory approach, the young people established a common understanding of the current regional situation, shared lessons learned and convened a dialogue on

¹² As per UNDP guidelines all projects require to use the gender marker. The gender marker follows the following scoring: GEN0 (not expected to contribute to gender equality), GEN1 (contributes to gender equality in a limited way), GEN2 (gender equality is a significant objective) and GEN3 (gender equality as a principal objective).

recommendations on how to encourage youth civic engagement for development. The participatory format of the sessions strengthened regional cooperation through the promotion of regional exchanges of ideas and best practices on youth civic engagement. The concrete examples of youth engagement presented during the Forum promoted political inclusion and civic engagement of young men and women through volunteering for development. Recommendations generated during the Forum concentrated on how to encourage youth civic engagement and how to establish the respective supportive environment.

In November 2014, the GPECS Asia and the Pacific team launched a follow up report to “Women’s Representation in Local Government in Asia-Pacific: Status Report 2010” and subsequently a workshop to chart a programmatic way forward to more effectively empower women to take office in local government. In addition, building from the 2012 “Gender Equality in Election Office: National Action Plan Development”, eight countries in the Asia-Pacific region have been assisted to develop national action plans for political equality with the support of GPECS. In 2014 three countries were selected based on the submission of proposals to have their work up-scaled. Indonesia has developed sub-national women’s caucuses to implement action-plans for political equality; Vietnam has developed an on-line training programme for potential women candidates; and Bhutan will conduct a review on legislation that impacts on women’s political participation. These initiatives will feed into the National Commission for Women and Children’s finalizing of the National Plan of Action on Gender Equality in Elected Offices (NAPGEEO) that has been supported by UNDP.

6. Conclusion and Looking Ahead

GPECS was established in 2009 to respond to the growing demands, and ensure global coherence, in the delivery of UNDP electoral assistance worldwide. It was also designed to focus on assisting member states to manage long-term, sustainable electoral *processes*, rather than to help them simply deliver one-time electoral events. In order to reflect the new shift in the approach towards the delivery of UNDP electoral assistance, and in order to sustainably support knowledge development, management and programme support, a new UNDP electoral assistance architecture, under GPECS, was designed and created, which put in place a structure of support that allowed for delivery on its key results in terms of:

- UNDP’s work in contributing to the development and implementation of UN electoral policy;
- advisory services that allow for comparative best practices to be integrated in national-level project formulation on matters such as electoral administration, voter registration, civic and voter education, electoral law reform, electoral operations, budgeting and procurement;
- integrating UNDP’s global, regional, and country level efforts, and integrating the promotion of gender equality throughout;

- promoting knowledge-sharing and partnerships through global trainings¹³, gatherings of electoral practitioners¹⁴, as well as online platforms¹⁵ and capacity development tools¹⁶;
- and innovation in new areas of demand, such as media, youth, etc.

During its five years of implementation, GPECS has received very positive marks. According to the ‘Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes’ completed in 2012, the Programme was positively rated for ‘promoting a holistic approach to electoral assistance, which uses the electoral cycle framework to provide support in the areas of leadership, advocacy, capacity and regional knowledge development, exchanges, women’s empowerment and administration.’ The Office of Audit and Investigations, who conducted an audit of GPECS in 2014, pointed out in its report that the Programme helped UNDP assistance to ‘become more sophisticated and addressed competing priorities alongside the cultural and technical barriers for equal participation.’ Likewise, the Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (GSIC), the highest accountability body in terms of gender in UNDP, has long recognized the programme as one of the best UNDP examples in terms of gender mainstreaming and advancing women’s political and electoral participation.

In spite of the successes and achievements of GPECS, the evaluations and lessons learned¹⁷ also identified certain areas where UNDP can strengthen its impact in electoral assistance. These include:

- integrating electoral assistance more into democratic governance programming;
- ensuring that the ‘electoral cycle’ is properly applied;
- connecting UNDP’s principles-based electoral framework better with Country Office realities;
- advocating more consistently for cost-effective and sustainable technological solutions, and;
- improving internal efficiencies.

Building on the successes and achievements of GPECS, UNDP has launched a second phase of GPECS

13 Over the course of GPECS Phase I, the JTF organized a series of global trainings targeting EMBs, EU and UNDP personnel, CSOs and other electoral practitioners. These includes trainings on electoral violence (Barcelona, 2011), electoral technology (Mombasa, 2012), electoral sustainability (Maputo, 2013) and electoral credibility (Dead Sea, 2014).

14 One of the most prominent global events for election practitioners in the last decade have been the Global Electoral Organisation (GEO) conferences, which were held in 2013, 2011, 2007, 2005, 2003 and 1999. GEO Conferences aim to facilitate networking and information sharing and bring together election management practitioners and international electoral experts. The 2013 GEO, co-hosted by the Korean National Elections Commission and UNDP, was the largest recorded gathering of electoral practitioners, at over 300 participants.

15 The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, established in 1998, is the most comprehensive online resource on electoral administration in the world. See more details in Section 3, Component 1. <http://aceproject.org>.

16 BRIDGE stands for Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections and is the most well-known and practitioner-developed modular professional development programme. See Section 3, Component 1 for more details. <http://www.bridge-project.org>.

17 During the life of the programme, several global evaluations and lessons learned took place, evaluating UNDP’s electoral assistance and when relevant reviewing the role of GPECS. See: UNDP Evaluation Office, Independent Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Electoral Systems and Processes; the UK Government’s Independent Commission for Aid Impact, Evaluation of DFID’s Electoral Support Through UNDP; UNDP BDP-DPA-DPKO, Lessons Learned on Integrated Electoral Assistance in UN Mission Settings; UNDP BDP, Lessons Learned on Longer-Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance; and UNDP BDP, Promoting Gender Equality in Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned in Comparative Perspective. In addition, the Office of Audit and Investigation has just completed a satisfactory audit of the programme.

(2015-2017), which will concentrate on additional activities identified through an evaluation of the impact of Phase 1. Moreover, targeting areas of activity will be informed by a) the lessons learned of GPECS Phase I, b) the series of independent evaluations recently conducted on UNDP's electoral assistance, c) the new priorities of Outcome 2 of the Strategic Plan, as well as the restructuring changes within UNDP brought about by the creation of the new Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, and d) the audit of GPECS conducted in mid-2014. Delivery of outputs to achieve results will continue to be organized under four different components, which remain: global, regional, national and gender.

Annex 1: GPECS Advisory Services to Countries

During 2014 GPECS provided advisory services to 59 countries through its team of advisors. Thereof, 29 in-country support missions were conducted. The following table lists the countries and the number of advisory services provided.

Country	Type of support	In country mission / remote support	Support provided by
1. Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to programme implementation • Recruitment of parliamentary project staff • Election Audit Support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Arab States; GPECS Asia; GPECS JTF; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
2. Armenia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory services on UN electoral assistance framework; • Policy advise on different types of electoral interventions to address the electoral participation of people with disabilities 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
3. Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referral, ToR development, and UN electoral assistance programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Asia-Pacific; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
4. Bhutan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Asia
5. Burundi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project formulation; support to staff recruitment; training facilitation • Expert referrals, ToR development, policy and programming support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
6. CAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project formulation & Support to resource mobilization • Needs assessment mission & project formulation • Expert referral, ToR development, and UN electoral assistance programming support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS JTF GPECS Policy Advisory Team

7. Chad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on UNDP normative framework • NAM • Various advisory services (TORs; support to staff recruitment) 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS JTF; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
8. Chile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy advice on out of country voting 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
9. Comoros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM • Expert referral, ToR development, and UN electoral assistance programming support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
10. Djibouti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy advise 	Remote support	GPECS Arab States
11. DRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project formulation • Project formulation and various advisory services (support to staff recruitment) • Expert referral, ToR development, and UN electoral assistance programming support, policy advise on civic education, and civil society engagement in electoral processes 	In country support & remote support	GPECS JTF; GPECS Africa: GPECS Policy Advisory Team
12. Ecuador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN electoral assistance programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
13. Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge products, training, expert referral, gender and elections 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
14. El Salvador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN electoral assistance programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
15. Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referrals 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
16. Fiji	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN electoral assistance and policy advisory support 	In country support and remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team

17. Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM 	In country support	GPECS Africa
18. Guyana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN electoral assistance programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
19. Haiti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referrals, ToR development, policy and programming support 	Remote support (ongoing)	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
20. Honduras	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referrals, ToR development, policy and programming support 	Remote support (ongoing)	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
21. India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Asia
22. Iraq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Support • Project development/revision of ToR 	Remote support	GPECS Arab States
23. Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and Programme support • TOR's development • Project document revision • Seminar facilitation 	In country support	GPECS Arab States
24. Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various advisory services (NAM request) • Expert referrals, ToR development, policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
25. Kyrgyzstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM • Project formulation • Support to resource mobilization 	In country support	GPECS JTF; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
26. Lebanon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support: ToR referral, gender and elections, legal drafting skills workshop, media and elections, etc. 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team GPECS Arab States
27. Lesotho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM 	In country support	GPECS Africa
28. Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM • Advice on FAFA normative framework 	In country support & remote support	GPECS JTF; GPECS Africa

29. Libya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on FAFA normative framework • Support to resource mobilization • Expert referrals, ToR development, policy and programming support, including support to the project evaluation 	In country support & remote support	GPECS JTF; GPECS Policy Advisory Team GPECS Arab States
30. Madagascar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of CPDs documents 	Remote support	GPECS Africa
31. Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to implementation • UN electoral assistance programming support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
32. Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Asia
33. Mali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on FAFA normative framework • Support to resource mobilization • Review of CPDs documents 	Remote support	GPECS JTF; GPECS Africa
34. Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN electoral assistance programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
35. Moldova	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN electoral assistance programming support; • Assessment mission 	In-country support and remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
36. Mongolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Asia
37. Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM 	In country support	GPECS Asia
38. Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referral, ToR development, and UN electoral assistance programming support, including support to the project evaluation 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
39. Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS Policy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory services (TORs; support to staff recruitment) • UN electoral assistance programming support 		Advisory Team
40. Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM • Advisory services (TORs; support to staff recruitment) • Expert referrals, ToR development, policy and programming support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
41. Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Review and Policy Advice • Expert referrals, policy and programming support, ICT & Youth conference 	In country support & remote support (ongoing)	GPECS Asia; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
42. Palestine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Arab States; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
43. Paraguay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM, support and advice on project development, ongoing policy and programming support • Project formulation • Support to resource mobilization 	In country support	GPECS JTF; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
44. Philippines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Asia
45. Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referral, ToR development, and UN electoral assistance programming support, including support to the project evaluation 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
46. Sao Tome e Principe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming advice on UN electoral assistance, support to desk assessment, expert referral, support to project development 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
47. Solomon Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Asia
48. Somalia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project formulation 	In country mission & remote	GPECS Arab States;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referrals, policy and programming support 	support	GPECS JTF; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
49. South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory services and strategic planning of electoral matters (NAM request, MoU with IEC) 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa
50. Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy advise 	Remote support	GPECS Arab States
51. Suriname	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM, project development, support and advice on resource mobilization, ongoing policy and programming support 	In country support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
52. Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert referrals, ToR development, policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team
53. Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-strategizing of governance programme 	In country support	GPECS Asia
54. Togo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM • Expert referrals, policy and programming support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Africa; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
55. Tonga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Review and Policy Advice • Recruitment of Project Manager 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Asia
56. Tunisia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to resource mobilization • Financial support to activities/implementation 	Remote support	GPECS Arab States; GPECS JTF
57. Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to implementation 	In country support	GPECS Africa
58. Yemen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	In country support & remote support	GPECS Arab States; GPECS Policy Advisory Team
59. Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and programming support 	Remote support	GPECS Policy Advisory Team



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