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العلية للانتخابات
High National Elections Commission



UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN LIBYA
بعثة الأمم المتحدة للدعم في ليبيا



PROMOTING ELECTIONS FOR THE PEOPLE OF LIBYA (PEPOL)

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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

DONORS

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PROJECT INFORMATION

Project ID:	00104140
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Project Partners:	High National Election Commission (HNEC) and United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)

UNSDCF Outcome 1.1: By 2025, Libyan citizens, particularly youth and women, are better able to exercise their rights and obligations in an inclusive, stable, democratic, and reconciled society, underpinned by responsive, transparent, accountable, and unified public institutions.

Strategic Plan Outcome 1: Structural transformation accelerated, particularly green, inclusive, and digital transitions.

CPD Output: 1.1: Institutional and human capacities of national and local state institutions to ensure democratic and inclusive governance, evidence-based planning, decentralization, right to vote and fair national and local elections are enhanced.

Inclusivity Marker: GEN2

ACRONYMS

CDA	Constitutional Drafting Assembly
CEA	Chief Electoral Advisor
COC	Code of Conduct
CRA	Civil Registration Authority
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EU	European Union
GIA	General Information Authority
GNC	General National Congress
HNEC	High National Elections Commission
HOR	House of Representatives
HCS	High Council of State
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFES	International Federation for Electoral Systems
ISA	Internal Security Agency
IT	Information Technology
LGP	Local Governance Project
LPDF	Libyan Political Dialogue Forum
LTT	Libyan Telecom Technologies
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OAI	Office of Audit and Investigation
OCV	Out-of-Country Voter
PEPOL	Promoting Elections for the People of Libya
PSU	Procurement Support Unit
PVP	Polling Verification Project
PWD	Persons With Disabilities
SIS	Security Institution Service
SMS	Short Message Service
SRSR	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEAD	United Nations Electoral Assistance Division
UNEST	United Nations Electoral Support Team
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWE	Violence Against Women in Elections

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
I. RESULTS.....	2
A. OUTPUT 1: Support HNEC in the planning, preparation and conduct of national and local elections and out of country voting.....	2
B. Output 2: Develop HNEC institutional and staff capacities and raise awareness on the requirements of electoral processes that are transparent, credible and promote inclusive participation.	7
C. Output 3: Promote public participation in electoral processes through interventions that target and enable vulnerable groups to exercise their right to vote.....	11
D. Output 4: Raising the electoral awareness of local partners and institutions, enabling them to perform their roles effectively in the process.....	16
E. Output 5: Project is effectively managed.....	19
II. WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS SPECIFIC RESULTS	27
III. PARTNERSHIPS	27
IV. CURRENT ISSUES	28
V. LESSONS LEARNED	30
VI. FUTURE PLAN	30
VII. COMMUNICATION	31
VIII. ANNEXES	32
ANNEX 1: Financial Table	32
ANNEX 2: Monitoring and Oversight.....	34
ANNEX 5: Policy and Knowledge Products	42
ANNEX 6: Risk Log.....	43

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

National elections represent a major milestone in the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process¹ and a critical step in restoring the legitimacy of Libyan institutions. More broadly, democratic processes are a way to move toward peace and stability, foster a culture of accountability and good governance with regular cycles of peaceful transition of power, where human rights can be delivered, and development sustained.

The Promoting Elections for the People of Libya (PEPOL) project is the vehicle through which the United Nations (UN) and its international stakeholders supported Libya's High National Elections Commission (HNEC) and other relevant stakeholders to prepare and implement electoral process in Libya. The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office in Libya, with technical and advisory support from the UN Electoral Support Team (UNEST), comprising technical experts from UNDP and the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).

While ensuring national ownership of the process, the UNEST team provides technical advice and support to the HNEC and other relevant Libyan stakeholders to build capacities and preparedness for elections. In 2023, PEPOL contributed to the following major initiatives and results:

- Improved capacities and preparedness of the HNEC to conduct national elections, with operational and public outreach plans, physical and technological infrastructure in place. This includes preparing 70 HNEC staff as “trainers of trainers”; 21 staff in election concepts; 37 staff in specialised ICT skills; and 7 staff in data collection and analyses.
- Initiation of biometric polling verification system pilot, and cooperation with civil registration and general information authorities to maintain and upgrade a comprehensive national register.
- Preparedness to conduct municipal council elections in almost 100 municipalities in 2024, with regulations in place, and HNEC staff across the country equipped and poised to train election workers.
- Preparedness for imminent voter registration, with technological systems in place and a public information campaign launched on 1 January 2024.
- Institutional sustainability of HNEC, cultivating a system of continuous knowledge sharing and internal memory, beyond the duration of the project.
- Capacity of 30 women from throughout Libya, who are now informed and equipped to engage in political life, to serve as educators and to advocate inclusive participation in their respective spheres of influence.
- Capacity of 20 young women to serve as future leaders, as a result of their participation in the Ra'idat programme – a joint initiative of UNDP, UNSMIL, UN Women and UNICEF.
- Broader HNEC stakeholder engagement, reaching out to political parties, professionals in law and academia, and young people from the National Students' Union and Libyan Youth Parliament.
- Stronger national and regional networks for sharing information, experiences, and best practices, including the Regional Conference on Women's Participation – the first international electoral conference to be hosted by the HNEC since 2014.

¹ The UN provides technical assistance and plays a role in mediation between stakeholders.

I. RESULTS

A. OUTPUT 1: Support HNEC in the planning, preparation and conduct of national and local elections and out of country voting.

Output 1.1: Support to the establishment of a permanent voter register through technical advisory assistance.

Enhancing Voter Register Credibility

With a view to establish an accurate, integrated voter register to inform both local and national elections, UNEST Advisors have supported liaison between the HNEC Data Management section and various government institutions. This includes the Civil Registration Authority (CRA), whose assistance is necessary to acquire the data required to ascertain the eligibility of potential voters and, in the case of local elections, to determine how residence criteria can be applied within the existing systems.

Advisors have also supported coordination between the HNEC and the General Information Authority (GIA), to pursue additional integrity mechanisms intended to ensure that remote/SMS voter registration is conducted only from phone numbers that are correctly assigned.

Polling Verification Project

In 2022, the HNEC approved a concept for polling verification that would require voter cards to be scanned using mobile phones before being issued ballots. Additional functionalities may then be added, scaling implementation over time. (This was introduced as the “Polling Verification Project” (PVP), approved by the Project Board in November 2022.)

This PVP project intends to build the HNECs capacity to deploy devices in polling stations and incorporate biometric systems in the future. While the electoral calendar is yet to be defined, the HNEC is preparing to accommodate biometric requirements in the future.

The HNEC currently uses a voter management system which provides number of services, including SMS registration, card management, roll generation and other elements. This system was conceived by the HNEC and functions completely under its oversight. There have been successive voter registration updates. To date, approximately 2.8 million Libyans have been registered to vote in roughly 1,900 polling centres. The HNEC has been making efforts to develop a custom mobile android application (PVP) to verify voters, scan voter cards and record biometric information. Further work is required to develop the application to a field worthy state and increase functionalities. The HNEC’s back-end systems and services must also be enhanced to support the application.

On 13 July 2023, HNEC and UNDP signed an agreement for HNEC’s financial contribution of USD 1,104,240.00 to support the implementation of the PVP, including the development of a mobile application and registration system to record, verify, store, and report biometric registration; and additional hardware to allow the HNEC system to exchange data securely.

In October 2023, UNDP supported HNEC with procurement of tablets form-factor biometric devices to permit the opportunity to test and train initial trainers, prior to a further procurement of a bulk number of tablet form-factor biometric devices. In the future, the HNEC envisages a larger purchase of biometric devices to cover each polling station. Along with this, a small number of custom handheld tablet devices with biometric fingerprint capabilities were procured in order to allow piloting. The devices arrived in Libya in late December 2023, and will be piloted around a small sample of local elections.

Voter Registration for Local Elections

Accommodating its newly mandated responsibility for managing local elections the HNEC will need to include additional eligibility criteria – namely residence – to the national voter register. Rather than combining local and national data sets – which could result in discrepancies – a completely new national and a municipal voter register will be established, combining data requirements of each. This new, comprehensive register will be developed using the main components of the existing system, but with a number of amendments to allow for capture of additional data requirements.

Anticipating registration for roughly 100 municipal elections in 2024, these amendments include mechanisms for servicing a new local election voter register, capacity to enforce residence criteria, ability to cross reference GIA phone ownership data, data entry software for local election in-person voter registration applications and the setup of a new SMS short code for local election registration.

Output 1.2: Provide technical assistance in election operations planning and implementation.

Election Timelines

Constitutional Amendment No. 13 (adopted in February) will potentially oblige the HNEC to conduct three simultaneous national elections – President, House of Representatives and Senate. UNEST is now supporting the HNEC to project timelines for electoral activities – accommodating various potential scenarios that would begin immediately upon the adoption of all necessary laws. Establishing operational parameters will also position the HNEC to provide technical advice on a new roadmap and conducive electoral laws. Presidential and Parliamentary electoral laws were agreed upon by the 6+6 Committee and published in the Official Gazette on 1 November 2023, and the HNEC issued a subsequent statement, confirming its preparedness to commence implementation. However, the HNEC also emphasized that actual implementation could start only when the necessary political agreements had been reached on issues encompassed in the laws, including the appointment of a unified government to support the electoral process as stipulated in the laws.

Preparedness Assessments

Anticipating the eventual use of the electronic devices for card distribution and polling, advisors supported an HNEC assessment of electricity and telecommunication coverage of all polling centres at the start of 2023. Pending more in-depth data analysis, preliminary findings indicate that the majority of the 1,906 polling centres/schools do have access to electricity and mobile network coverage. Meanwhile, four centres reported having no electricity coverage; and 25 having no mobile network coverage. The floods that affected Derna and surrounding cities caused additional difficulties that are now being assessed and activities are under way to provide support for HNEC to be able to be allocated with new offices space.

In July/August, UNEST Advisors conducted a mission to the HNEC Benghazi Electoral Administration Office, assessing field office readiness and identifying gaps for the attention of the Commission. Following meetings with key staff members, visiting the Benghazi (HNEC Eastern Regional Hub) warehouse and two polling centres, Advisors concluded that the field office is equipped both to carry out operations effectively and to manage electoral processes and logistics in the region. In particular, they observed excellent office premises and infrastructure; 24-hour security; accessible warehouse and office space; and logistical amenities including a surveillance system, stable power supply, reliable internet connectivity, backup generator and a new forklift.

At the same time, they flagged several issues for attention, including key staff vacancies (difficulties attracting/retaining staff); insufficient funding (to conduct operations); lack of training; insufficient communication between HNEC Headquarters and field offices; absence of basic safety and security equipment such as fire extinguishers, ventilation and cooling systems, and X-ray machines; and a lack of polling centres for internally displaced persons (IDPs). Consequently, Advisors have recommended the HNEC a set of measures to improve the situation. These are also applicable to other field offices across the country.

Polling Simulations

On 18 July, UNEST supported the HNEC to conduct a polling simulation as defined in the draft electoral laws proposed by the by the 6+6 Committee. The exercise revealed that:

- The time required to process each voter is significantly increased.
- Each station must accommodate a much greater volume of materials (ballot boxes, ballot papers), representing a significant logistic challenge.
- Average classroom space (5x6m) does not accommodate the presence of all polling staff, observers, agents (of candidates from six different ballots), media and special guests.
- New procedures require procurement of additional items for each polling kit (including ink pads for fingerprints and tamper-evident bags).
- From the voter perspective, the most arduous aspect was the process of identifying the correct ballot for each race, and then finding the selected candidate on the respective ballot.
- Identification of voters through QR recognition device was swift and efficient.
- Ballot distribution – which includes detaching, stamping, folding, handing over and explaining procedures for marking six forms – required more time than anticipated.

A second, modified simulation was conducted from 19–20 September with a view to accommodate potential electoral parameters in the absence of legislation. On the instruction of Commissioners, the HNEC Operations and Registration department staff simulated:

- Polling for two simultaneous elections (first round Presidential + Senate), with separate polling stations for each election.
- Polling for two simultaneous elections (second round Presidential + House of Representatives), with an additional polling staff member (for a team of 6 at each station, rather than 5 as has been the norm).

The simulations revealed that having two stations serving two different kinds of election at the same polling day is not a practical solution. Among other things, going to two separate stations (in two locations and requiring two separate identification and ballot casting processes) was confusing for the simulation participants.

Rather the exercise indicated that the number of polling stations and quantity of election materials should be doubled. Similarly, twice as many polling staff should be recruited and trained. More broadly, the HNEC should focus on how to facilitate the polling process within the classic way of doing the paper-based polling rather than pursuing other, demanding and resource-intensive solutions.

Administration of Local Elections

With the adoption of Law, No. 20/2023² making HNEC the sole electoral management body, and in accordance with the UN Department of Political and Peacekeeping Affairs (DPPA)'s Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) policies, UNDP Libya will have only one electoral support project and UNEST experts will become the singular source of UN technical and advisory support to any type of election.

To this end, PEPOL is working closely with the UNDP Local Governance Project (LGP) – the former provider of technical and advisory support to the Central Committee for Local Elections (CCLE) – to ensure a swift and efficient transfer of responsibilities. The PEPOL project is supporting HNEC to accommodate its newly mandated responsibility for administering local elections.

To date, the HNEC has completed almost all preparations required for implementation of voter registration process in targeted municipalities. However, the voter registration process can only begin once sufficient operational budget is received from the government.

Drafting Regulations for Local Elections

In preparation for the local elections anticipated in January 2024, and with the development of the main regulation defining the major principles of the process, UNEST advisors have guided HNEC policy staff to develop the executive regulation for implementation of local elections as well as to draft regulations for candidate nomination; accreditation of agents, media, and observers; and voter registration. These have been presented to the HNEC Chair and are pending further discussion.

Output 1.3: Facilitate the procurement of sensitive and non-sensitive election material.

Material Assessments

Following the adoption of Constitutional Amendment 13, UNEST Advisors supported the HNEC to assess material requirements for polling, including the additional ballot boxes and polling kits required to accommodate the implementation of three national elections. At the request of the HNEC in February, an assessment of election material needs was conducted with the support of UNEST Advisors and submitted to the Board of Commissioners.

² The Law amends Law No. 8, effectively transferring responsibility for organizing and implementing local elections to the HNEC.

Data Centre Reconstruction

To accommodate results tabulation for the three simultaneous national elections (Presidential, HOR and Senate) required by Constitutional Amendment No. 13, the existing HNEC data centre has been relocated within the headquarters compound. The building previously used as the main warehouse was renovated for the purpose, with construction initiated in April and completed in September. The new centre will increase HNEC capacity to deal with tabulation of multiple complex electoral processes in faster and more transparent manner, including municipal elections.

Enhancing Electoral Security

Additional security equipment has been installed at the HNEC to upgrade the security systems, including security electronic equipment including handheld security metal detectors, walk through metal detectors, under vehicle search mirrors, rising bollards and improved gate motors – improving the safety and security of both HNEC staff and visitors.

Output 1.4: Deploy UNEST field presence to selected HNEC field offices.

This activity has been largely precluded, due to security conditions and lack of developments on the concrete implementation of national elections.

Output 1.5: Enhance HNEC capacities in electoral security, and in facilitating coordination between HNEC and relevant security agencies engaged in supporting electoral security at all levels.

In November in Gasr Banghashir, HNEC conducted an Electoral Security Workshop for 45 women Police Officers from the Ministry of Interior (MOI) from the Nawahi Arbaa area. The workshop introduced participants to the electoral process, and to procedures to be observed while securing the premises throughout the polling period, to strengthen the security of women's centre level polling stations. The event was conducted by the HNEC Operations Department (Election Security Unit and Procedures and Training Section) staff in collaboration with the MOI's Department of Electoral Security and Protection. The initiative is one in a series of similar workshops female police officers previously conducted in Tripoli, Benghazi, and Sabha.

In December, the project coordinated with the UNDP Local Governance Project (LGP) and the UNSMIL Security Institution Service (SIS) to conduct a workshop for 39 police officers from the MOI in the western region. Facilitated by the MOI Department of Election Security and Protection, UNDP and the HNEC Electoral Security Coordinator, the workshop familiarized participants with topics including the electoral process and legal framework, electoral security planning, cybersecurity, and risk analysis.

Expenses

During the reporting period, the project incurred expenditure amounting to USD 1,254,799.10 for this output.

B. Output 2: Develop HNEC institutional and staff capacities and raise awareness on the requirements of electoral processes that are transparent, credible and promote inclusive participation.

Output 2.1: Increase level of HNEC capacity for external communications through support to the HNEC Public Outreach department.

Specialized Advisory Support

In 2023, a specialised international Public Outreach Advisor was recruited by the project and assigned to provide direct, on-site support to the HNEC. The Advisor has supported the HNEC to achieve results, elaborated in the relevant sections of this report.

Output 2.2. Facilitate the development of a multi-year (public outreach) strategy and action plan.

Planning for More Effective Outreach

With the support of a specialized UNEST Advisor and in consultation with the HNEC's Women's Empowerment and Persons with Disabilities units, the HNEC's Public Outreach department (POD) devised a six-month action plan, outlining anticipated content, key messages and public outreach campaigns. With the approval of the Board of Commissioners, the plan has been in implementation since July; and extension is anticipated in the new year.

Output 2.3 Trainings and Workshops on thematic and general office functions

BRIDGE Training: Electoral Processes

With a view to strengthen understanding of electoral processes within the HNEC Headquarters, UNEST Advisors conducted a training of 29 staff from within its various departments in March. The participants were provided with an overview of the different types, characteristics, and roles of political parties, giving participants an opportunity to reflect on the current context in Libya.

BRIDGE Training of the Facilitator.

In collaboration with UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) and in partnership with the Electoral Affairs Department of the League of Arab States (LAS), the project supported two (one male and one female) HNEC staff to participate in a BRIDGE training of facilitators, held in Cairo from 23 July to 3 August. The event was designed to build the capacities of potential BRIDGE Workshop Facilitators, equipping them with critical and practical facilitation skills and knowledge, BRIDGE materials and methodology, so they can conduct workshops independently and strengthen internal capacities of the Commission.

Training of Trainers

Anticipating a swift succession of local elections in 2024, UNEST Advisors and their HNEC counterparts trained 24 newly recruited trainers in November. As an important component of both election preparedness and sustainable institutional capacity, these new Procedures and Training section staff members are now equipped to train others. In addition to regular support

to other HNEC departments and sections, they are poised to initiate the cascade-style training sessions that will be required in advance of future elections – including those anticipated in almost 100 municipalities, in 2024.

In December, another Training of Trainers was conducted in Benghazi for 21 participants (18 men and three women) from HNEC field offices in the east and south – including both new staff and experienced staff who had yet to receive such training.

ICT Training

In July, the project supported training of four HNEC staff (three men and one woman) in PRINCE 2 methodology. Globally recognized, PRINCE 2 (“Projects in Controlled Environments”) is a process-based project management approach that is scalable and can be tailored to accommodate the changing needs of a project, throughout its duration. The training is anticipated to improve HNEC staff capacity to manage both in-house and vendor-developed software projects.

In November/December 2023, 10 HNEC staff were trained in a) ICT Training Master #C Fundamentals for HNEC Staff from 6-11 November 2023 b) ASP.NET Core Entity Framework training 27 November to 1 December 2023 and c) SP.NET Core Web API Training from 4-8 December 2023 to address specific needs identified by the HNEC staff. The project is supporting the training of technical staff to acquire specialised skills in information and communication technology (ICT). In addition to enhancing their regular work capacity, the HNEC staff will also be better equipped to develop and maintain the electoral technology systems used by the HNEC. The training is part of a series of modules, each including examination and certification of participants.

Output 2.4: Integrate ICT in the administrative and operational functions of the institution including in candidate nomination, results management and OCV.

Election Results Management

Tally system and software in being refined to accommodate various electoral systems and sequencing potentialities. This includes simplification and alignment of tabulation with other HNEC systems; enabling automated generation of results display/broadcast (to expedite the process while mitigating possible errors); incorporation of mechanisms for availing reports as a component of result management; development of tools for algorithmic analysis of tabulation anomalies; and use of open source to enhance transparency. The results management system design is being reviewed to integrate the results transmission aspects of the mobile devices.

Triggers for checking validity of result forms have also been identified.

Internal Server Hosting

Due to issues with services provided by the Libyan Telecom Technologies (LTT) for hosting the servers used for the voter registration, the HNEC has established an in-house server room, and relegating the LTT location as the backup site. UNEST Advisors are currently supporting the HNEC to work with the supplier and to build technical resilience and security of its data centre.

Output 2.5: Learning, exposure and experience sharing through regional and south-south electoral experiences.

Regional Promotion of Women’s Participation

In May, UNDP collaborated with UNSMIL and UN Women to support HNEC to host a regional conference, “Enhancing Women’s Participation in Elections.” The two-day event drew over 60 participants from Libya and across the region³ to explore the most pressing challenges facing women in elections and politics, develop recommendations for electoral stakeholders and establish a mechanism for regional cooperation toward gender inclusive elections.

Participants included representatives of election management bodies and networks, governments, parliaments, media, women’s unions, and civil society organizations from across the Arab Region; and opening remarks were delivered by the Canadian and German ambassadors.

Violence against women (VAW) – including online violence – was a recurring theme throughout much of the discussion. In her own presentation, the HNEC Commissioner shared findings of derived through the eMonitor+ platform, used by the Commission to identify and quantify trends in online VAW in elections. Similar events will be conducted in an online forum in 2024.

In September, the relevant HNEC Commissioner, Minister of State for Women’s Affairs, one female Member of Parliament, and a representative of the Women’s Union⁴ participated in a Regional Conference on Women’s Participation, held in Cairo by UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) and the Arab Women’s Organization. Attended by ministers, parliamentarians, and heads of election management bodies, the conference, “Disrupting the Status Quo: Charting a New Path to Women’s Political Participation in the Arab Region” drew 70 participants from 11 countries and culminated in the adoption of a collective Statement of Intent.

In October/November, the relevant HNEC Commissioner and five Libyan women active in politics attended the [Arab Leadership Academy](#) conference, “Igniting Leadership and Connectivity for Accelerated Progress on Women’s Participation”. Hosted by the UNDP RBAS in Madrid, the event was designed to accelerate regional momentum, create a community of change agents, and build the capacity of women in decision-making roles. Featuring presenters from government, academic, human rights and electoral institutions, topics included advocacy for women’s political participation; leading in conflict, complex and uncertain environments; transformative, inclusive, and intergenerational leadership; strategic communication; and the role of men in promoting gender equality. A plan to roll out of the Leadership Academy in Libya is now being discussed within the HNEC, with a 2024 commencement envisaged.

³ 46 female and 21 male participants from Algeria, Comoros, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Palestine, Somalia, Tunisia, and Yemen; media (4 female and 6 male) from 4 TV channels and 2 newspapers

⁴ The largest network of women’s civil society organizations

Regional Promotion of Youth Participation

UNDP supported two Libyan youth to participate in the 21st University for Youth and Development conference in Molina, Spain. As part of a wider effort by the Regional Electoral Support Project⁵ to promote political participation of young people across the region, the week-long event in September was designed to build capacity for creative thinking, team building, problem solving, project management and leadership among peer groups. The event was hosted by the North-South Centre and the Council of Europe.

Regional Training of Facilitators

The HNEC Head of Procedures and a Staff Trainer from the Zilten field office participated in a Training of Facilitators event in Cairo, hosted by a joint UNDP/Arab League project in July/August. In addition to providing participants with skills for facilitating events, the regional conference introduced participants to practitioners with diverse backgrounds and experiences in the field of elections and exposed them to new perspectives and knowledge. They are now also semi-accredited as BRIDGE facilitators.

Exchanging Best IT Practices

From 16–29 October, a PEPOL Programme Analyst/software engineer participated in [DjangoCon US](#) in North Carolina. The annual conference brings together users to explore new ways of using the Django web framework. PEPOL shared its own experience in a case study, having developed a voter registration system – including an SMS option – using Django, Python and Celery. Of particular interest to participants was the generation of voter rolls and distribution to all 2,000 polling centres across Libya. Importantly, the code assigns groups of 500–600 voters to polling stations within the centres. The code then generates one list (PDF) for each station, listing all eligible voters assigned to it.

Output 2.6: Promote sustainability through effective coordination of electoral assistance.

Information Sharing Meetings

In June and December, the project hosted international election stakeholders in information sharing meetings with briefings from UNSMIL’s Head of Political Affairs; and UNSMIL Chief Electoral Officer and UNDP Chief Technical Advisor.

Annual Board Meeting

On 29 October, UNDP and the HNEC co-chaired the annual PEPOL Project Board Meeting in Tripoli. Expressing renewed support to the HNEC – now responsible to conduct both national and local elections – the project board approved the workplan for 2024 and 2025, including an extension of the project to 31 December 2025. The meeting was attended by the Ambassadors of Canada, the European Union, and the United Kingdom; and Deputies/representatives of the European Union, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Expenses

During the reporting period, the project incurred expenditure amounting to USD 734,894.72 on this output.

⁵ UNDP RBAS and the Arab Network for Youth in Elections

C. Output 3: Promote public participation in electoral processes through interventions that target and enable vulnerable groups to exercise their right to vote.

Output 3.1 Support the implementation of HNEC’s voter and civic education strategy through increased engagement.

Equipping Women as Community Outreach Ambassadors

In February, HNEC conducted a training of trainers for 26 Female Election Ambassadors (a group of Libyan women who have volunteered and been approved by the HNEC to act as election Ambassadors in their respective communities and spheres of influence) and their respective Public Outreach counterparts from the HNEC field offices. The training was designed to equip the Ambassadors with skills for training other women activists in their respective regions; and ultimately, to share knowledge to improve understanding of the electoral process and advocate for women’s participation in elections.

With a view to improve the system and magnify the impact of these Ambassadors, an HNEC Commissioner, and the acting Head of Public Outreach, held two online meetings with 17 female ambassadors in July. The participants exchanged their experiences of conducting outreach and advocating women’s participation in schools, universities, health clinics and other spaces in their own communities, as well as the challenges they had encountered. Specifically, participants cited lack of funds, appropriate meeting spaces and transportation – particularly in rural areas. They also expressed their need for additional information about electoral systems and processes; candidate nomination; skills for communicating with various demographic groups; and guidance for writing meaningful reports about their work.

Responding to these expressed needs, the UNEST Advisors supported HNEC facilitators to hold a training for female election ambassadors in September. Employing the BRIDGE curriculum, the training topics included women in elections and election concepts; communication and leadership skills; and methods for training other trainers.

In October, a second group of 22 female election ambassadors received the same training. Reflecting the success of the event, a qualitative evaluation of the exercise demonstrated a 27 per cent increase in knowledge, with participants scoring an average of 56 per cent on pre- and 83 per cent on post-training tests.

With a view to support, document and continuously strengthen efforts to promote women’s participation in electoral processes, the female election ambassadors have been provided with laptop computers, equipped with custom-designed software for reporting their work to the HNEC.

Supporting HNEC in Engaging Political Parties

In March, UNEST conducted a training for the HNEC officials on interacting with political parties. The facilitation of the event was also supported by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). Twenty-nine participants were provided with an overview of the different types, characteristics, and roles of political parties; reflected on the current situation in Libya; discussed their legislative framework; and considered how different electoral systems affect political parties, candidates, and the results of an election.

Better understanding of political parties and their importance as strategic partners is critical to the HNEC. In the context of elections, political parties will be important to voter outreach, education, promotion of transparency and accountability during observation of electoral operations through their agents – all of which contribute to the credibility of electoral processes and general confidence of the electorate. Moreover, when timely and thoroughly informed, political parties can play an important role in defusing misinformation, fake news, and rumours; as well as promoting inclusive participation.

On 19 June, the HNEC and the Open University of Tripoli organized the first gathering of the Political Party Forum at the HNEC Headquarters in Tripoli. Representatives of 15 political parties discussed revisions of the legal status of political parties, implications of Constitutional Amendment No. 13, and the role of political parties – including opportunities to advocate participation and transparency of the electoral process. Political parties expressed their interest to use the Forum as a vehicle for regular engagement and exchange of information with the HNEC.

Engagement of political parties will continue in 2024, in coordination with the National Democratic Institute.

Engaging Youth

Responding to a request of the national Students' Union, HNEC conducted a two-day training in March. In a session conducted by staff of the Procedures and Training section, all of 17 electoral committee members received instruction on polling procedures, with a view to develop polling procedures for elections within the Union.

In June, PEPOL supported the HNEC to host 122 delegates of the Libyan Youth Parliament (98 men and 24 women), under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office. Young Libyans from the east, west and south were introduced to topics including democratic citizenship; principles and legal framework for elections; the Parliamentary decision-making process; electoral administration; and the role of Arab youth. After having completed their training, the Youth Parliamentarians participated in a model parliamentary session on Government Accountability on Fuel Subsidies and voted on the proposals submitted. The event was designed to build knowledge and capacity among youth and to equip them as voters, candidates, and future leaders.

Improving Access of Persons with Disabilities

In March, UNEST Advisors held an online meeting with representatives of the Access Campaign, a national CSO, advocating inclusion of people with disabilities (PWD) in the electoral process and facilitating access to polling centres and stations. Emerging recommendations have been shared with HNEC for further consideration. Considering that polling centres in Libya are located in school premises, UNEST suggested that the Access Campaign should also continue approaching relevant authorities, such as the Ministry of Education, to voice their concerns about the disability-access of the polling centres.

With a view to better facilitate PWDs, events were held in Benghazi and Ajdabiya in August, elaborating mechanisms and measures taken by the Commission to make polling centres more accessible. Conducted by Public Outreach/ Persons with Disabilities Unit staff from the Tripoli office and attended by 30 persons in each of the offices, sessions similar events were conducted in September, in Tobruq, Derna, Al Baida, Ghadames.

Recognizing the need for greater support to both youth and PWDs, the project plans to recruit a Stakeholder Engagement Advisor in 2024.

Cultivating Future Women Leaders

A joint UN initiative (UNSMIL, UNDP, UN Women and UNICEF), Ra'idat is designed to increase and magnify the voices of young Libyan women in political thought, dialogue, and decision-making. The one-year programme supports 20 women (18 – 30 years) nominated from across the country to build their knowledge of elections, communication and advocacy skills, and capacity to act as leaders, both in their communities and in their country.

The inaugural session in September included introduction to equality and inclusive democratic elections. Following presentations of election-related content, participants reported: better understanding of basic electoral principles/women's role in elections; greater capacity for communication of election-related information/raising awareness among other women; and "increased self-esteem". Another notable comment was that "We learned that the individual has a right over the government to participate in decision-making."

Responding to surveys conducted on two of the three days, participants cited an average:

- Improved collaboration skills: 9/10
- Improved communication within a group: 9/10
- Improved critical thinking skills: 8/10
- Improved knowledge of elections: 7/10
- Change in perspective of women's participation in elections: 8/10

Responding to the expressed interest of participants to learn more about equality, elections, and human rights the project has produced a "handbook", outlining articles in international conventions and instruments, relating to the rights of women to participate in elections, national decision-making, and public life. This handbook will be distributed to Rai'dat participants in their February 2024, and will also be available online in Arabic and English, with hyperlinks to relevant documents, to facilitate sharing in social media communities.

Topics discussed in the second session in October included advocacy, debating and leadership skills, national reconciliation and peacebuilding, and effective use of social media platforms, including TikTok.

Sessions in the third session in December discussed women engagement in political processes, human rights commitments relating to electoral participation, and identification/mitigation of online misinformation and hate speech. Participants were also hosted by the HNEC, where they received a guided tour and presentations from several women HNEC staff.

On the final day of the last session in 2023, participant teams presented advocacy campaigns – designed using techniques they had acquired throughout the training – to UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and UN agency heads, whose votes recognized the best group efforts. Of the twelve winners were selected, six will travel to the European Union and six to the African Union, where they will meet with respective Members of Parliament and Commissioners.

Output 3.2: Support the design, development and implementation of inclusive voter education and awareness campaigns and materials.

Voter Registration Campaign

Anticipating local elections in early 2024, the HNEC has developed a pre-campaign that will be launched prior to voter registration, to inform and generate interest among voters. Of critical importance is to inform citizens of the need of link their national identification number to their phone number, to use the SMS registration function in advance of local elections.

The pre-campaign is scheduled to begin in early January 2024 (20 days in advance of the exercise). It will be launched with a press conference, already announced on HNEC social media channels, and will continue through the commencement of the registration via social media, and HNEC field offices.

The HNEC has also prepared a plan for voter registration campaign, running throughout all phases – from registration to card collection. This will include dissemination of information through a range of media (flyers, billboards, SMS, television and radio public service announcements, social media, and other visibility tools), with diverse messages targeting specific demographics, including women, youth, internally displaced persons, and other minority and language groups.

Activity 3.3: Generate data and analysis through surveys and mapping exercises, including IDPs and out of country.

Mapping Online Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWE)

In 2022 and 2023, PEPOL and the Regional Bureau of Arab States (RBAS) cooperated to support the HNEC in adopting customized technology/methodology for quantifying and analysing the nature, trends, and impact of online VAW in elections and politics (VAWE/VAWP). Experts from RBAS have also trained the HNEC staff to apply these tools to monitor trends over time and in relation to key political events.

The final phase of the eMonitor+ pilot and staff training was concluded in January. Monitoring activities now continue, under internal HNEC oversight, with data being updated on a dashboard that allows for quick generation of real-time statistics and infographics. The UNEST Public Outreach and Women's Empowerment Advisors are assisting HNEC staff to consider this data as they develop strategic action plans and public messages. Ultimately, the practice of data collection and analysis will help to understand the root causes of VAWE, anticipate challenges and develop audience-specific approaches to preventing and mitigating their impact.

Meanwhile, data has been shared with national electoral partners, including the Ministry of Interior, police, national women's groups and regional electoral management bodies, as a means of evidence-based awareness raising. In a recent session of the Ra'idat programme (in which young women are trained to serve as future leaders), the expert responsible for developing components of the methodology applied by monitors (a professor from George Washington University), presented ways for citizens to actively counter online hate speech.

The exercise was featured in [UNDP Arab States social media](#) during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (25 November – 10 December). A technical/analytical report of data collected during the pilot phase (27 August 2022 – 27 April 2023) is under final reviews and will be published by UNDP in 2024.

Developing an Inter-Agency Roadmap

In November, HNEC and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) conducted a workshop, "Towards an Inter-Agency Roadmap to Protect the Electoral Process from Digital Threats". Attended by one HNEC Commissioner, senior Public Outreach staff and UNEST Advisors, the exercise engaged participants to identify challenges related to technological development, consider mechanisms for enhancing the protection of the electoral process, and inform the development of a joint roadmap for media institutions and others in the field.

In a follow up workshop in December, partners developed joint recommendations for legal and institutional partnership with media, including a play for improving capacities and steps toward the creation of an independent platform for engaging with media during elections.

Output 3.4: Support and advocate for the strengthening of the newly established gender and disability units

Specialised Advisory Support

In 2023, a specialized international Women's Empowerment Advisor was recruited by the project and assigned to provide direct, on-site advisory support to the HNEC.

Expenses

During the reporting period, expenditure amounting to USD 1,128,447.84 incurred for this output.

D. Output 4: Raising the electoral awareness of local partners and institutions, enabling them to perform their roles effectively in the process.

Output 4.1: Strengthen HNEC’s legal department to contribute to legislation, draft regulations, and procedures.

Analysis of Electoral Laws and Potential Options

In April, UNEST Advisors prepared a set of documents, including analysis of the implications of the modalities defined in Amendment 13 on electoral laws, analysis of previous electoral laws, and potential options for modalities to be defined in electoral laws to be drafted in the imminent future.

The HNEC Chairperson met with members of the House of Representatives (HOR) appointed to the “6+6 Committee” tasked to develop electoral laws, and discussed issues related to modalities of the Constitutional Amendment and potential implementation challenges. Particular attention was given to the application of the formula for future HOR elections and the need to consider population and geographic factors in allocating constituency seats; and ultimately, the HOR concluded that the Constitution could require further adjustments to be applicable. In addition, it was agreed that communication between the HNEC and the 6+6 Committees should remain fluid, with HNEC providing technical advice to facilitate their work.

In May, at the request of the 6+6 Committee, the UNEST Chief Electoral Adviser (CEA) supported discussions on the development laws for presidential and parliamentary elections in Bouznika, Morocco, providing technical advice during the drafting process.

Round Table Discussion

In November, the HNEC hosted a roundtable discussion with representatives of academia and law to examine legal frameworks and the ways in which legislators can contribute to establishing a conducive electoral climate. Among their observations:

- The absence of a constitution has obstructed development of legal electoral framework; and has been the main cause of judicial and political disputes.
- Numerous and well-trained monitors, technical staff and equipment are necessary to effective oversight of the electoral process throughout the country.
- Judges specializing in resolution of electoral disputes must be prepared, understanding the role and responsibilities of the Commission according to law, and respecting its neutrality and independence as electoral management body. Judicial oversight should only occur in later stages and cases in which error or intentional misconduct is identified.
- The role of media in electoral processes is not clear. Foreign satellite media is difficult to distinguish from national media; and while social media is prevalent, its use/impact on elections is not well understood, raising the need for media regulation/legislation.

Output 4.2: Develop codes of conduct for key electoral stakeholders.

Code of Conduct for Parliamentary Candidates

At the request of HNEC Chairperson, Advisors from UNEST and UN Women have provided comments on a draft Code of Conduct for future Parliamentary elections candidates. Drawing guidance from the UN Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Advisors have recommended inclusion of reference to sex, opinion, political and other specific examples in relation to non-discrimination clauses; as well as respect for “the dignity and worth of the human person” and “the equal rights of men and women.”

Recognizing the potential impact of mis/disinformation, undermining and divisive expressions, Advisors also recommend stated commitment to refrain from sharing false, misleading, or provocative statements – both on and offline – regardless of intention. Similarly, candidates should refrain from undermining the integrity of the electoral process and the authority of the HNEC to deliver credible results.

Having observed the consistent under-representation of women in governance and the particular impact of online violence on their ability to participate fully in elections and public life, advisors also recommend that candidates be obliged to refrain from direct or indirect threats, harassment, comments of a sexual nature, comments that undermine the morality, integrity of reputation of other candidates and/or their families. negative group stereotypes name calling and sharing of photos/film without consent. They should also refrain from vandalizing or removing posters and campaign materials other candidates.

Output 4.3: Generate information, data and analysis, and the integration of relevant tools for the prevention of electoral violence and electoral fraud.

Election/Campaign Media Monitoring

At the request of HNEC, the project will extend support to include monitoring of traditional media during electoral campaigns. Based on the 6+6 draft Presidential Law (Article 57), the HNEC shall determine the controls and requirements for the utilization of public and private media in electoral campaigning, on the basis of equality and equal opportunities. In this regard, HNEC is also required to approved codes of conduct determining measures applying to media and candidates during the electoral campaign.

In the meantime, an expert consultant engaged by the project has delivered an inception report, mapping the Libyan media landscape and identifying potential challenges to monitoring of electoral campaigns. Notably, the inception report observes that:

- Most Libyan media are tied to the dominant political and military fronts and foreign powers and are being used as propaganda tools in favour of the different factions.
- Foreign based private satellite televisions represent the biggest challenge from the point of view of regulation and control during the future electoral campaign.
- The spread and influence of Facebook plays a decisive role in the dissemination of disinformation thus increasing a state of chaos and uncertainty.

Moving forward, a Media Monitoring unit within the HNEC could carry out both quantitative and qualitative monitoring on traditional media (TV, radio, and print news), to assess candidates media presence and tone of media coverage. Monitoring could also be extended to the hate speech and disinformation.

In the meantime, a draft candidate campaign regulation drafted by the General Authority for Monitoring Media Context, requiring candidates to refrain from disseminating disinformation and hate speech in media, is currently under revision by the HNEC with UNEST advisory support.

Output 4.4: Facilitate communication, planning and coordination between HNEC and authorities directly related to the electoral process.

In 2023, UNEST Advisors have facilitated communication and coordination between the HNEC and:

- **Central Registration Authority (CRA)** – Developing an accurate, integrated voter register to inform both local and national elections.
- **General Information Authority (GIA)** – Building the means to ensure that SMS registrations are from the phone number belonging to the applicant.
- **General Authority for Monitoring Media Context (GAMMC)** – Exploring possible cooperation on monitoring media coverage during the electoral process and particularly during the campaign period.
- **Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MWA)** – Seeking opportunities for cooperation in support of an inclusive electoral process. Most notably, HNEC and the MWA have collaborated in support of the Ra’idat programme, jointly nominating participants and identifying focal points in both institutes to ensure continued exchange and coordination.
- **Ministry of Interior/Police** – Conducting training of police officers in election principles and procedures for securing men’s and women’s polling stations. Fostering coordination on development of the electoral operations security plan, once parameters for implementation are established.
- **Ministry of Education** – Constant liaison on provision of registration/polling venues and staff, with special emphasis on facilitation/accessibility for PWDs.

Expenses

During the reporting period, expenditure amounting to USD 49,816.90 incurred for this output.

E. Output 5: Project is effectively managed.

Financial Resources

Financial resources are elaborated in the Annexes at the end of this report.

Human Resources

In 2023, UNDP recruited the Chief Technical Advisor/Programme Manager against the vacant position. The project also recruited a Public Outreach officer, Women's Empowerment Advisor, and national Women's Empowerment Officer. The Women's Empowerment Officer has since been employed by UNSMIL and will not be replaced.

In 2024, the project envisages recruitment of a Legal Advisor, Stakeholder Engagement Specialist, and a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, subject to continuing need and funding availability.

Women's Equality Seal Certification

In 2023, UNDP Libya was awarded with the [Women's Equity Seal](#), a corporate certification recognizing accomplishments of an office or bureau, following an intensive internal review process. The honour is partly attributable to the achievement of important benchmarks by the PEPOL project, including:

- Allocation of a specific budget for inclusivity related activities (benchmark 1.4);
- Use of branding and key messages to amplify the impact of UNDP Libya in advocating human equality (benchmark 4.2);
- Alignment of project planning with UNDP inclusivity programming guidelines (benchmark 5.2); and
- Collaboration with a key line ministry (HNEC) to address a substantive inclusivity related challenge (benchmark 6.1).

Technical Electoral Mission

At the request of the Government of Libya, UNSMIL and the PEPOL facilitated a UN Electoral Expert Mission deployed to assess all technical aspects of UN electoral assistance in Libya. With a view to determine the most appropriate means of support within the existing context, the Mission consulted with a wide range of stakeholders in Tunis and in Tripoli in May/June. Comprising representatives of the UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) and Northern Africa Division (NAD) of the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Peace Operations (DPO) and the UN Development Programme Regional Bureau of Arab States (UNDP/RBAS), the Mission has since presented its assessment in a report to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. These recommendations include:

- With the support and cooperation of the international partners present in Libya, UNSMIL to continue to build trust among political actors as well as to encourage and support initiatives aimed at creating conditions for inclusive political dialogue, trust in the electoral processes and peaceful dispute resolution regarding acceptance of results.
- UN to continue providing integrated electoral assistance to Libya, under the overall authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), in alignment with the existing Security Council mandate, UNSMIL strategic priorities, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

- Ensure continued effective technical assistance to the HNEC and all pertinent stakeholders involved in national electoral processes and to deliver technical electoral assistance in accordance with the approved parameters as outlined in the 2017 electoral needs assessment.
- Extend the current UNDP electoral assistance project (PEPOL) supporting the HNEC and national electoral processes until December 2025 to address ongoing needs for strengthened technical assistance, especially in civic and voter education, as well as women and youth empowerment. The UNDP electoral technical assistance project supporting local elections should be recalibrated in accordance with the new mandate that assigns the responsibility of conducting local elections to the HNEC.
- Continue enhancing the platform for convening discussions on the development of a code of conduct aimed at preventing VAW in political and electoral processes and the mission recommends further efforts in this regard.
- UNSMIL to continue efforts to promote effective coordination among international assistance to enhance information sharing, agree common messaging on key advocacy points and to prevent duplication of efforts.
- International observation and training of domestic observation organizations to continue being conducted by other international partners.

Expenses

During the reporting period, expenditure amounting to USD 1,192,392.04 were incurred for this output.

Table 1: Overview of Progress Toward Annual (2023) Targets

Indicators (Pro Doc)	Baseline (Pro Doc)	Annual Targets (2023 AWP)	Actual (Reporting Period)	Status/ Comments
1.1 Enhancement of HNEC's voter registration system	HNEC's voter registration system is based on SMS registration, including a card-generation component added in 2021.	Enhanced integration with CRA database of HNEC's VR system and added security features introduced	Partial	Security features introduced; CRA database yet to be integrated.
1.2 Number of registered voters vs distributed voter cards	In 2021, 2,862,147 voters were included in the voter register and 2,483,647 cards (86 per cent) were distributed.	In case of a new VR top-up exercise, the list is expanded with at least 5 per cent new voters. Voter card distribution is at least 90 per cent.	Not applicable	No voter registration in the reporting period.

Table 1: Overview of Progress Toward Annual (2023) Targets

Indicators (Pro Doc)	Baseline (Pro Doc)	Annual Targets (2023 AWP)	Actual (Reporting Period)	Status/ Comments
1.3 Percent of HNEC's technical readiness to conduct electoral operations	In 2021, HNEC was 95 per cent operationally ready to conduct elections (VR top-up conducted, operational plans developed, materials purchased, voter cards distributed, candidate nomination process opened, training in progress, ballot printing and OCV preparations halted, final candidates' lists not published).	HNEC preparedness and readiness for elections is at least 95 per cent (electoral timeline/calendar in place, operational plans revised, VR top-up conducted, preparations for ballot printing and OCV in place).	Having most recently developed operational plans, policies, and procedures for conducting elections in 2021, with the project support HNEC staff has gained invaluable experience and knowledge that can now be applied in future – and likely more complex – national processes. HNEC staff is experienced and better equipped to translate ideas into action.	Operational plans in place; material assessments conducted; facilities renovated; software amended; simulations complete; training of trainers conducted.

2.1. Capacity of HNEC's Management and ICT department to manage electoral ICT systems	In 2021, PEPOL supported HNEC with technical advice and software systems to enhance and successfully manage the voter registration system, OCV platform, results reporting and audit system, and tally scanning.	PEPOL supports HNEC with enhanced technical advice and provision of software systems to ensure sound management of VR database, OCV results and audit, and tally scanning.	Achieved	Various enhancements including limiting the ability of changes, applying controls within the family circle, additional controls around out-of-country registrations.
2.2 Capacity of HNEC's Public Outreach to promote transparent, credible and inclusive participation	HNEC's PO department could benefit from revised and clear strategy for communication with the public. HNEC Public Outreach has expressed the need for skills development and advisory support	An external relations strategy is designed, approved and implemented. Staff receive training in media, communications and other areas, according to identified needs.	Achieved	Strategy approved and currently being implemented; staff receiving direct, on-site advisory support.

2.3 International cooperation and regional learning sharing	PEPOL supports HNEC as actively participating member of association of Arab EMB	HNEC has closely engaged with Arab EMBs and other electoral entities to address common regional challenges and enhance inclusive participation.	Achieved	HNEC participation in five regional events, including one event hosted by the HNEC in Tripoli.
3.1 Voter turnout (percentage)	2012 GNC elections: 62% (female turnout 38%), 2014 CDA elections: 46% (female turnout 33.4%), 2014 HOR elections: 41% (female turnout 31%)	In case of elections, turnout is at least at the same level as in 2012 elections (62 per cent). Female turnout is 50 per cent.	Not applicable	No election in the reporting period.
3.2 Percent of Women participation in electoral	Following a 2021 VR top-up, 44 per cent of registered voters are women.	In case of a VR exercise, 50 per cent of newly registered voters are women.	Not applicable	No voter registration in the reporting period.

<p>3.3 Percent of initiatives undertaken by HNEC Women’s Empowerment and Disability units supported by PEPOL processes (registered voters, voter turnout, candidates)</p>	<p>In 2021, PEPOL supported the HNEC Women’s Empowerment Unit by organizing webinars.</p>	<p>PEPOL supports the HNEC Women’s Empowerment Unit in mainstreaming activities and initiatives.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Activities for empowering women have been expanded and increased; mainstreaming within the HNEC requires further action.</p>
<p>4.1 Legal framework for elections</p>	<p>4.1. 2021 Electoral Laws did not have constitutional basis and lacked wider political buy-in. In 2012 and 2014, elections were based on a draft Constitution and ad hoc legislation.</p>	<p>Revised electoral laws have inclusive political buy-in and a constitutional basis.</p>	<p>Partial</p>	<p>Constitutional basis for elections established through Amendment 13; resolution of some contentious issues by 6+6 Committee with support of UNEST Technical Experts; consensus on outstanding issues of contention being supported through dialogues convened by the UN SRSG to Libya.</p>

4.2 Inclusive Codes of Conduct	HNEC developed a Code of Conduct for women participation in elections and prevention of electoral violence.	Women's inclusivity components are integrated in Codes of Conduct for candidates, agents, observers, and polling staff.	Partial	Some initial discussions took place. No concrete documents produced yet as the electoral process has not started.
4.3 Mechanisms for addressing misinformation and hate speech.	4.3 A Trusted Partner relationship with Facebook allows for expedited response to reports of misinformation and hate speech.	HNEC develops platforms and tools to identify, prevent and mitigate the impact of misinformation and hate speech on elections.	Partial	eMonitor+ platform adopted for the purpose of identifying and raising awareness of VAWE in the form of misinformation and hate speech; tool may be expanded for wider purposes.
5.1 Project is adequately funded.	Project was fully funded in 2022.	Project is fully funded.	Achieved	Project fully funded.
5.2 Project is adequately staffed, as per the HR plan.	Project was 95 per cent staffed, as per HR plan.	Project is fully staffed, as per HR plan.	Achieved	
5.2 Unqualified audit report.	Project had an unqualified audit report in 2022.	Project has an unqualified audit report.	Not applicable	No audits conducted in the reporting period.

II. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS SPECIFIC RESULTS

At the end of April, UNEST Advisors and UNSMIL Experts facilitated a meeting of 17 women representatives from the HOR And HCS, to consider special temporary measures for ensuring women's representation within the legal electoral framework and in the next elected Parliament. UNEST Advisors presented electoral systems that would be most conducive to the purpose and consistent with the provisions of Constitutional Amendment 13. Representatives agreed to advocate for an electoral system in which the majority of seats is allocated through proportional representation with a closed list, alternating male and female candidates vertically and horizontally; and Advisors supported the delivery of recommendations to the 6+6 Committee.

Representatives also agreed on the need to establish a minimum proportion of Senate seats, within the electoral law. Ultimately, however, this resulted in the allocation of just 6 of 90 (6.6 per cent) to women.

Responding to a delegation of the Libyan Women's National Council in July, requesting that the Commission support increased representation of women in Municipal Councils, the HNEC Chair wrote a letter to the HOR in the same month: "The HNEC Board would like to support increasing women's seats in Municipal Councils, based on the draft Executive Regulation, to be presented to you later, which includes increasing the number of seats in Municipal Councils in general and the number of women's seats, in particular." According to HNEC Executive Regulation No. 43 on Municipal Council Elections published on 10 September, there are now up to three seats reserved for women in each municipality, according to its size.

Within the Commission, there is continued reluctance to adopt inclusive workplace and career development policies, conduct relevant training among all staff/departments, and to implement practical policies and plans for mainstreaming inclusivity throughout election plans. For more than one year, the position of Women's Empowerment Unit Head has remained vacant and the number of inclusivity focal points in HNEC offices is unclear.

III. PARTNERSHIPS

National Partner

HNEC is the legally mandated electoral management body, responsible to conduct national elections in Libya in accordance with provisions of the Constitutional Declaration and Law No. 8/2013. Between 2012 and 2014, the UN has supported the HNEC to successfully conduct three elections. Respecting national sovereignty and a political process that is Libyan-owned and Libyan-led, PEPOL provides technical electoral assistance to the HNEC, supporting its capacity and readiness to prepare and hold national elections. With the expansion of HNEC responsibility for local elections in 2023 articulated in Law 20/2023, the PEPOL support has been extended accordingly with the approval of the Project Board in October.

UN Project Partners

PEPOL comprises UNEST, an integrated team of technical experts from UNDP and UNSMIL. PEPOL also collaborates with UNSMIL experts from the fields of political affairs, public information, security institution reform, women empowerment, and human rights; and other UN agencies including UN Women.

International Donors

PEPOL receives diplomatic and financial support from Canada, the Czech Republic, the European Union, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

IV. CURRENT ISSUES

In addition to the risks elaborated in Annex 8, issues affecting in 2023 include:

Issue: Discriminatory Restriction of Human Rights

Several developments are recognized as deterrents to free and full public participation.

Following the activation of an Anti-Cybercrime Law in February, the UN SRSG expressed alarm over “a wave of arrests of women human rights defenders, accused of “offending Libya’s traditions.”⁶

Based on a Supreme Judicial Council opinion on civil society organizations (CSOs) in March, several laws are being developed, reflecting the restrictive provisions of Law 19/2001; and in May, Cabinet Decision No. 312 placed CSOs directly under the supervision of executive authorities. Some actors have already been observed to leverage these developments to their advantage.⁷

Since April 2023, the Internal Security Agency (ISA) in Tripoli has required all women traveling independently to complete a form, providing their names, place of work, passport, and phone numbers to authorities – and explaining the purpose of their travel. In addition to the risks inherent in having their personal details documented, women who travel for work with civil society organizations, as human rights advocates – and indeed as UN staff, national partners and/or participants in UN-hosted training and events – face a compound threat.

Several individuals have been detained for belonging to specific political parties and expressing their opinions in public. Such actions seriously jeopardize conducive environment for elections where freedom of speech can be exercised.

Mitigation: UNDP has encouraged Project Managers to arrange for *mahrims* to accompany women travelling for the purpose of UN work and events. UNSMIL consistently advocates for freedom of speech and against unlawful detentions. One of the main goals of the SRSG’s initiative is to create environment where all candidates and political parties will have opportunity to freely conduct their electoral campaign.

Issue: Politicized Terminology

⁶ <https://unsmil.unmissions.org/srsg-abdoulaye-bathily's-remarks-security-council-meeting-libya-27-february-2023>

⁷ Between 1 May 2022 to 30 April 2023, the UN documented eight reported incidents of arrest, death threats, and intimidation targeting women and human rights defenders cooperating with the UN. Notably, some victims have declined to lodge official complaints for fear of reprisal. (UN Common Country Analysis, 2023)

In 2022, the UN and the Libyan Government agreed to refrain from using the word “gender” – one for which there is no clear Arabic equivalent.⁸ In October 2023, the word was prohibited by the Libya Fatwa House. According to Resolution No. 2⁹, the term is contrary to the Islamic Sharia and should be prohibited by State authorities through deterrent legislation, with advocates of the term’s use prosecuted.

Mitigation: With a view to avoid provoking tensions, UN and PEPOL project staff have employed alternative terminology. Meanwhile, under the guidance of UNSMIL and UNDP leadership, activities that could provoke negative reactions will not be featured in official public channels, including social media platforms, in the foreseeable future.

Issue: Weak Judicial System

Judiciary remains to be politicized with number of major cases related to major legal documents pending at the Supreme Court for many years posing treat to obstruct electoral process at different stages. At the same time, the judiciary will need to play a major role during the electoral process in area of electoral dispute resolution. Without their efficient and impartial engagement, it is not possible to implement legitimate electoral process.

Mitigation: PEPOL continues to work with relevant stakeholders and international partners to strengthen the judicial system to tackle the issue related to electoral dispute resolution in 2024.

⁸ At the request of the Libyan government, meetings were convened on 11 and 12 October 2022 between the Government committee leading the coordination and consultation on the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Libya (2023-2025) that includes the Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Economic and Social Development Board, and the United Nations.

⁹ Resolution No. 2 (2 October 2023) from the hijri year 1445 by the Council of Sharia Research and Studies prohibiting the use of the term Gender.

V. LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons learned throughout the implementation of project activities in 2023 will be applied in 2024, with a view to improve outcomes and produce greater impacts. These include:

Lesson: Efforts to advocate inclusion of youth and persons with disabilities have been few and sporadic, lacking a clear strategic plan or any identifiable goals. In addition, the HNEC has yet to establish any practical plans for improving internal inclusivity.

Application: To enhance inclusivity efforts, the project will recruit specialized staff, to provide on-site advisory support to the HNEC as it seeks to engage youth and persons with disabilities.

Lesson: While training has been provided in relevant areas and according to identified needs, there has been no standard method for quantifying/effectively demonstrating the degree to which knowledge/skills have improved.

Application: In 2024, standard tools/mechanisms should be adopted and consistently used, to demonstrate the success of capacity development activities; and to make evidence-based adjustments, where required.

Lesson: As an election support/capacity development project, some of the foundational training material is based on BRIDGE. However, only one electoral Advisor is certified to deliver BRIDGE trainings and to certify others – limiting opportunities to equip (certify) national partners to continue internationally-recognized/standardized election training (and to certify others) beyond the project duration. In addition to BRIDGE, other training modalities should also be employed.

Application: The project should ensure that additional UNEST staff and Libyan counterparts are accredited as BRIDGE facilitators. Other training modalities should also be explored.

VI. FUTURE PLAN

Based on contextual developments, lessons learned, and risks/challenges anticipated, the future plans include:

- Expansion of practical support (financial and human) to accommodate the scope of the HNEC, which is now responsible for both national and local level elections;
- Development of policies, plans, procedures and technology required to accommodate multiple, simultaneous electoral processes at both national and local levels;
- Wider and greater HNEC engagement with stakeholder groups (particularly youth and persons with disabilities);
- Long-term sustainability of in-house capacity, equipping individuals and building systems to ensure duration of institutional sustainability and knowledge transfer beyond project duration.

VII. COMMUNICATION

Situation updates, political developments, and project achievements are elaborated across the websites and social media of project stakeholders:

HNEC Website

<https://h nec.ly>

HNEC Social Media

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HNEC.LY>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/LyHNEC>

UNDP Website/PEPOL Project Page

<https://www.undp.org/libya/projects/promoting-elections-people-libya-0>

UNDP Social Media

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/undp.ly>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UNDPLibya>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@UNDPLibya>

UNSMIL Website/News Releases and Statements

<https://unsmil.unmissions.org>

UNSMIL Social Media

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UNSMIL>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UNSMILibya>

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EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance Website Project Page

<https://libya.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org>

VIII. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Financial Table

a) Expenditure by output

Project Output Description		Expenditure	Commitments	Total
		provisional		
		in USD		
Output 1	Support the planning, preparation for and conduct of balloting events including OCV	1,254,799.10	2,323,212.83	3,578,011.93
Output 2	Develop HNEC institutional and staff capacities and raise awareness on the requirements of electoral processes that are transparent, credible and promote inclusive participation	734,894.72	273,551.36	1,008,446.08
Output 3	Promote public participation in electoral processes through interventions that target and enable vulnerable groups to exercise their right to vote	1,128,447.84	314,892.56	1,443,340.40
Output 4	Raising the electoral awareness of local partners and institutions, enabling them to perform their roles effectively in the process	49,816.90	158.00	49,974.90
Output 5	Project Management and Technical Assistance	1,192,392.04	262,227.69	1,454,619.73
Total		4,360,350.60	3,174,042.44	7,534,393.04

*Financial information provided above is provisional pending certified financial reporting expected no later than 30 June 2024

b) Donor contribution and funds utilization.

Sl. no.	Donors	Total donors commitment	Funds Received	Funds Utilized	Balance available funds	Receivables	
		2018-23	2018-2023	2018-23	as of 31 Dec. 2023	2024	
				provisional			
		in USD					
1	EU	13,415,740.00	13,415,740.00	11,358,624.52	2,057,115.48	-	
2	Germany	7,120,709.80	7,120,709.80	5,008,883.59	2,111,826.21	-	
3	Italy	4,034,256.47	4,034,256.47	3,073,498.43	960,758.04	-	
4	Netherlands	3,777,998.04	3,777,998.04	3,691,428.95	86,569.09		
5	France	2,822,334.33	2,822,334.33	2,417,856.22	404,478.11		
6	Govt of Libya	1,965,709.41	1,082,206.41	1,082,206.41	-	883,503.00	
7	Japan	1,728,767.66	1,728,767.66	1,728,767.66	-	-	
8	Canada	779,589.83	779,589.83	779,589.83		-	
9	UK	743,272.14	743,272.14	743,272.14	-	-	
10	Switzerland	165,620.54	165,620.54	165,620.54	-	-	
11	Spain	164,848.15	164,848.15	164,848.15	-	-	
12	Czech Republic	89,194.41	89,194.41	89,194.41	-	-	
13	UNSMIL	32,076.00	32,076.00	32,076.00	-		
	Total	36,840,116.78	35,956,613.78	30,335,866.85	5,620,746.93	883,503.00	

ANNEX 2: Monitoring and Oversight

Event	Date	Participants	Outcomes and Follow-Up Actions
Technical Electoral Mission	29 May – 8 June	EAD, NAD, DPPA, DPO, UNDP/RBAS; and national and international electoral stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment report provided to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
Project Board Meeting	29 October	Project donors (heads of mission +1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2024 Work Plan Approved• Project duration extended to December 2025

ANNEX 3: Training Log

Name	Subject	Dates	Trainers	Trainees	Number of Trainees	
					M	F
eMonitor+ Training	Use of technology and methodology to monitor trends in online violence against women in elections	15 – 25.01	RBAS specialists and IT developers	HNEC Public Outreach, Women’s Empowerment, and ICT staff	1	6
Training of Trainers	Training methods, presentation skills	5 – 9.02	HNEC Training and Public Outreach staff	Women Ambassadors and HNEC Public Outreach focal points (western and some southern regions)	13 public outreach staff	13 ambassadors
		12 – 16.02	HNEC departmental staff	Women Ambassadors and HNEC Public Outreach focal points (eastern and some southern regions)	10 public outreach staff	13 ambassadors 7 public outreach staff
Civic Education	Training/guidance for developing polling procedures for Student Union elections	7 – 8.03	HNEC Procedures and Training staff	National Students’ Union electoral committee members	17	
BRIDGE Training	Electoral Processes: Types, characteristics and roles of political parties within the legislative framework; and how parties, candidates and election results are affected by electoral systems	13 – 15.03	BRIDGE-accredited UNEST and IFES Advisors	HNEC staff	11	18

ICT Training (Tunis)	PRINCE (Projects in Controlled Environments) 2 methodology, a scalable process-based project management approach, which can be tailored to accommodate changing project needs, anticipated to improve HNEC capacity to manage in-house and vendor-developed software projects	11 – 15.07	Advancia Training Institution	HNEC ICT staff	3	1
Regional BRIDGE Train the Facilitator (Cairo)	Using BRIDGE methodology, this module is designed to equip experienced trainers to become potential BRIDGE workshop facilitators and to build sustainable capacity development within the HNEC	23.07 – 3.08	UN Electoral Affairs Department and the League of Arab States	HNEC Head of Procedures and a Trainer from the Zilten field office	1	1
BRIDGE Training for HNEC Women Ambassadors	Equipping volunteers to support advocacy across Libya: concepts of women in elections, electoral processes, communication and leadership skills, methods for training others as advocates, developing capacity among civil society actors	3 – 7.09	UNEST Advisors and HNEC Facilitators	HNEC Women Ambassadors		18 from west, 2 from east and 3 from south
HNEC Women Ambassadors Training	Topics included concepts of women in elections, electoral processes, communication and leadership skills, and methods for training other advocates	1 – 5.10	UNEST Advisors and HNEC Facilitators	Second group of HNEC-appointed Women Ambassadors		11 from west, 4 from east, 7 from south

Training of Trainers	Providing new HNEC staff with skills and knowledge required to implement cascade training of polling and call centre staff, sustaining internal capacity and ensuring preparedness of the HNEC to conduct simultaneous, large-scale electoral events.	5 – 9.11	UNEST/HNEC Procedures and Training section staff	Newly recruited HNEC staff	12	12
ICT Training (Tunis)	Master C# Fundamentals	6 – 11.11 27.11 – 1.12	Advancia Training Institution	HNEC ICT staff	12	2
MOI Women Police Training	Introducing women police to the electoral process/procedures for securing premises during polling.	21 – 22.11	MOI Department of Election Security and Protection, HNEC Policy and Training unit staff	MOI Women Police		45
ICT Training (Tunis)	ASP.NET Core Entity Framework	27.11 – 1.12	Advancia Training Institution	HNEC ICT staff	8	2
ICT Training (Tunis)	ASP.NET Core Web API	4.12 – 8.12	Advancia Training Institution	HNEC ICT staff	8	2
MOI Police Training	Introducing police to local election/procedures.	5 – 7.12	MOI Department of Election Security and Protection, UNDP Local Governance Project, HNEC Electoral Security Coordinator	MOI Police from the western region	34	5

Training of Trainers	Providing new HNEC staff with skills and knowledge required to implement cascade training.	10 – 14.12	UNEST/HNEC Procedures and Training section staff	New and existing HNEC staff, who had yet to receive such training	18	3
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ANNEX 4: Events and Workshops

Name	Subject	Dates	Facilitators	Participants	Number of Participants	
					M	F
HNEC Regional Conference on Women’s Electoral Participation	Exploration of challenges to women in elections and politics, development of collective recommendations for electoral stakeholders, establishment of a mechanism for regional cooperation toward gender inclusive elections	21 – 22.05	Hosted by HNEC and featuring the women’s voices and election experiences from across the region, with opening remarks by Ambassadors of Canada and Germany, and closing remarks by Resident Representatives of UNDP and UN Women	Representatives of regional election management bodies and networks, governments, parliaments, media, women’s unions, civil society organizations.	21	46
Political Party Forum	Dialogue: Revisions of the legal status of political parties, implications of Constitutional Amendment No. 13, and the role of political parties – including opportunities to advocate participation and transparency of the electoral process	19.06	Jointly hosted by HNEC and the Open University of Tripoli	Representatives of 15 Libyan political parties	15	
Libyan Youth Parliament		3 – 9.06			32 from west and east	8 from west and east

	Introduction to: Active democratic citizenship; principles and legal framework for elections, Parliamentary decision-making processes, electoral administration, and the role of Arab youth	7 – 13.06	Under the auspices of the Prime Minister’s Office, training conducted by HNEC Training department in cooperation with Public Outreach	Libyan Youth Parliament (created by the PMO, members elected in 2022 and representing all regions of Libya	33 from west and south	8 from west and south
	Mock Parliament: Session simulation on government accountability on fuel subsidies	17.06			65 from all regions	16 from all regions
Access to Persons with Disabilities	Information on HNEC mechanisms and measures for making polling centres more accessible	13 – 16.08	HNEC Public Outreach/Persons with Disabilities staff	CSOs concerned with PWD and HNEC Public Outreach department field staff	5 from Benghazi	25 from Benghazi
					20 from Ajdabiya	10 from Ajdabiya
Youth Civic and Political Participation Conference (Mollina)	Annual event, motivating and equipping youth to act as advocates and leaders.	17 – 24.09	UNDP Arab States/Regional Electoral Support Project	Two Libyan youth, selected by the project		2
RBAS Conference on Women’s Participation (Cairo)	Event culminating in adoption of a collective Statement of Intent and call for participants to revert with their own individual statements.	18 – 29.09	UNDP RBAS and the Arab Women’s Organization	Ministers, Parliamentarians, and heads of election management bodies. From Libya, attendees included the HNEC Chair, Commissioner Rabab Minister of State for Women’s Affairs and the PEPOL Gender Advisor	1	3

Ra'idat: Session One	First session in a one-year programme, designed to equip young Libyan women to act as leaders and advocates for electoral participation. Session themes included and introduction to human equality and inclusive democratic elections	12 – 14.09	UNSMIL, UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF	Libyan women (aged 18 – 30) from across all regions, nominated by the HNEC and other national institutions)	20
Ra'idat: Session Two	Topics covered in the second session of the one-year programme included skills for advocacy, debating and leadership; introduction to concepts such as national reconciliation and peacekeeping; media and hate speech; and effective use of social media platforms.	2 – 4.10	UNSMIL, UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF	Libyan women (aged 18 – 30) from across all regions, nominated by the HNEC and other national institutions)	20
Ra'idat: Session Three	Engagement of women in the political processes, campaign design and delivery, addressing hate speech, HNEC visit and tour, socio-political contributions of Libyan women, presentation of group campaigns to the UN DSRSG.	3 – 6.12	UNSMIL, UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF	Libyan women (aged 18 – 30) from across all regions, nominated by the HNEC and other national institutions)	20

ANNEX 5: Policy and Knowledge Products

Title of Product	Type	Partners	Status	Languages
Women's Right to Participate in Public Life, Governance and Decision Making: Declarations, Conventions, and International Standards	Information/ advocacy	UNSMIL, UN Women, UNICEF (Ra'idat joint-UN initiative)	Ready for print	English/ Arabic
Online Violence Against Libyan Women in Elections: Preliminary Findings and Stakeholder Recommendations	Research	UNDP/RBAS	Editorial review	English

ANNEX 6: Risk Log

#	Description	Type	Impact(s)	Probability and Impact	Countermeasures/ Management Response	Status
1	Lack of broad agreement on legal framework for elections	Political	Credibility of the electoral process may be undermined.	P: High I: High	Continuous analysis of developments and support to advocacy measures through UNSMIL's political unit	<p>UN SRSG is convening discussions among key political actors with a view to reach consensus.</p> <p>The country is still going through the legal transition without permanent constitution and electoral legislation. The (draft) electoral laws change frequently with adoption procedures that are frequently not transparent and often subject of appeals to the Judicial system. Absence of permanent/stable legal framework for elections doesn't allow electoral commission to take long term approach in developing its procedures and staff capacity. It also effects development of political parties and as well as development of civil society for participation in electoral process.</p>

#	Description	Type	Impact(s)	Probability and Impact	Countermeasures/ Management Response	Status
2	Lack of broad agreement on election timeline	Political	<p>Credibility of the electoral process may be undermined.</p> <p>Pressure on project planning and delivery may intensify with changing electoral timeline.</p>	<p>P: High I: High</p>	<p>Continuous analysis of developments and support to advocacy measures through UNSMIL's political unit</p> <p>Continuous capacity building and other non-election event specific interventions through the project</p>	Legal electoral framework determines an electoral timeline, pending agreement among key political actors.
3	Deteriorating security situation	Political, Security	Effectiveness of project implementation may be affected.	<p>P: Medium I: High</p>	<p>Continuous analysis of developments.</p> <p>Project planning in place for different security scenarios.</p> <p>Project coordinates closely with UNSMIL security and UNDSS.</p>	Security situation is currently stable, in comparison to recent years. However, it remains very fragile with armed clashes frequently occurring in different parts of the country. Presence and influence of armed militias creates a feeling of overall insecurity. Lack of state monopoly to use force creates overall feeling of insecurity, prevents a number of IDPs to return to their places of origin and hampers the prospects for credible electoral process.

#	Description	Type	Impact(s)	Probability and Impact	Countermeasures/ Management Response	Status
4	Main project beneficiary demonstrates lack of engagement in project implementation	Project Management	Effectiveness of project implementation may be affected.	P: Medium I: Medium	Project design and implementation mechanisms based on close engagement with beneficiary.	HNEC's engagement with the project and level of collaboration remains high. However, potential changes in the leadership might change it and create the situation where the counterparts will not be easily reachable. Engagement of other important stakeholders might vary across the areas of implementation.
5	Lack of coordination/ collaboration between UNSMIL's electoral and political units	Project Management	Quality and effectiveness of electoral assistance may be affected.	P: Low I: Medium	Project design includes mechanisms for close engagement between the two units.	Units collaborate regularly.

#	Description	Type	Impact(s)	Probability and Impact	Countermeasures/ Management Response	Status
7	Lack of/delay in state funding for core HNEC costs, including salaries and running costs	Political, Financial	Sustainability and credibility of HNEC as a key institution may be affected.	P: High I: High	Support advocacy measures for an adequate budget to HNEC's running costs, as well as election budget. Project planning is in place to respond to additional requests for assistance.	Project is adequately funded.
8	Limited availability of donor funding	Financial		P: Low I: High	Project design to be adjusted to available funding scenarios.	Project is adequately funded.