

## Project Document

**Project Title:** Support to Iraq's Electoral Process – Support to Early Election 2021 and Capacity Development

**Project Number:** 00131655

**Implementing Partner:** Direct Implementation- UNDP and UNAMI

**Start Date:** October 2020

**End Date:** 31 December 2022 **PAC Meeting date:** / /

**PREAMBLE NOTE:** *The project has been formulated during the lockdown imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic which has halted the normal functioning of governmental institutions. It remains unclear when the situation might return to normal. This project comes as a priority in response to IHEC's request to hold early Council of Representatives elections on 6 June 2021 subsequently postponed to 10 October 2021.*

*This project document is revised as of September 2021 to feature the changes made since its original design in November 2020 to the support provided to the electoral process in light of the changing timelines, and also to reflect the changes to the implementation timeframe, Project budget and available resources, and consolidated and updated the Results Framework.*

### Brief Description

The United Nations assisted Iraq with 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 has subsequently supported 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.

On 5 December 2019, the Council of Representatives (CoR; the Iraqi parliament) voted on a new IHEC Law, which made several changes to IHEC's structure and functions. Importantly, it established a new Board of Commissioners (BoC): nine commissioners drawn from the Judiciary (including one woman, currently the Chief Electoral Officer) took office on 13 January 2020. Meanwhile, a new CoR Electoral Law, on the management of parliamentary elections, was approved on 24 December but has yet to be ratified, pending agreement on annexes determining the size and number of new constituencies and seat allocation under a new electoral system.

On 31 July 2020, the Iraqi Prime Minister announced that elections will take place on 6 June 2021. In consideration of the proposal submitted by IHEC citing technical reasons, the Council of Ministers subsequently decided on a new election date of 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.

This project document proposes an enhancement of UN electoral assistance to IHEC through the deployment of additional electoral advisors who will reinforce the existing small UNAMI Office of

Electoral Affairs (OEA) team. The project aims at assisting IHEC with capacity building and support to various technical areas, both at headquarters and governorate level, in preparation for early elections in 2021 and relevant capacity development of IHEC in 2022.

In addition to existing UNAMI electoral personnel, it proposes the deployment of an international project manager, international electoral advisors, and International UNVs. The team will be based in Baghdad and in UNAMI field offices (Erbil, Basra, Mosul and Kirkuk). The project also proposes national staff who will be equally based Baghdad and in all governorates.

Given continued uncertainty around the election timeline, as well as the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project is designed with the flexibility to scale up or down in size and scope should the need arise, and with the agreement of partners.

**Contributing Outcome (UNSDCF/CPD 2020-2024):**

**UNSDCF 2020-2024<sup>1</sup> OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP: 3.1.** Strengthened institutions and systems deliver people-centred, evidence and needs-based equitable and inclusive gender and age-responsive services, especially for the most vulnerable populations, with particular focus on advocating for women's leadership in decision-making processes.

Indicative Output(s) with gender marker:

Output 1.1: Operational and administrative capacities of IHEC to deliver CoR elections are improved. [GEN 2]

Output 1.2: The technical capacity of IHEC staff at HQ and governorate offices is developed through a comprehensive capacity development strategy. [GEN 2]

Output 1.3: The electoral legal framework is strengthened. [GEN 2]

Output 2.1: IHEC acts in a transparent manner through improved communication. [GEN 2]

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 of women, first-time voters and marginalized groups. [GEN 2]

Output 3.1: Support to IHEC's operational and administrative preparations at the central and governorate offices [GEN 2]

Output 3.2: Support to civic and voter education initiatives [GEN 2]

Output 3.3: Improvement of IHEC's structured engagement with stakeholders [GEN 2]

Output 3.4: IHEC promotes inclusiveness in all phases of the electoral process for a conducive electoral environment [GEN 2]

Output 3.5: Strengthen IHEC's electoral adjudication mechanism and appeals process [GEN 2]

Output 3.6: The project is effectively and sustainably managed and implemented, under national ownership [GEN 2]

Output 4.1: Journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, trained and mentored on professional election coverage according to international standards. [GEN 2]

Output 4.2: Journalists, from media outlets across Iraq and KRI, trained online on recognizing and combating hate speech, and gender-sensitive reporting. [GEN 2]

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 marginalised groups. [GEN 2]

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 electoral process. [GEN 2]

<sup>1</sup> In draft at the time of UNDP Iraq 2020-2024 CPD formulation.




Output 4.5: Fact-checking of statements or information espoused by powerholders related to the Iraqi elections conducted to counter disinformation or misinformation, and especially targeting Iraqi youth. [GEN 2]  
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. [GEN 2]

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Agreed by (signatures):

Support to Iraq's Electoral Process:  
Support to Early Election 2021 and Capacity Development

Agreed by (signatures):

Government of Iraq - IHEC	UNDP	Implementing Partner (UNAMI)
<p>Print Name: Jalil Adnan Khalaf, Chair</p> 	<p>Print Name: Zena Ali Ahmad, RR</p> 	<p>Print Name: Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, SRSG</p> 
<p>Date: 09/09/21</p>	<p>Date: 14/9/2021</p>	<p>Date: 16/09/2021 UNAMI</p>

## **Development Challenge**

Voter apathy and low levels of public trust in elections are substantive current development challenges in Iraq. The parliamentary elections held in May 2018 (with an overall low turnout of around 44 percent) heightened public concerns about the transparency and credibility of elections, leading to a recount amidst allegations of fraud. There were also concerns relating to the interpretation and implementation of the 25% constitutional quota for women (Article 49). This was wrongly interpreted as a ceiling for women's representation in the CoR, and female candidates who directly won seats in the 2018 elections by having the highest number of voters were denied a seat as they surpassed the 'quota'.

Similarly, as highlighted in discussions in the post-election review that IHEC conducted, the use of technologies in elections was identified as a constraint on sustainability having negative impact on public confidence. Voter apathy and overall low turnouts have also been exacerbated by the precarious security environment prevailing in the country, which discourages voters from participating (especially women and vulnerable groups). A specific challenge to inclusive and participatory elections in Iraq is the impediment that Internally Displaced People (IDPs) face in engaging with the electoral process in all its phases.

Persistent issues concerning the use of technology in elections, institutional independence, transparency and credibility will also need to be addressed as the country moves towards a new electoral process with a new BoC. A major challenge will be to properly inform the public and educate the electorate on the structures for electoral constituencies and seat allocation under a new electoral system. Regaining public trust and demonstrating confidence and professional integrity will be critical to IHEC and to the credibility of future elections. In this context, the UN - in consultation with IHEC and electoral stakeholders - will enhance its support to develop the capacities of the newly appointed IHEC staff, including the commissioners.

## **Independent High Election Commission of Iraq (IHEC)**

IHEC is a constitutional body mandated to oversee, organize and conduct elections and referenda in Iraq<sup>2</sup>. The new 2019 IHEC Law defines the institution as "*a professional, governmental, independent, neutral and autonomous body, subject to the supervision of the Council of Representatives*". IHEC has its headquarters in Baghdad, with a regional office in Kurdistan (Erbil) and electoral offices in the 18 governorates (there are 19 IHEC governorate electoral offices (GEOs) overall, since Baghdad governorate has two - Rasafa and Karkh). The Commission has around 4,000 permanent civil servants across its offices, plus additional staff hired on a temporary basis during elections.

### **Special note on the COVID-19 pandemic:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a strong impact on the way IHEC and the UN Office of Electoral Assistance (UNOEA) are collaborating. Some members of the UNOEA team have been telecommuting; IHEC remained semi-operational, with commissioners and staff present at IHEC premises in Baghdad on a rotational basis. The health emergency could impose further operational challenges for IHEC and holding of elections if the pandemic extends into 2021. The project is accordingly proposing specific activities to better equip IHEC to use technology for training and virtual communications. UNOEA will also engage with IHEC to consider contingency measures and alternative modalities should COVID-19 impact ability to vote in person during the upcoming elections.

## **I. Strategy**

### **Project Rationale**

The focus of this project is to support IHEC in improving public confidence in electoral processes by strengthening staff and technical capacities, as well as improving communication/outreach to voters

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<sup>2</sup> The status of the electoral commission derives from Article 102 of Chapter 4 of the Iraqi Constitution; its mandate is defined in Article 1, Section 1 of Law No. 31 - Law of the Independent High Electoral Commission (2019).

and electoral stakeholders. The project will also support IHEC's efforts to increase public understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all actors involved in elections.

In order for the UN to respond to the immediate needs of IHEC, UNAMI's small OEA needs to be reinforced with additional electoral experts, to be recruited and deployed through a UNDP-managed project. The project will require donor financial contributions to mobilize the required expertise through the recruitment of professional staff in identified priority areas of electoral preparations.

This project entails the provision of assistance through capacity-building of IHEC staff at both the headquarters and governorate electoral office (GEO) levels. The project activities will contribute to the streamlining and standardization of processes within IHEC, also increasing the understanding and preparedness of staff to implement the various electoral operational phases. The project will continue to provide advice on the electoral legal framework. A gender assessment to identify gender gaps and inequalities, gender norms and roles and collect gender-disaggregated data will be conducted. This will contribute to understanding the level of gender-mainstreaming (in elections but also within IHEC's structure and operations) and provide recommendations on any remedial action.

The project's technical assistance will be provided in full collaboration and cooperation with IHEC staff, its leadership and other Iraqi stakeholders in every aspect of the project to promote and sustain national ownership of the electoral process.

The current revision of the project Document expands on the approved two phases of the "Support to Iraq's Electoral Process – Capacity Development and Support to Early Elections. Considering the changing timelines in the electoral calendar and the impact that this has on the support that is envisaged, the project document has been revised and extended into 2022 to reflect the changes to the implementation timeframe. Where support in 2020 and 2021 focus mostly on technical and strategic support towards early election preparations, 2022 will predominantly look at capacity building. This proposed reinforcement of enhanced support builds upon and reinforces the objectives, outputs and activities of the previous phases while factoring the new election date and introducing additional direct technical assistance to IHEC in preparation for the early parliamentary elections.

Given the significant turnover of technical staff, both at HQ and in the field, and the increased requirements for implementing new provisions of the electoral legal framework, IHEC has expressed the need for enhanced UN technical assistance, not only at headquarters, but also for the Governorate Electoral Offices. In this context, the UN, in consultation with IHEC and electoral stakeholders, will enhance its technical support to IHEC in preparation for the upcoming early elections, complementing the efforts under the existing phases.

This will focus on providing direct, time-bound assistance and technical support to the organization of early parliamentary elections. It requires the recruitment and deployment of further international and national electoral experts to reinforce the capacity of UNOEA. These additional experts will provide technical assistance on all the phases and key areas of electoral preparations at both national and regional/governorate level. Such support will be delivered in full collaboration and cooperation with IHEC staff, its leadership and other Iraqi stakeholders throughout to promote and sustain national ownership of the electoral process.

### **Flexibility**

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi announced that early parliamentary elections will take place on 6 June 2021. Furthermore, on 19 January, the CoM decided on the new date for Iraq's early parliamentary elections for 10 October 2021, based on IHEC's proposal citing several technical reasons for a postponement of the elections from June to October. These included the need for more time to register political alliances and candidates, to expand biometric registration, and to deploy additional UN international electoral expertise on the ground. Electoral preparations will take place in a difficult operational environment. Iraq is facing the devastating impact of COVID-19, and its oil-dependent economy has been impacted by the drop in oil prices. The COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with an uptick in social unrest, could affect the functioning of the CoR and the holding of early elections. Precise project implementation will accordingly need to remain flexible.

## II. Results and Partnerships

### Project goal

The overall expected result of the project is a more credible and transparent IHEC that promotes inclusion and participation in electoral processes.

### Outcomes, Outputs and Activities

The project will overall contribute to UNSDCF 2020-2024<sup>3</sup> Outcome involving UNDP 3.1. Strengthened institutions and systems deliver people-centred, evidence and needs-based equitable and inclusive gender and age-responsive services, especially for the most vulnerable populations, with particular focus on advocating for women's leadership in decision-making processes.

The project is articulated around four outputs:

- 1) *Strengthened technical capacities of IHEC to deliver elections in a credible, professional manner.*
- 2) *Enhanced transparency in the electoral process through greater public outreach and information sharing by IHEC.*
- 3) *The conduct of key electoral operations for the 2021 parliamentary elections is improved*
- 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.*

These outputs have dedicated activities (described below) that are expected to build on the capacities of the electoral commission to administer elections in a professional and transparent manner, in order to increase the credibility of the process and acceptance of results. Additionally, the project will also seek to strengthen the capacity of civil society in their media work to support fair and transparent electoral processes.

Should further request(s) for support be made in additional areas - such as, but not limited to, voter registration or support to implementation of specific parts of the electoral process - additional outputs will be added and the workplan and budget will be amended accordingly. Such amendments will be decided jointly and approved by the Project Board in consultation with UNOEA and UNDP.

<b>OUTPUT ONE: <i>Strengthened technical capacities of IHEC to deliver elections in a credible, professional manner.</i></b>
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Capacity development, an important component of electoral assistance, usually takes place in the quieter mid-periods of electoral cycles, rather than in the run-up to elections. It seeks to strengthen the technical capacities of the institution, particularly those identified from previous electoral processes through lessons learned and reviews. For example, a review of previous electoral processes indicates that IHEC will need to address the specific challenges facing Iraq's many displaced (IDPs), to ensure that conditions for their full participation are met throughout the electoral process. For the purposes of this project, of course, the capacity development component will take place before and during the preparations for actual elections.

### **Output 1.1: Operational and administrative capacities of IHEC to deliver CoR elections are improved**

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 past; their sustainability and overall contribution to transparency and public trust was

<sup>3</sup> In draft at the time of UNDP Iraq 2020-2024 CPD formulation.

questionable. Therefore, this project aims at assisting IHEC's decision-making processes through accurate assessments and sound technical advice in preparation for early elections next year. Support will be also provided in specific priority areas including information technology support to help expand IHEC's ongoing biometric registration coverage, improve training capacities as well as to help implement COVID 19 mitigation measures aimed at protecting polling officials.

**Proposed activities:**

*1.1.1: Support to electoral preparations through capacity-building programmes for staff that instill values and principles underpinning transparent elections.*

*1.1.2: Development and delivery of operations planning and management training for IHEC senior management.*

*1.1.3: Technical support in gender mainstreaming on elections management, including designing IHEC's internal gender policy.*

*1.1.4: Gender mainstream training for IHEC operations staff in Baghdad and governorate offices.*

*1.1.5: UN support for electoral security planning through participation in the High Election Security Council meetings.*

*1.1.6: Procurement and installation of conferencing equipment to facilitate management of meetings and trainings in IHEC HQ and GEOs during the COVID-19 emergency.*

*1.1.7: A lessons-learned workshop (facilitated by international experts) to identify challenges encountered along the electoral process and recommend solutions.*

*1.1.8: Support to IHEC in Upgrading the Capacities of its Central Servers for Biometric Voter Registration*

*1.1.9: Establishing In-House Biometric Voter Card Printing Capacity*

*1.1.10: Package of Upgrade for IHEC GEO and HQ Network Capacities*

*1.1.11: Support with E-Day COVID-19 Mitigation Measures for Polling Staff*

**Output 1.2: The technical capacity of IHEC staff at HQ and governorates offices is developed through a comprehensive capacity development strategy**

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 the overall quality of the electoral process, as it will standardize processes and procedures throughout IHEC structures around the country.

**Proposed activities:**

*1.2.1: Design of a comprehensive capacity development strategy and action plan and monitoring and evaluation activities 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.*

*1.2.3: Training for master trainers at IHEC HQ and governorate level, including on gender perspectives.*

*1.2.4: Training on devolved results management, and specialized training in Information and Communication technology (ICT).*

*1.2.5: Training on electoral operations and procedures.*

*1.2.6: Training on reporting and monitoring, using gender indicators on elections management.*

*1.2.7: Procurement and installation of conferencing facilities to supporting GEO remote training and meetings during the COVID-19 emergency.*

**Output 1.3: The electoral legal framework is strengthened**

The project will provide legal and technical advice to help develop clear and concise regulations, procedures, code of 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.



**Proposed activities:**

*1.3.1: Review of existing IHEC regulations and instructions to align with international best practices.*

*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.*

*1.3.3: Provision of technical advice and assistance on monitoring and enforcement of existing electoral legislation; provide support in awareness raising of special measures to increase political participation of women, youth, the displaced and other marginalized groups.*

**OUTPUT TWO: Enhanced transparency in the electoral process through greater public outreach and information sharing by IHEC.**

The project will provide strategic guidance and technical advice to ensure that IHEC can better communicate with voters and electoral stakeholders, with increased transparency at all phases of electoral preparations. Additional technical advice and support will be provided on implementing an inclusive civic/voter education strategy, including, for example, confidence-building measures to encourage and enable IDPs to vote. These efforts are aimed at boosting public confidence and increasing participation in the electoral process.

IHEC could take much better advantage of modern communications and technological solutions to improve outreach and disseminate information. The commission's website should be systematically updated, and social media much more widely exploited. Aiming at promoting transparency, the project will provide technical advice to improve IHEC's external communication strategy. Support will also be provided to improving IHEC's internal information-sharing mechanisms, including between HQ and GEOs, and crafting an institutional internal communication policy.

**Output 2.1: IHEC acts in a transparent manner through improved communication**

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.

**Proposed activities:**

*2.1.1: Support to the development of IHEC's comprehensive communication and media strategy for elections.*

*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.*

*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).*

**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 of women, first-time voters and marginalized groups.**

The project will support IHEC with strategic guidance and technical advice on gender-mainstreaming, crafting of gender-sensitive policies to increase opportunities for women within its structure and in designing and implementing monitoring mechanisms of compliance with gender (and other) quotas. Additionally, the project will focus on improving IHEC's outreach to youth and marginalized groups and will support efforts to increase their political participation and representation.

**Proposed activities:**

2.2.1: *Conduct an internal assessment of IHEC's gender policies, to identify gaps in existing practices and identify opportunities for gender mainstreaming.*

2.2.2: *Provide guidance and support to develop an internal gender policy which defines IHEC's operational objectives, responsibilities and targets on gender equality - on human resources, operations and staff capacity development.*

2.2.3: *Provision of training on gender responsive electoral processes.*

2.2.4: *Provision of guidance and support to the IHEC's gender unit/focal point.*

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.*

<b>Output 3: The conduct of key electoral operations for the 2021 parliamentary elections is improved</b>
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**Output 3.1: Support to IHEC's operational and administrative preparations at the central and governorate offices**

The project will support IHEC's administrative and operational preparations for early elections at the central and governorate offices. The interventions under 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.

**Proposed activities:**

3.1.1: *Support to the voter registration process for more accurate voters' lists:* Support and advice will be provided to IHEC in assessing and identifying options for improving the quality of the voter registration database, including allocation of voters to polling centres across the new constituencies, as defined by the electoral law; monitoring the progress of biometric registration and the distribution of biometric voter cards; and reviewing the registration for security forces and IDP voting and the associated systems, processes and procedures.

3.1.2: *Development of Election Day procedures and training manuals, including production of innovative training tools:* A well-trained staff enables the proper, detailed application of electoral procedures in all aspects of the electoral process. In line with lessons learned from shortcomings in previous elections, experts will provide technical support, under a comprehensive training plan, for the creation of clear procedures, user-friendly training manuals, and innovative training tools.

3.1.3: *Assistance in the formulation and implementation of election cascade training plans:* Operational training will be delivered using the "cascade" model, ensuring that there are sufficient skilled trainers available to conduct the training:

- an initial Fundamentals of Training (FoT) will be delivered by the UNOEA training team to IHEC's Procedures and Training Section, who in turn will train all GEO trainers;
- a workshop on drafting procedures will be delivered to IHEC Procedures and Training Section to build the knowledge for writing user-friendly procedures manuals;
- an operational training phase will ensure training of the entirety of polling centre staff (in previous elections, some 300,000 individuals).

3.1.4: *Support for the preparation and management of a Results Management System (If technology is used for the counting and/or results processes, as in previous elections):* Provision of advisory support to IHEC in procuring and overseeing an independent audit of the election results management system. (the UN will not itself undertake an audit of the Result Management System; it will advise, assist and support on the process, in line with its mandate.)

*3.1.5: Training and ongoing support to IHEC staff on Results Management, seats allocation and Information and Communication Technology: Provision of high-level advisory support on the use of information technology in electoral processes, complemented by relevant specialized training for IHEC staff working in these areas.*

**Output 3.2: Support to civic and voter education initiatives**

A comprehensive voter education 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.

**Proposed activities:**

*3.2.1: Administration of a small grants programme to support civil society groups in the implementation of countrywide voter education campaigns:* The provision of small targeted grants will enable the involvement of youth groups in a voter participation campaign specifically targeting youth; groups representing people with disabilities, to reach out to disabled voters; and the dissemination of civic and voter education to IDPs and minority communities.

*3.2.2: Support for the production of voter education materials:* The project will support the conceptualization and production of voter education materials, with a particular focus on specific target groups, such as women, youth, minorities and IDPs. Materials will be produced in Arabic and Kurdish (with English translation).

*3.2.3: Support for a youth motivational campaign using social media:* Recognizing that Iraq's youth is very engaged with social media, an online campaign will be designed and delivered specifically targeting youth, to motivate young people to vote.

**Output 3.3: Improvement of IHEC's structured engagement with stakeholders**

This activity is aimed at encouraging IHEC to maintain a consistent, periodic communication channel with all electoral stakeholders and to make publicly available relevant information on the electoral preparations.

**Proposed activities:**

*3.3.1: Support for regular IHEC briefing of electoral stakeholders, such as political parties, media and civil society groups:* UN experts, drawing on support from UNAMI's Public Information Office (PIO), will assist IHEC in creating a culture of comprehensive, targeted, transparent communication with all electoral stakeholders.

*3.3.2: Support for the establishment of a well-equipped, fully functional IHEC Media Centre:* An effective, professional IHEC media centre should be operational from at least two months before election day until the final announcement of results. It will provide a friendly, collaborative environment in which media representatives can access electoral information in close interaction with IHEC. Again, UNAMI PIO will provide advisory support as appropriate.

*3.3.3 Support for the establishment of IHEC Governorate Results Display Centers (D-RDC) complementary to National Results Announcement Center (NRAC) in Baghdad:* in order to promote transparency and access to information, UNOEA and IHEC are proposing the establishment of decentralized results display centers in each of IHEC's 19 Governorate Electoral Offices (GEOs) and 1 national results display center in Baghdad for the for nation-wide publication of results. These facilities will support IHEC in announcing election results from each polling station, in each of the constituencies and in each of the governorates in a transparent and real time manner as they are received by the electoral commission in Baghdad.

**Output 3.4: IHEC promotes inclusiveness in all phases of the electoral process for a conducive electoral environment**

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.

**Proposed activities:**

*3.4.1: Training for female candidates (in collaboration with UNAMI's Gender Unit and UN Women):* The project will assist female candidates in developing skills to address the particular challenges facing women seeking a role in the political sphere.

*3.4.2: Support to IHEC in developing an electoral Code of Conduct (in collaboration with UNAMI's Office of Political Affairs):* In an effort to minimize intolerance, violence and hate speech during both campaigning and voting periods, political parties and actors will be encouraged publicly to sign up to a code of good electoral conduct.

*3.4.3: Delivery of specialized training to counter hate speech:* Hate speech (often targeting female and minority candidates and smaller parties) has been a major concern in previous elections. The project will offer: (i) training to media on how to write and report using language that does not reflect, condone or facilitate hate speech; (ii) training to political actors (parties, political bloc representatives, candidates) on avoiding hate language in their speeches and public communications - and how to discourage their supporters from using hate speech.

**Output 3.5: Strengthen IHEC's electoral adjudication mechanism and appeals process**

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 provide legal and technical advice to support improvement of IHEC 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.

**Proposed activities:**

*3.5.1: Review of IHEC complaints adjudication system:* Through high level advisory support, the project will assist IHEC in reviewing the existing complaints adjudication mechanism. Appropriate adjustments to procedures will make them clear, accessible and better understood by the electorate and electoral stakeholders. The electoral complaints adjudication mechanism should be easily available to the electorate.

*3.5.2: Support to development of appeals regulation:* Technical experts will work with relevant Iraqi entities (IHEC and the Electoral Judicial Panel) to formulate the regulations and procedures necessary to set the framework for the appeals process.

*3.5.3: Specialized training on the complaints adjudication system and appeals system:* Specialized training for IHEC complaints department staff (and other IHEC staff) on the electoral complaints mechanism will enable a common understanding and interpretation of the regulations and procedures relevant to the resolution of electoral complaints, as well as their timely implementation. Related training will include: (i) specialized training for members of the Judiciary to enhance their understanding of the electoral complaints adjudication mechanism and the appeals system; (ii) training and briefings on the complaints adjudication system for candidates, political parties, the Bar Association, the media and civil society organizations to expand understanding of the vital role that complaints adjudication plays in legitimizing electoral outcomes.

**3.5.4: Public information campaign for electoral stakeholders and electorate:** A robust, widespread public information campaign will disseminate information on the electoral complaints' adjudication mechanism, using tools such as leaflets, online or broadcast discussion and social media posts, developed and distributed in Arabic, Kurdish and English across the country.

**Output 3.6: The project is effectively and sustainably managed and implemented, under national ownership**

**Proposed activities:**

*3.6.1: Recruitment of top quality, experienced project personnel.*

*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.*

*3.6.4: A substantive project monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism.*

*3.6.5: Full collaboration and co-operation with IHEC staff, its leadership and other Iraqi stakeholders in every aspect of the project to promote and sustain national ownership of the electoral process.*

**OUTPUT 4 – Improved capacities of media stakeholders in Iraq and the KRI 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.**

**Proposed activities:**

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

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

**Proposed activities:**

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

**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 marginalised groups.**

**Proposed activities:**

*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 marginalised groups.*

**Output 4.4: 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 marginalised groups.**

**Proposed activities:**

*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*

**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.**

**Proposed activities:**

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

**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.**

**Proposed activities:**

*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.*

**Resources Required to Achieve the Expected Results**

The existing capacities of UNAMI's OEA are insufficient to deliver the specialist technical advice required for identified areas of support. Although the wider UN family (including UNDP, other UNAMI components and UN agencies) will collaborate on aspects of the programme, it will require a surge capacity of international and Iraqi electoral experts to deliver the required technical advice to IHEC.

**Requirement - Recruitments:**

- Recruitment, contracting, onboarding and deployment of UN Election Team personnel and Project Management personnel for UNDP.
- UNDP shall recruit and administer personnel on UNDP Letters of Appointment and/or contracts as appropriate, on behalf of UNAMI/UN. Letters of appointments signed before assignment to UNAMI will stipulate that the services of the staff members/ personnel are limited to the "Support to Iraq's Election Process project" and UNDP is administering their contracts/appointments on behalf of UNAMI.
- During the recruitment process the common electoral roster managed by the UN's Electoral Assistance Division (EAD), as well as existing UNAMI and other UN agencies' rosters for national staff, will be consulted. The selection process will be developed with close involvement of UNOEA and led by dedicated project support staff.

**Requirement - Security & Other:**

- While certain categories of personnel may be recruited and administered by UNDP and therefore hold UNDP letters of appointment and/or contracts, security responsibility and accountability is however discharged by the UNDP Administrator to respective agency/entity heads when personnel are hosted by or assigned to other agencies/entities. In this case, as UNAMI will host personnel, UNAMI therefore assumes responsibility and accountability for the security and safety of personnel. This responsibility and accountability relate to all levels of personnel under the UNSMS applicability framework. Security clearance procedures and other relevant directives issued by the Designated Official/designate must be followed strictly.

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- Procurement of computers, radio communication and PPE: The project assumes procurement of laptops and SIM cards, PPE, handheld VHF; other protection equipment will be sourced from existing UNAMI inventories.
- Special protective equipment (PPE) due to COVID-19 as required will be purchased through the project.
- Procurement Services will be provided by UNDP upon request from UNAMI unless otherwise agreed in particular cases.
- Offices and accommodation for UN electoral advisors: The project will consider the most cost-effective options allowing for safe and secure placement of recruited international personnel. The international electoral advisors and UNVs in the regional hubs (Erbil, Basra, Mosul, Kirkuk) will be accommodated in existing UN facilities. Accommodation in UNAMI's HQ compound in Baghdad will be provided for the remainder of the international advisors and the project manager.

The enhanced capacity team will reinforce areas identified as critical to the success of elections which, at present, have limited IHEC in-house capacity: legal complaints management system, external communication and outreach and information and communications technology. The team will complement phase I capacity development efforts in building sustainable electoral expertise while prioritizing preparations for the actual elections themselves. Under the surge capacity phase, UNAMI OEA will also extend its geographical support by deploying its national staff at Governorate Electoral Offices (GEO) across Iraq. This team was expected to be in place from January/February 2021 and will remain so until 31 December 2022, depending on finalization of the timing of the elections.

The proposed team will consist of a number of international experts complemented by UNV specialists and Iraqi electoral officers and support staff. International staff will be based in five governorates (Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, Erbil and Mosul), and complemented by a number of Iraqi-national electoral officers present in each of the Governorate Electoral Offices. UNOEA will establish three support lines (HQ, regional and governorate level) with the capacity to impact all phases and layers of electoral operation.

The enhanced team will be organized to work in the following areas:

- Operations team: (international advisors, UNV specialist and national officers) will work with IHEC on all electoral operational issues: electoral assistance programmes; field coordination, process management, planning and infrastructure; development operation including field operations.
- Legal support team (international advisors and national officers): will assist IHEC in creating and managing an electoral complaints mechanism and engage in extensive training of different election stakeholders.
- Communications and outreach team (international advisors and national officers): will focus on civic education efforts in all sectors of Iraqi society. Advisors, under the guidance of the Senior Communication Advisor hired during phase I, will manage a small grant programme supporting civil society voter education campaigns.
- Regional operations teams (six teams comprising international advisors, UNV specialists, national security officers.): serving as the first line of support to Governorate electoral teams. They will be reinforced with additional personnel as necessary.
- Security team (international advisors and national officers): providing security support, advice and guidance to the overall team.
- Reporting unit (international adviser and national officer)

- Planning and support team (international advisor, UNV specialists and national officers): ensuring seamless integration of new deployment into existing UNAMI structure, adequate support, ongoing maintenance and instant of work plan.
- Project Management Unit (PMU) (international Project manager and national officers): will be joined by a UNDP Finance Specialist to manage the significant budget, in line with UNDP financial rules and regulations.

**Requirements:**

- Recruitment, contracting, integration and deployment of UN Election Team personnel: UNDP will lead the recruitment process using the common electoral roster managed by the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs' Electoral Assistance Division (EAD), as well as existing UNAMI and other UN agency rosters for national support staff members. The selection process will be undertaken in collaboration with the UNAMI Office of Electoral Assistance and led by dedicated project support staff.
- Procurement of computers, radio communications and PPE: All required equipment will be procured through the project management unit, following UNDP rules and regulations. Where feasible, the project will use existing UNAMI inventories prior to acquiring new items.
- Establishment of offices and accommodation facilities for UN Election Teams across Iraq: international staff will be accommodated in existing UNAMI accommodation and work either at IHEC headquarters or directly embedded in their respective governorate offices. National advisors to Governorate Electoral Offices will be co-located in IHEC premises (the project budget will cover funding for any office equipment required on a case-by-case basis).

**Partnerships**

Project implementation may require partnerships and coordination with:

- Electoral stakeholders: civil society organizations, academia, other electoral assistance providers active on the ground.
- UNAMI: Office of Political Affairs, Public Information Office, Gender Unit, Human Rights Office, Department of Safety and Security, others.
- UN agencies: UNDP, UN Women, IOM, UNOPS, UNHCR, others as relevant.

**Risks and Assumptions**

A risks analysis, elaborated in the annex "Risk Log", focuses on the main risks associated with the political and security situations in Iraq. On the implementation side, timely recruitment of technical advisors may become a challenge if financial resources are not readily available. Additionally, risks associated with the ongoing COVID-19 emergency may impact the timely implementation of activities, underscoring the need for robust mitigation measures.

**Stakeholder Engagement**

- *Target Groups:* As the project seeks to develop IHEC's capacities to organize elections, the direct target of this project is IHEC staff in HQ and GEOs. Voters are the indirect target of activities to boost public confidence and participation.
- *Specific target groups:* Some activities indicated in the project are conceptualized to reach specific target groups, such as: women, youth, IDPs, media, minorities, political parties.
- *Engagement with international community:* The UN's good offices may be used to bring coherence to the international community's engagement with elections. The project will ensure synergies and coordination mechanisms with other electoral assistance providers, under UN auspices.

**South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC)**

The project provides support before and during the preparation phases for early elections; it provides the foundation for IHEC's potential future peer-to-peer work with electoral commissions at regional and global levels.



### ***Knowledge***

Through the proposed activities the project is expected to produce or/and contribute to the production of several knowledge building elements, including but not limited to procedural manuals, training manuals, civic & voter education materials.

### ***Sustainability and Scaling Up***

Sustainability is built into the design and implementation strategies of this project, as the objective is to strengthen the long-term technical and operational capacities of IHEC. The current project will work to ensure all interventions with IHEC and other electoral stakeholders are undertaken in line with international best practices for sustainable development, including alignment with national development plans. The UN has a proven track record of success in supporting sustainability in electoral assistance through capacity building of electoral staff and commissioners.

## **III. Project Management**

### ***Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness***

With substantial experience in providing electoral assistance in Iraq, as well as globally, UNDP is well positioned to implement the current project in an effective, cost-efficient manner. This will include project implementation under the integrated mission structure with a common overall objective to move Iraq forward, under SDG5 and SDG16:

- Leveraging existing partnerships and ongoing programs to ensure the project interventions can be provided in a timely manner;
- Implementing activities that target crosscutting issues relevant to all sectors such as participation of women and youth;
- Partnering with other UN agencies, international and national organizations promoting similar goals and objectives;
- Taking advantage of fast track facilities to ensure timely and effective operational support to the upcoming elections;
- Implementing activities through a joint operations approach, taking advantage of the resources available within UNAMI's electoral team; and
- Tailoring activities to ensure interventions are conflict sensitive and in line with policies of Do No Harm.

### ***Project Management***

The project will be implemented following UNDP's direct implementation modality, embedding significant UNDP implementation support, according to the Service Level Agreement (SLA) signed between UNDP and UNAMI at local level. Substantive and operational implementation will be managed and led by UNAMI UNOEA, with the agreed upon administrative and fund management support from UNDP. Fund management will be led by UNDP, based on program management requests from UNAMI, and funding for the project will be provided by interested donor countries. For selected activities that are identified to require a substantive management role by UNDP, this will be identified and agreed upon by UNOEA, UNDP and the respective donor(s), and these activities will be specified in the Annual Work Plan.

The international electoral advisors will be recruited by UNDP on behalf of UNAMI, and fall under the direct supervision of UNOEA, headed by the UN Principal Electoral Adviser, and under the aegis of UNAMI's Deputy Special Representative for Political and Electoral Affairs. The reporting lines will be defined in the Terms of Reference for each position. UNAMI will provide accommodation, offices and other logistics support, on the understanding that all services provided by UNAMI will be paid for by the project on a cost recovery basis.

UNAMI and UNDP will sign a Service Level Agreement defining roles and responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the Project and have senior level oversight on both sides, ensuring a smooth implementation of the project. UNDP will put in place a project management unit to manage financial and administrative aspects of the project, ensure project integration with UNOEA under the guidance of the UN Principal Electoral Advisor. UNOEA will ensure there is effective coordination with project partners, and will adhere to specific donor agreements, including reporting obligations.

All phases of the project, including inception, implementation and closure will be guided by UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures.<sup>4</sup> Quality assurance ensuring corporate compliance for project management, in keeping with UNDP's rules and regulations will be provided by the Governance Programme Pillar, with required support from UNDP Iraq's Programme Management Support Unit.

Audits will be undertaken by UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigation (OAI) in keeping with UNDP's rules and regulations, while the Project evaluation will be conducted in keeping with the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office Guidelines and UNDP Iraq Evaluation Plan.

**Direct Project Costs and General Management Service Fee:**

The UNDP Country Office will charge Direct Project Costs (DPC) for services provided, including support services, that are directly linked to the implementation of activities detailed in this Project. DPC will be included in and charged directly to the project budget. DPC is separate from the General Management Support (GMS) charge, which is solely to cover the costs to UNDP that are not directly attributable to specific projects or services, but are necessary to fund the corporate structures, management and oversight costs of the organization. UNDP will charge a GMS fee on expenditures incurred under this Project. The one (1) percent UN Coordination Levy will apply to all funding contributions provided by donor countries that signed up for the Agency Administered option with the UN Secretariat.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://info.undp.org/global/popp/ppm/Pages/Closing-a-Project.aspx>

#### IV. Results Framework

<p><b>Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF/Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:</b> <b>UNSCF 2020-2024<sup>5</sup> OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP: 3.1.</b> Strengthened institutions and systems deliver people-centred, evidence and needs-based equitable and inclusive gender and age-responsive services, especially for the most vulnerable populations, with particular focus on advocating for women's leadership in decision-making processes.</p>
<p><b>Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:</b> <b>UNDP Country Programme Document Outcome Indicator 3.1.</b> Proportion of the population satisfied with the delivery of improved public services, disaggregated by sex, age, disability, type of service and governorates. <b>Baseline (2019): 5.8% Target (2024): 2%</b> increase every two years <b>CPD 2020-2024 Output 3.3:</b> Capacities and systems for transparency and accountability improved in key policy making and oversight structures to mitigate the risk of corruption.</p>
<p><b>Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan (2018-2021):</b> <b>Outcome 2.</b> Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development. <b>Output 2.2.2</b> Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability. <b>Output Indicator 2.2.2.1.</b> Number of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) with strengthened capacity to conduct inclusive and credible elections.</p>
<p><b>Project title and Atlas Project Number:</b> Support to Iraq's Electoral Process: Support to Early Election 2021 and Capacity Development Project Number: 00131655</p>

**NOTE: DETAILED RESULTS FRAMEWORK GIVEN IN ANNEX 1**

<sup>5</sup> In draft at the time of UNDP Iraq 2020-2024 CPD formulation.

## V. Monitoring and Evaluation

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation plans.

### Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)	Cost (if any)
<b>Track results progress</b>	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Quarterly, or in the frequency required for each indicator	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.		\$15,000
<b>Monitor and Manage Risk</b>	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Quarterly	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.		\$30,000
<b>Learn</b>	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.	At the end of the project	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.		\$40,000
<b>Annual Project Quality Assurance</b>	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.		\$20,000
<b>Review and Make Course Corrections</b>	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	At 6 months	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.	UNOEA/ IHEC	\$10,000
<b>Project Report</b>	A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the	Quarterly Report,			\$10,000

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Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)	Cost (if any)
	results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk log with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	Annual Report and Final Project Report			
<b>Project Review (Project Board)</b>	The project's governance mechanism (i.e. project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	At least annually	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.		\$0

**Evaluation Plan**

Evaluation Title	Partners (if joint)	Related Strategic Plan Output	UNSDCF/CPD Outcome	Planned Completion Date	Key Evaluation Stakeholders	Cost and Source of Funding
Final Project Evaluation		Output 2.2.2 Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability.	UNSDCF 2020-2024 <sup>6</sup> OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP: 3.1.	December 2022	IHEC	\$75,000 Project Funds

**VI. Multi-Year Work Plan**

**NOTE: DETAILED ANNUAL WORK PLAN GIVEN IN ANNEX 2**

<sup>6</sup> In draft at the time of UNDP Iraq 2020-2024 CPD formulation.

## VII. Governance and Management Arrangements

The project is designed as an integrated structure managed by UNDP under the overall guidance of the UN Principal Electoral Advisor, reporting to the SRSG through the DSRSG, and in full coordination with the UNDP Iraq Resident Representative.

The **Project Board** is the highest-level project management and oversight body. It will provide strategic and policy guidance, review progress against target results, support the identification of solutions to challenges faced by the project, and review risks and lessons learned. The Board will also provide guidance needed to strengthen coordination and collaboration among other relevant projects and with other national initiatives and development projects. The Project Board will **meet at least annually** and, should the need arise the Board will also meet on an ad-hoc basis, in the event for example there is a significant change in context.

UNDP will be responsible for the management of the project funds, in keeping with UNDP's Financial Rules and Regulations, and Programme and Operation Policies and Procedures through effective process management and well-established project review and oversight mechanisms. A Project Management Unit led by a Project Manager will be put in place by UNDP to support implementation (as defined in the Agreement signed between UNDP and UNAMI). Under the responsibility of the UN Principal Electoral Advisor, the project will prepare and submit the following reports/documents: Annual Work Plans, Quarterly and Annual and Final consolidated Progress Reports, Risk Log, Lessons Learnt Log, using standard reporting formats provided by UNDP.

The project will produce substantive progress and financial reports in compliance with standard UNDP procedures and format, and/or as required. During the delivery of the assistance, the project will keep the UN Electoral Affairs Division (EAD) of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) updated on the implementation status through the UNOEA. This will include providing status reports on a quarterly basis to the EAD, which will also be kept informed of any project revisions or extensions.

### **Project Board Composition and Responsibilities**

A Project Board will be established, comprising senior representatives from IHEC, UNAMI, UNDP and development partners.

The main responsibilities of the Project Board include:

- Ensure that identified results and associated actions in the annual work plans comply with the strategies and principles outlined in the project document.
- Review reports which indicate progress against target results and provide strategic guidance and policy direction.
- Provide oversight, and assess the quality of project implementation, including through review of the Quality Assessment by UNDP's Programme Assurance function.
- Review assessments, evaluations and recommendations in respect of the project and provide strategic guidance, as required.
- Assess and decide on substantive changes (such as project strategy, principles, outputs and activity results).
- Recommend new or revised policy directions in the planning and implementation of the project in light of new national planning strategies/documents.
- Establish levels of tolerance (on time and budget) for the Project and provide guidance when tolerance levels have been exceeded.

- Ensure that the resources made available are committed and expended in a timely manner
- Provide guidance on project risks and agree on possible countermeasures and management actions to address specific risks.
- Review and endorse the Project's transition and closure arrangements, leading up to its Closure.

The Project Board will be **co-chaired** by UNDP/Resident Representative and UNAMI Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) serving as the Executive. The Chair/Executive will have ultimate responsibility for the project. As part of the responsibilities of the Board, the Chair will ensure that the project is focused throughout the project cycle on achieving its outputs and targets. Additional responsibilities include monitoring and controlling the progress of the project at a strategic level; ensuring that risks are being tracked and mitigated as effectively as possible; and chairing and ensuring that the Project Board meets in a timely manner, as stipulated in the project document. The Chair will be responsible for approving the Projects multi-year and/or annual work plans.

The **Senior Beneficiary** will be represented by a Senior Official from IHEC representing the interests of the institution. The primary function of the Senior Beneficiary within the Project Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries.

The **Senior Supplier** will represent the interests of those parties concerned with providing funding and/or technical expertise to the project. In this Project the Senior Suppliers would be represented by UNOEA, UNDP's Deputy Resident Representatives- Programme and Operations, and development partners funding the Project. The primary function and responsibility of the Senior Supplier is to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project. As part of the responsibilities of the Project Board, the Senior Supplier will advise on the identification of strategies, design and methods to carry out Project actions. Within the context of the Project Board, the Senior Supplier is also responsible for ensuring that progress towards outputs remains consistent; contributing the supplier's perspective and opinions on implementing any proposed changes; and arbitrating on and ensuring resolution of input/resource related priorities or conflicts.

With the endorsement of the Project Board additional Institutions/Organizations may be invited to engage as Observers in the Project Board.

### **Project Assurance**

The technical quality assurance for substantive and timely implementation will be the responsibility of UNOEA. UNDP will provide quality assurance for ensuring corporate compliance for project management, in keeping with UNDP's rules and regulations, through UNDP Iraq's Governance Programme Pillar. The Project Assurance supports the Project Board by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. The Project Assurance role needs to be engaged throughout the project as part of ensuring that it remains relevant, follows the approved plans and continues to meet the planned targets with quality. Project Assurance is required to ensure Beneficiary needs and expectations are being met or managed; risks are being controlled; adherence to the project justification (business case); the right people are being involved; an acceptable solution is being developed; the project remains viable; applicable UNDP rules and regulations are being observed; adherence to monitoring and reporting requirements and standards of the donor; quality management procedures are properly followed; and the Project Board's decisions are followed and revisions are managed in line with the required procedures.

### **Project Manager**

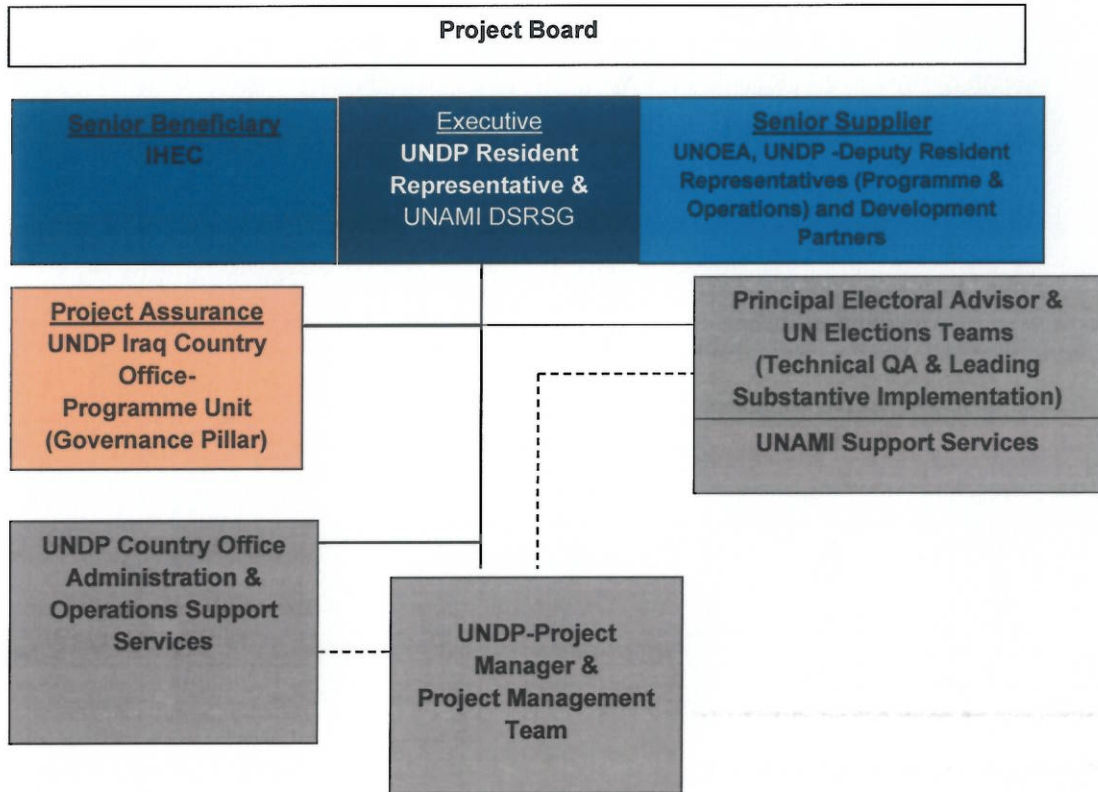
The Project Manager leads the Project Management team that is put in place by UNDP. The team comprises of a Project Manager and a Finance Specialist and national consultants. The Project Manager is responsible for the successful management of project resources and supporting UNOEA to achieve the outputs of the Project. The PM will have the responsibility to financially manage the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of and within the framework outlined by the Project Board, and in overall collaboration and coordination with UNOEA. The PM is responsible for working in coordination with the respective UNOEA, the Senior Beneficiary/ies and Responsible Parties (when required) of the project to ensure project implementation, financial management, administration, monitoring and reporting takes place in a timely manner. The PM will be responsible for supporting UNOEA to manage the realization of Project outputs and targets through actions as specified in the Annual Work Plan. This includes: planning activities/actions from a management perspective; preparing annual work plans in keeping with UNDP requirements upon receiving the substantive inputs from UNOEA; overseeing the implementation of activities/actions that UNDP is directly responsible for (including liaising with service providers to mobilize goods and services); managing financial resources and accounting to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial reports; alerting the Project Board to consider the risks identified by the Project with UNOEA input and decide on possible actions; managing issues and requests for change; and supporting UNOEA to prepare the Project Summary Quarterly Progress Update, Annual Report and Final Reports for submission to the Project Board. For any activities UNDP is directly responsible to management, and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) applies, the Project Manager will take all necessary steps to ensure compliance.

#### **UNOEA and UN Elections Teams**

UNOEA is overall responsible for technical/substantive design, planning, implementation, and completion of Project activities, and ensuring defined results are achieved. UNOEA is responsible for substantive preparation of the Annual Work Plans and reports, working in coordination with UNDP on fund management aspects and administrative issues. Under the guidance of the Co - Chairs, the UNOEA with the engagement of the Elections Teams shall ensure efficient coordination efforts between the stakeholders of the Project at the different levels of implementation. UNOEA will also be responsible for the implementation of activities a per workplans, updating the monitoring plan; ensuring the availability of data in a timely manner and identification of project risks; preparing the substantive consolidated Project Summary Quarterly Progress update, Annual Report and Final Reports, with UNDP providing support as needed, and the Financial Reports. UNOEA is also responsible for updating UN Electoral Affairs Division (EAD) of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) on the implementation status.



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## VIII. Legal Context

### Where the country has signed the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA)

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of (country) and UNDP, signed on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1976. All references in the SBAA to "Executing Agency" shall be deemed to refer to "Implementing Partner."

## IX. Risk Management

1. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS.)
2. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the [project funds]<sup>[9]</sup> [UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document]<sup>[10]</sup> are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via [http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list.shtml](http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml). This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under this Project Document.
3. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (<http://www.undp.org/ses>) and related Accountability Mechanism (<http://www.undp.org/secu-srm>).
4. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.
5. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP as the Implementing Partner will handle any sexual exploitation and abuse ("SEA") and sexual harassment ("SH") allegations in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies and procedures.
6. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.
7. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will ensure that the following obligations are binding on each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient:
  1. Consistent with Article III of the SBAA, the responsibility for the safety and security of each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's custody, rests with such responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient. To this end, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall:

- i. put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
  - ii. assume all risks and liabilities related to such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.
2. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.
3. In the performance of the activities under this Project, UNDP as the Implementing Partner shall ensure, with respect to the activities of any of its responsible parties, sub-recipients and other entities engaged under the Project, either as contractors or subcontractors, their personnel and any individuals performing services for them, that those entities have in place adequate and proper procedures, processes and policies to prevent and/or address SEA and SH.
4. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or programme or using the UNDP funds. It will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.
5. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org).
6. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP will conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP programmes and projects. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to its (and its consultants', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with it to find a solution.
7. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will promptly inform UNDP as the Implementing Partner in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality.

Where it becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). It will provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

8. UNDP will be entitled to a refund from the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient under this or any other agreement. Recovery of such amount by UNDP shall not diminish or curtail any responsible party's, subcontractor's or sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.

Note: The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

9. Each contract issued by the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from it shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.
10. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project or programme, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.
11. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to its subcontractors and sub-recipients and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are adequately reflected, *mutatis mutandis*, in all its sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

## X. ANNEXES

1. **Results and Resources Framework 2020-2022**
2. **Multiannual workplan 2020-2022**
3. **Project Quality Assurance Report**
4. **Social and Environmental Screening**
5. **Risk Log**
6. **Capacity Assessment:** Results of capacity assessments of Implementing Partner (including HACT Micro Assessment) – Not Applicable for this Project
7. **Project Board Terms of Reference and TORs of key management positions (Project Manager and Finance Specialist)**
8. **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

## **ANNEX 8 Acronyms and Abbreviations**

- IHEC - Independent High Election Commission of Iraq
- CoR - Council of Representatives (the Iraqi parliament)
- BoC - Board of Commissioners
- OEA - Office of Electoral Assistance
- UNAMI - United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
- UNOEA – United Nations Office of Electoral Assistance
- UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
- UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
- IOM – International Organization for Migration
- UNOPS - United Nations Office for Project Services
- UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees