The project aims to support and strengthen the Election Commission of Pakistan to enable it to hold credible, transparent and inclusive elections. This project was set up following a request by the Election Commission of Pakistan to the United Nations for electoral assistance. It takes an electoral cycle approach supporting the periods before, during and after elections. It has been divided into two phases: Phase 1 was on the pre-elections period up to 11 May 2013, while Phase II is focused on post-elections. Phase I activities included support to the Election Commission of Pakistan to prepare and conduct the general elections that took place in May 2013. Phase II will focus on long term institutional strengthening of the Election Commission of Pakistan, lessons learnt, further improvements to the electoral process, civic education and local government elections.

Phase 1: Pre-elections and elections
Pakistan’s elections for national and provincial assemblies were held successfully on 11 May 2013. Although the period leading up to the elections and polling day itself were marred by violence, the elections were hailed as a success paving the way for a peaceful transfer of power to a new national government.
Main Achievements

Training of Polling Staff and Security Personnel

- Training was carried out for over 330,000 polling staff and 17,000 security personnel.

Voter Education

- An estimated 40 million people were reached through a voter education campaign utilizing media, social media and civil society organizations with an emphasis on encouraging women, youth and minorities to participate in the elections. 222 district and regional election officers were trained and provided with materials – posters, brochures, banners, stickers, t-shirts, caps, pens, badges and bags – to carry out awareness activities in their communities.

Elections Results Management

- A new results management system was developed and implemented enabling greater accuracy and transparency in the compilation of elections results including the use of tamper evident bags and collection of gender-disaggregated voter turnout for the first time in Pakistan’s history.

Phase 2: Post Elections

Phase 2 commencing in July 2013 will focus on longer-term capacity strengthening of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), electoral reforms and improvements to electoral processes, civic education and local government elections. It will kick off with support to the ECP for lessons learning and to review recommendations from observer groups. A key objective in the post-elections phase will be the adoption and implementation of electoral reforms to overcome the flaws and shortcomings evident in the general elections. Capacity strengthening of the Election Commission of Pakistan will also be vital to ensure that the ECP can implement much needed reforms effectively and efficiently.

Expected Results

- Post elections lessons learning exercise for the ECP at provincial and national levels.
- A comprehensive analysis of the 2013 elections results data.
- Policy dialogues and civil society advocacy on key electoral reforms leading to revision of the legislative framework.
- Improved electoral processes and increased ECP oversight and administration of the elections.
- A Training Needs Assessment and a strengthened Federal Election Academy capable of implementing professional development programs with a particular focus on electoral process.
- Local government elections held in four provinces with support for drafting of rules and procedures, training of lead trainers and capacity strengthening of aspiring women candidates.
- An assessment of civic education initiatives and needs in Pakistan and formulation of a civic education program.