



## ENHANCING LEGAL AND ELECTORAL CAPACITY FOR TOMORROW Phase II (2012-2015)

### SEMI-ANNUAL PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT (1 January to 30 June, 2014)

## DONOR PARTNERS



Australia



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United Kingdom



United States of America

\* Carried-over support from ELECT I budget

\*\* Japan signed an agreement with UNDP to support the electoral process and the IEC, contributing to the ELECT II objectives outside the basket fund.

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**Project ID:** 00063078

**Duration:** January 2012 – December 2015

**ANDS Component:** Governance, Rule of Law, and Human Rights

### Contributing to NPP:

National Governance cluster:

- “National Transparency and Accountability Program” (component 3.7. oversight mechanism for elections);
- “National Law and Justice for All Program” (legal reform of the electoral framework);
- “National Human Rights and Civic Responsibilities Program” (component 3.2 increased effectiveness of IEC and ECC).

Human Resources cluster:

- “National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan” (NAPWA) (component 5: Public Education and Awareness Raising).

**CPAP Component:** Outcome 4: The state and non-state institutions are better able to promote democratic participation and be accountable to the public

**UNDP Strategic Plan Component:** Democratic Governance

**Total Budget:** USD \$ 338,157,793

**Annual Work Plan 2014:** USD \$ 158,007,755.13

**Implementing Partner:** Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan (IEC)

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**Project Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Specialist:** Filip Warnants



**PHOTO COVER PAGE:** A father and son from Herat province vote at the run-off round (14 June 2014) – Photo by ELECT II

## ACRONYMS

AGCHO	Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CD	Capacity Development
CDA	Capacity Development Assessment
CEO	Chief Electoral Officer
CoC	Code of Conduct
CSC	Civil Service Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CVE	Civic and Voter Educator
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DFC	District Field Coordinator
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General
EDR	Electoral Dispute Resolution
ELECT / II	Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow / II
EU EAT	European Union Election Assessment Team
FEFA	Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan
GIROA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIS	Geographic Information System
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IEC	Independent Election Commission
IECC	Independent Electoral Complaints Commission
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
FEFA	Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan
MoCIT	Ministry of Communications and IT
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Haj
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSCE/ODIHR	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
PEO	Provincial Electoral Officer
PERO	Provincial External Relation Officer
PO	Public Outreach
PSA	Public Service Announcement
SC	Security Council
SNTV	Single Non-Transferrable Vote
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TEFA	Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan
TEB	Tamper Evident Bag
TMAF	Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework
ToT	Training of Trainers
T&CB	Training and Capacity Building
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VR	Voter Registration

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With support from 15 donors, the UNDP project 'Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, phase II (2012-2015), or ELECT II, provides technical support to the country's two electoral management bodies: the Independent Election Commission (IEC), and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC). To avoid any conflict of interest, project support to the IECC is delegated to two subcontracting partners; the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

The 2014 presidential elections pave the way for Afghanistan's first democratic transfer of power to succeed President Karzai. Mandated by the Security Council, the United Nations supports the Afghan authorities in what is an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned electoral process, with an emphasis on promoting sustainability, integrity, and inclusiveness.<sup>1</sup>



A father (left) takes his son along to a polling station. Photo: ELECT II.

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<sup>1</sup> On 19 March 2014, the United Nation's Security Council's resolution 2145 unanimously accepted, extended UNAMA's mandate until 17 March 2015 and decided that the UN would continue to lead and coordinate international civilian efforts in Afghanistan, including the provision of support for the 2014 presidential election, the 2015 parliamentary elections and future electoral processes, while also helping to build capacity and to provide technical assistance to national institutions.

First election round: On 5 April, the IEC conducted the first round of Afghanistan's 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections. According to the final (presidential) results: 7,018,849 votes were cast, of which 2,524,773 (35.97%) were by women. After audit and recount, a total of 6,604,456 votes were considered valid, and 18,866 polling stations were declared as effectively open and active (out of the planned 20,795 polling stations). Turnout was regarded as surprisingly high and positive, with long queues in different centres. Observers, stakeholders, and media welcomed the enthusiastic turnout, despite bad weather and Taliban threats to disrupt the process. In most polling centres, voting was orderly and went according to procedures. Polling, which started at 7am, was extended from 4pm until 5pm. People queueing at the scheduled close were allowed to vote. There were a number of significant security incidents in the run-up to the election, in particular attacks on the IEC provincial office and its HQ in Kabul, as well as at Kabul's prominent Serena hotel, which was hosting a number of international observer organizations. On polling day itself, security forces were widely congratulated for having provided security to the process in Kabul and other main cities. The limited number of incidents on polling day in other areas did not disrupt the voting process.

On 5 April 2014, nearly seven million Afghans, 36% women, defied bad weather and terror threats to queue in long lines and cast their vote for the country's Presidential and Provincial Council elections.



A father carries his disabled son to vote in Kunduz. Photo: ELECT II.



On 15 May, after completion of the tally and audit process by the IEC as well as the adjudication of complaints and objections by the IECC, the IEC announced that from all eight presidential candidates, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah secured the lead with 2,972,141 of all valid votes (45%); followed by Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai with 2,084,547 votes (31.56%); Dr. Zalmay Rassoul with 750,997 votes (11.37%); Sayaf with 465,207 votes (7.04%); Hilal with 181,827 votes (2.75%); Sherzai with 103,636 votes (1.57%); Sultanzoy with 30,685 votes (0.46%); and Arsala with 15,506 votes (0.23%)<sup>2</sup>.

One of the main achievements of the ELECT II project is that after the first elections round, the IEC was widely commended for having successfully prepared and conducted the 5 April Presidential and Provincial Council elections. Also, the election results of the first presidential round were accepted by most key partners as well as the public at large, giving credit in April to the IEC. The main criticism related to a lack of full transparency regarding the release of contingency ballot boxes at the last minute when polling stations appeared to have run out of ballots. Furthermore, the IEC's communication of its tallying and audit-and-recount decision-making process was criticised for lacking full transparency, including delayed or insufficient level of polling details on its website.



A female election worker sits at her desk alongside her daughter at the polling centre in Kabul. Photo: ELECT II.

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<sup>2</sup> The three presidential candidates (W. Karzai, Naem, Wardak) who dropped out of the race, received a total of 40,838 votes.

Second election round: On 14 June, millions<sup>3</sup> of Afghans voted in a run-off election between the two leading candidates, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah and Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, as no one was able to secure on 5 April a majority of 50% + 1 vote. After the feedback received from the first round regarding lack of sufficient polling stations in certain areas, the IEC decided to increase the number of planned polling centres (6,365) and polling stations (23,136 - 60% male and 40% female) for the run-off election. Based on the 7 July preliminary results, out of the 23,136 planned polling stations, 22,828 actually opened (6,172 polling centres).



A voter in Kabul shows his ballot paper before he votes in the run-off round for the Presidential Election. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah is above and Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai is below. Photo: ELECT II.

On 14 June, the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, as well as the Special Representative (SRSG) for Afghanistan, Jan Kubiš, congratulated Afghans on the two rounds of voting. The SRSG stressed the critical responsibility of the IEC and IECC to “tally the votes in a transparent and accountable manner, resolve complaints consistently and efficiently, and to transparently release the results [...] with the utmost integrity and impartiality to protect the vote”<sup>4</sup>. The SRSG further underscored the need for candidates and their supporters to obey and follow Afghan laws and exercise restraint and patience, allow due process to take its course and respect the work of the Commissions, and accept

<sup>3</sup> The preliminary release of the results on 7 July showed a turnout of 8,109,496 voters (37.63% female); a number that was highly contested. It is expected that the UN supervised audit process will lead to invalidation of ballots.

<sup>4</sup> <http://unama.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=12254&ctl=Details&mid=15756&ItemID=38043&language=en-US>

the final results. The SRSG also urged the candidates to consider national unity and inclusivity as their top priorities in order to serve the interests of the Afghan people.

After accusations of fraud and bias, on 18 June Dr. Abdullah Abdullah withdrew from the electoral process, citing a lack of confidence in the electoral institutions. On 23 June, IEC Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Ziaulhaq Amarkhil resigned following accusations of fraud. On 7 July, the IEC announced preliminary results, which were rejected by Dr. Abdullah Abdullah.

The IEC recruited some 106,000 temporary polling staff nationwide to assist the voting process on both polling days. There was a rise in the number of female staff from the first to the second round, from 21.8% to 29.7%.

These preliminary results gave a lead to Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai (56.44%), ahead of Dr. Abdullah Abdullah (43.56%). Both candidates agreed on 11 July, through direct mediation efforts by US Secretary of State John Kerry, to conduct a 100% audit of all ballots, to take place in Kabul in the presence of international observers and supervised by the UN.

## **ELECT II support and activities**

IN the first half of 2014, ELECT II's support to the IEC was focused on organizing a national election in Afghanistan – by no means an easy task amidst major concerns such as malfeasance and security. Added to that, the logistics of delivering electoral materials across a mountainous country, with poor infrastructure, was a major challenge. ELECT II's support to the IEC included electoral and operational planning to support a wide range of activities, including public outreach, training, legal advice, external relations, and gender mainstreaming. Furthermore, ELECT II provided and consolidated recommendations to improve the electoral process based on lessons learnt from the first round. In the aftermath

A total of 3,900 lorries and 4,500 donkeys were used to move and retrieve 15 million ballots from some 6,200 polling centres across Afghanistan, for both election rounds.

of the second round, ELECT II provided technical input to mediation efforts by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), particularly in terms of the audit.

Assistance to IEC electoral planning and operations: During Q1 and Q2 of 2014, ELECT II advisors continued to assist the IEC with the implementation of the various plans that had been put in place in 2013 such as the security plan, a fraud mitigation plan, the procurement plan and public outreach plans. Furthermore, ELECT II was closely involved in the IEC's planning of polling centres and polling station locations as well as movement and retrieval

Around 1,450 civic and voter educators, of which 33% were female, reached out to people in the districts, to raise awareness and participation in the elections.

for the materials, in close co-ordination with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the International Security Assistance Force for Afghanistan (ISAF). Once it became clear that a run-off election was expected,

ELECT II accelerated the pace of its planning assistance to the IEC towards the new election date of 14 June. Within a challenging time frame of a month, the development and implementation of new electoral plans, procedures, and operations for the second round was a great achievement. Sound movement contingency planning underscored the success of the operations process: there were no significant disruptions to the delivery and retrieval of electoral materials, despite targeted attacks on certain road convoys during the second round.

Direct support to IEC electoral activities: ELECT II's role further expanded in 2014 to directly support the IEC with the preparations and conduct of both rounds of elections, in particular, but not limited to: international and domestic procurement of electoral materials; customs handling; packing and bar-code scanning of electoral materials per polling station; air transport of materials; software development for e-day reporting as well

ELECT II assisted the IEC with the design, procurement, and movement of 15 million ballots for both presidential rounds and another 15 million ballots for the Provincial Council elections.

as results tallying. For both election rounds, ELECT II procured election material (ballots, screens, boxes, ink, etc.) out of country for USD \$24 million out-of-country. Domestic procurement (transport services; radio

and television Public Service Announcements (PSA) conducted by ELECT II) totalled USD \$19 million for both election rounds. The most prominent electoral commodities purchased for both election rounds included the more than 45 million different ballots (two times 15,121,200 ballots for both presidential rounds, as well as 15,121,200 ballots for the Provincial Council election), 100,000 bottles of indelible ink; 50,000 bottles of ultra violet ink; 75,000 results release forms; 50,000 polling station kits; 15,000 polling centre kits; ballot boxes, etc. A total of 3,900 lorries and 4,500 donkeys were used to move and retrieve 30 million ballots to some 6,200 polling centres across Afghanistan, a similar operation with 15 million ballots repeated for the second round. ELECT II leased two UN helicopters to assist the IEC with delivery and retrieval of electoral materials, as well as personnel



A woman dips her finger in Photo: ELECT II

movement. From March until June, ELECT II helicopters assisted the IEC with 235 flights. Besides facilitating the delivery of electoral materials to the field, these helicopters were also extremely useful in the timely retrieval of results forms. With this explicit support from ELECT II, the IEC was able to commence swiftly with the tally process at its HQ. The importance of the ELECT II helicopters was even further underscored with the retrieval process of all 22,828 ballot boxes during the audit process in July. To keep track of sensitive

materials, ELECT II developed a sophisticated 'ballots and results form' tracking mechanism.

Public Outreach: ELECT II and the IEC conducted a nationwide electoral public outreach campaign for the 2014 elections. Public outreach focused on encouraging Afghans to participate in the elections. ELECT II was closely involved in the planning and preparation of the IEC's electoral public outreach campaign, both urban and rural. Key elements of the public outreach campaign included dissemination of some 50 elections-related

During the six months, approximately 25 million listeners and up to 13 million viewers were reached by 50 IEC electoral messages (in Dari and Pashto) through 28 TV stations and 50 radio stations contracted by ELECT II

informational and motivational messages, broadcasted on 50 radio and 28 television stations. Furthermore, ELECT II helped the IEC to train some 1,450 civic and voter educators at the district level for face-to-face interactions and distribution of

electoral leaflets. The educators held mobile theatres in each province, targeting illiterate people twice per provincial capital. They conducted some 200 local and provincial level stakeholder consultations and workshops with local government partners, prominent community and religious leaders, civil society groups, women networks, and youth representatives. The IEC Call Centre, established with ELECT II support, had received since its inception in August 2014 more than 1.8 million calls from Afghan citizens with queries about the electoral process. Furthermore, through ELECT II procurement, the following items were purchased for the IEC's indirect public outreach: 400,000 stickers; 1.7 million mock and sample ballots for training and outreach; 851 billboards; 10,000 poll signs; 1.6 million brochures; 600,000 posters; 4.8 million leaflets; two million factsheets; 200,000 calendars; 200,000 pocket calendars; and 4,000 flipcharts and manuals.

Since its inception in August 2013, the IEC Call Centre has received more than 1.8 million calls from citizens with queries about the electoral process.

ELECT II Public Outreach Advisors assisted the IEC closely with the development of the overall public outreach strategy as well as the planning for specific activities. ELECT II Public Outreach Advisors also worked on planning and script development of radio and TV public service announcements, provincial mobile theatres messages, call centre factsheets with frequently asked questions, etc. All messages were developed in both Dari and Pashto. ELECT II Public Outreach Advisors also made sure that specific messages were developed for the country's nomadic Kuchi groups. The ELECT II Gender Advisor engaged the IEC Gender Unit and Public Outreach Focal Point to ensure that gender mainstreamed messages were included in the IEC's public outreach, as well as underscoring the development of specific messages and scripts to enhance female participation. An ELECT II

Graphic Designer assisted the IEC with the development of logos, banners, mock ballots for training and outreach, and the design of the original ballots including specific security features. ELECT II Procurement Specialists contracted 50 radio and 28 TV stations to broadcast electoral messages on a daily basis. They also took responsibility of international and domestic procurement of a wide range of printed materials used for public outreach. Finally, ELECT II recruited a monitoring firm that followed-up for the IEC on the activities of the district field coordinators. The key challenge for the project and the IEC regarding public outreach was insecurity. This made it extremely difficult to follow-up results in the field.



Young women queue to vote at a female polling station. Photo: ELECT II

Electoral recommendations and technical mediation support: On 30 April, ELECT II conducted an internal lessons learnt workshop to identify challenges and issues from the first round, and capture useful lessons learnt which were shared with the IEC for its lessons learnt workshop with staff from the Secretariat and the provinces on 22 and 23 May. Different key issues related to the lack of sufficient polling station planning during the first round, which lead to long queues of voters, as well as the IEC's insufficient transparency on results decision-making by the Commissioners and inadequate and or slow website updates. Annex 7 provides a detailed overview of recommendations and improvements that the IEC pledged to include in the second election round.

ELECT II's political-technical role in the electoral process was deepened after the second round, including offering technical inputs into UNAMA's mediation efforts between both candidates to resolve the conflict. Following mediation by US Secretary of State John Kerry and the UN SRSG Jan Kubiš, both candidates agreed on 11 July to a full audit of all ballots, under UN supervision. ELECT II's role adapted in order to bring a legitimate conclusion to this electoral process.

Ongoing advisory support to the IEC's departments and units: ELECT II continued with ongoing capacity development assistance to the IEC; in particular related to field operations and GIS, logistics, public outreach, external relations, media commission, legal, training, gender, archiving, finance, construction, and security.

Voter registration: On 2 April, the IEC announced the end of the voter registration 'top-up' exercise for the 2014 Presidential and Provincial council elections. With ELECT II assistance to the planning and process, this voter registration top-up exercise ran from 26 May 2013 until 1 April 2014. Within this period, 3,842,504 eligible voters were registered, out of which 2,507,657 were male and 1,334,847 were female (34.74%).

During its voter registration top-up campaign of 2013-2014, the IEC registered 3.8 million people, predominantly new voters, of which almost 35% are women.

The IEC's voter registration 'top-up' targeted mainly first time voters, as well as returnees, and people with lost or damaged old VR cards. The exercise was conducted in different steps: Phase I: 41 IEC provincial registration centres (26 May 2013 - 1 April 2014); Phase II a: district registration in 395 districts (from 27 July 2013 until 10 November 2013); Phase II b. 353 mobile district registration teams (October and early 2014). The IEC Gender Unit, with ELECT II input, conducted in February 2014 provincial seminars with stakeholders to discuss gender-related lessons learnt elements from the voter registration conduct, particularly in 2013.

## Gender

40% of all polling stations were allocated for women; 8,544 during the first round on 5 April and 9,218 during the second round on 14 June.

ELECT II assisted the IEC with ensuring that a sufficient and equally proportionally-distributed number of female polling stations were allocated in each polling centre. In this respect, on polling day on 5 April, the IEC opened 8,544 polling stations for women constituting 40% of the total stations (20,795). In the run-off on 14 June, an even higher number of female stations were opened, still ensuring that 40% (9,218) of the total planned 23,136 polling stations were female. On the downside, in more than 2,100 female polling stations, due to security and/or socio-cultural issues, the IEC was not able to recruit sufficient female staff, hence elder male polling staff workers were deployed there. Some observer groups stated that this could have dissuaded

female voters from participating or possibly created opportunities for fraud by discouraging female observers from monitoring those sites.



A young woman holding up her inked finger at a polling station in Kabul. Photo: ELECT II

With ELECT II support, the Ministry of Interior hired approximately 13,000 female body searchers to ensure security in more than 8,000 female polling stations.

In terms of turnout, the female turnout for both electoral rounds ranged between 36% to 38%, although the actual figures for the run-off election depends upon the final results after the current audit process.



A woman votes at a female polling station in Nangarhar. Photo: ELECT II

Article 30 (2) of the electoral law provides that at least 20 % of each Provincial Council seats shall be allocated for female candidates. Accordingly, out of 458 total seats, 96 are reserved for women. The actual number of elected female provincial council members will be available only after the release of the final results, currently halted due to the ongoing audit of the second round presidential election.

### Media Commission

As the IEC's Media Commission was officially inaugurated on 4 December 2013, the body was completely established well ahead of the start of the presidential candidates' campaign on 2 February 2014. ELECT II further assisted the Media Commission with the development of an official Regulation regarding 'Media Activities during the Electoral Campaign' (14 January) and procedures for media-related complaint adjudication (9 February), as well as guidelines for media coverage regarding the silken period. ELECT II also provided support to strengthen the Media Commission's external relations strategy and approach, including the conduct of consultative stakeholder sessions with journalists in eight different regions in February.



ELECT II assisted the Media Commission with contracting a third party media monitoring organization to provide unbiased weekly overviews of all media activities. On 23 April, the Media Commission announced the imposition of financial penalties to 14 media outlets (13 TV and 1 radio) for violation of electoral media regulations during the first election round. On 6 July, the Media Commission announced that 25 outlets (13 TV, 5 radio, 4 newspapers) had been fined due to violation of media regulations during the second round election.

## IECC

Support to the IECC is part of the ELECT II project document and its overall scope. However, administrative and operational support to the IECC has been delegated to UNOPS while IFES assists the IECC with electoral dispute resolution. Both organizations report to UNDP Country Office in order to avoid any conflict of interest given ELECT's role with the IEC.

Based on the Electoral Law, the IECC was only established in the second half of 2013 as a permanent institution: the HQ Commissioners were appointed on 16 September 2013, followed shortly thereafter by the recruitment of HQ Secretariat key staff. In this respect, the entire recruitment of the IECC's HQ Secretariat took place over several months and was only fully completed at the end of May 2014. The swearing-in ceremony of the 102 Provincial Commissioners took place on 18 February 2014, and the Commissioners were subsequently deployed to their duty stations beginning on 3 March 2014. Provincial Secretariat staff recruitment commenced in late February 2014 and was approximately 70% complete by March 2014. The remainder of posts — those which were non-critical for operations — were filled by June 2014.

The issue of co-location with the IEC in the provinces was also a factor that hampered recruitment and deployment of PIECC staff. The IEC had advised that office space would be provided for the IECC in IEC provincial offices. Of the 34 provinces, UNOPS supplied and installed 38 office containers in 24 IEC provincial offices. In five provinces (Daikundi, Samangan, Nangahar, Herat and Khost) IECC offices are not co-located with the IEC, while the IECC's Kabul Provincial Office is co-located at the IECC HQ.

In parallel with the recruitment and establishment of offices in the provinces, in the first quarter, the IECC registered and started the adjudication of challenges relating to candidate nomination. The filing period for challenges started on October 19; the IECC finalized its adjudication of presidential nomination challenges in November but continued the adjudication of provincial council election challenges until March 2014.

With IFES support, the IECC drafted and adopted its regulatory framework, including procedures, guidelines and forms, and prepared and conducted a series of trainings for all PIECC commissioners and IECC staff, both permanent and temporary. Ahead of the election, the IEC and the IECC also signed a mutual memorandum of understanding that facilitates co-operation between both institutions, in particular regarding the process of

addressing electoral complaints. IFES also advised the IECC in the development and adoption of an interim strategic and operational plan.

In March, with IFES support, the IECC held its first briefing for election stakeholders. In the briefing; the IECC presented the complaints adjudication process, including how, where, and when, to file a complaint. IFES also supported the IECC as it developed and aired three radio and TV PSAs during the first and second round of elections, revamped its website, conducted regular press conferences and conducted briefings for stakeholders in the provinces. Furthermore, the IECC produced brochures and posters that were distributed on 11 March to the PIECC staff with UNOPS and IFES support. This exercise was repeated in the second round and handed over during the refresher training held on 2 and 3 June.

April to June was a demanding period for the IECC and other electoral stakeholders. The first round of presidential and provincial council elections took place on April 5, and the presidential run-off election on June 14, with intensive preparations for and implementation of complaints adjudication. The IECC announced that it had registered a total of 2,133 complaints regarding polling and counting for the first round of the elections, including 921 complaints designated as “Category A”— complaints that could potentially affect the results of the election. Among these complaints, 297 were directly filed at polling stations or centres. The IECC also registered 80 appeals against PIECC decisions within the 72 hours legal deadline. Following preliminary results announcement by the IEC on April 26, the IECC registered 112 complaints against these results and nine complaints against the IEC’s invalidation of polling stations. Throughout this period, IFES advisers emphasized the importance of international standards and best practices, including judicially expedited decisions, pre-determined standards, established burdens of proof and standards of evidence, timely publication of decisions, case on its own initiative and complaints reports, and well publicized deadlines and timelines.

The adopted Law on the Structure, Duties and Authorities of the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission, provides for open complaints adjudication meetings that are accessible to media, observers and agents. With IFES support, for the first time in Afghanistan the IECC organized open sessions in which allegations and evidence were presented, and involved parties were given the opportunity to present their arguments. Despite security threats and political sensitivity, these sessions were well attended by candidates’ teams, agents, domestic and international observers and media. This series of open sessions enhanced the transparency of the IECC’s activities and set an important precedent for transparency in Afghanistan. IFES provided written and in-person advice to Commissioners and the Legal Department on how to hold open sessions, including preparation, publication, participation of agents and observers, presentation of cases and evidence.

Between the two rounds, the IECC focused on the lessons-learnt events and, with UNOPS and IFES support, identified challenges and shortcomings from the first round that

presented opportunities for improvement. The IECC, together with UNOPS and IFES, prepared and conducted a series of lessons-learned and refresher training events, including both central and provincial staff. The IECC and IEC also held a joint lessons-learned event.

The period following the presidential run-off election resulted in a high volume of complaints for the IECC to address. The IECC reported a total of 2,576 complaints filed related to polling and counting in the presidential run-off election, including 752 "Category A" cases (29% total). The PIECCs made decisions on 90% of the complaints (2,341 decisions) and imposed various remedies, including fines, invalidation, and recounts. The remaining 235 cases will be adjudicated by the IECC as 'exceptional circumstances' cases. After the publication of PIECC decisions, 135 appeals were filed by Ashraf Ghani's team within the legal deadline. After the PIECC adjudication period ended, IECC HQ began its adjudication of appeals and exceptional cases.

### Security

In the run-up to the first election round of 5 April, there was a general concern about the security situation and how it would affect both the turnout as well as the actual election process. The Taliban had threatened to disrupt the elections and warned people to stay home. On 20 March, an attack on Kabul's international Serena hotel, which hosted a number of international election observation and assessment teams, resulted in the reassessment of the field presence of most international observation groups. Amidst other casualties, also one team member of the National Democratic Institute, an international election observer group, was killed. On 25 and 26 March, the IEC's provincial offices of Kabul and Laghman, respectively, came under attack, resulting in at least two dead IEC staff amongst other deadly casualties. On 29 March, the IEC's headquarters in Kabul was attacked. Although there were no casualties, severe damage was caused to electoral materials that had already been procured for an eventual run-off election. A number of IEC staff members received threats and some temporary IEC staff were kidnapped. This resulted in several resignations.



A voter being searched by ANSF guards before he enters a polling centre in Herat. Photo: ELECT II

ELECT II and the IEC closely co-ordinated with ISAF and the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and the Ministry of Defense (MoD), which resulted in a three-layer security belt around each polling centre. National and international security forces also provided security for the movement of polling materials. In this respect, the rather limited number of incidents on polling day itself (5 April) did not disrupt the voting process as feared. Security forces were widely congratulated for having provided security on polling day to the process in Kabul and other main cities. This was also true for the 14 June election round, where polling itself went relatively smoothly. However, the run-up of the second round was tainted by the (failed) suicide attempt on presidential candidate Dr. Abdullah Abdullah on 6 June. On 14 June and directly before and after, the IEC recorded some 150 IEC-election-related security incidents nationwide. Most incidents, however, happened during the movement and retrieval of materials. The IEC lost in total a dozen of electoral officers during this period.

## **2. RESULTS**

### **OUTPUT 1: Sustainability of the IEC is enhanced via the development of both its institutional and staff capacities**

An underlying premise of the ELECT II project as outlined in the project document developed by UNDP, international donor partners, the IEC and the Afghan authorities, is the 'Afghanisation' of the electoral process; placing the IEC in a leading and managing role while the international community, including ELECT II, is a supporting partner. In this respect, a key objective of the ELECT II envisages the enhancement of the IEC's capacity to realize long-term technical sustainability; in order for the IEC to be able to organize upcoming elections in a credible, professional and successful manner with ever decreasing external international support. Staff capacity development and organizational strengthening, although reflected below in output 1, relates to efforts and activities across all seven outputs, as every implicit sub-objective in the other six outputs also encompasses an increased capacity development of the IEC. ELECT II advisors contribute to outputs 2 to 7 through passing on their knowledge and skills to their counterparts by being embedded on a daily basis at the IEC. They assist the IEC formally and informally with strengthening processes, procedures and practices; explore sustainable ways of implementation of plans; and assist in proper hand-over and archiving developed plans and guidelines, as part of a sustainable knowledge sharing approach.

#### **1.1 Organizational and Staff Capacity – electoral trainings**

ELECT II is assisting the IEC with capacity enhancement efforts targeted at individual staff, organizational and institutional levels. In Q1 and Q2 of 2014, the ELECT II Training and Capacity Building Advisor closely assisted the IEC with the development of training plans and materials in light of the presidential and provincial council elections. ELECT II was involved with the design of the cascade training programme on polling and counting procedures and processes. The cascade training started in February for the IEC HQ and provincial staff, as well as the 188 recruited provincial IEC trainers. Subsequently, they trained the 3,200 district field officers and later on around 100,000 polling staff members. In addition, tally centre operators received the required training to process the results forms in a correct way at the national tally centre. When it became clear that a run-off election in June was inevitable, ELECT II assisted the IEC with the programme of refresher trainings. These refresher trainings captured lessons learnt the IEC had identified from the 5 April elections during a two-day workshop on 22-23 May with from IEC HQ Secretariat staff members and all the Provincial Electoral Officers. ELECT II provided input to the IEC's lessons learnt analyses based on the project's own electoral lessons learnt from the 5 April

elections, internally conducted on 30 April.

Compared to the shortcomings of the 2009 Presidential and Provincial Council election, the IEC's technical preparation and conduct of the 5 April and 14 June 2014 elections can be regarded as an improvement in terms of electoral planning, processing and technical implementation.

A key challenge for the project to ensure long-term institutional sustainability includes proper capture of knowledge management practices beyond the individual level. ELECT II recruited before the start of the elections a Knowledge Management and Archiving Specialist to review and adjust the IEC's knowledge management systems. However, the short timespan between the first and second election round, followed in July by the audit has kept all energy and attention to the operational level. After the first round, encouraged by ELECT II, UNAMA and key international partners, the IEC held as mentioned above a useful lessons learnt workshop to identify and implement technical improvements to the process.

## **1.2 Legal framework, regulations, procedures and codes of conduct**

A robust legal electoral framework, including the structure, authority and duties of the electoral bodies is essential for the IEC and IECC to function as independent and sustainable institutions and focus on their mandate. As the President and Parliament approved in 2013 a revised Electoral Law as well as a new Structures Law of the IEC/IECC, ELECT II further assisted the IEC in 2014 with refining its electoral regulations and procedures in line with the Laws. In Q1 and Q2 of 2014, the IEC approved 16 Electoral Regulations and 24 Regulatory Decision, most of them drafted with input from the ELECT II Legal Advisor. Additionally, 6 Electoral Procedures for the conduct of the elections, drafted with input from ELECT II Planning and Procedures Advisor and ELECT II's Election Information Management Specialist.

On 9 February, the IEC endorsed updated Codes of Conduct for observers and political parties. The IEC conducted trainings for staff as well as different briefings for stakeholders to inform them on all Codes of Conduct. The ELECT II Training Advisor assisted the IEC Trainings Department that staff were trained properly on the practical impact of relevant electoral regulatory documents. ELECT II translators provided for swift and accurate translation into English of all IEC regulatory decisions, which also helped to keep international key partners abreast. All relevant documents are available on the IEC website. (For details: see below in the output 1 progress table.)

### 1.3 Physical infrastructure and security

The ELECT II Project Document foresees significant support to enhance the IEC's physical infrastructure, both at its HQ and in the provinces. In this respect, ELECT II has a team of national architects who assist the IEC with design and quality control of a wide range of constructions. Notably, by the end of June 2014, through ELECT II support, significant progress was made with the building of proper offices and warehouses on a land that the IEC owns in the provinces of Nangarhar, Laghman, Jawzjan, Herat and Bamyan. Due to weather issues, the schedule for a new office and warehouse in Paktia is behind schedule; whereas issues with land in Balkh, Kunduz and Daikundi made ELECT II and the IEC decide to change the construction plans to three different provinces. Besides the construction of complete new provincial offices and warehouses, ELECT II encouraged and supported the IEC in providing the necessary security upgrades in all other provincial premises wherever needed for both the 5 April and 14 June elections. The direct attacks on the IEC's provincial offices in Kabul province and Laghman close before the first election round indicated the necessity of security reinforcements of all IEC provincial compounds.

Similarly, ELECT II has been closely involved in 2014 in the security upgrades of the IEC's headquarters, in particular the reinforcements of the different walls, and the enhancement of the south gate with tightened security checkpoints. ELECT II also emphasized on proper deployment of inner security guards according to agreed procedures. On 24 March, ELECT II CTA Deryck Fritz sent a letter to IEC Chairman Nuristani urging immediate and comprehensive measures to improve IEC HQ compound. After the attack on 29 March against the IEC's HQ compound, also outer security was boosted by the deployment of extra security personnel from the Ministry of Interior.

#### **EXPENSES FOR Q1-Q2**

During Q1 & Q2 of 2014, a total of USD 4,818,144 was directly spent under output 1; added with USD 1,286,226 Japanese funding (7.1-7.2) also contributing to the achievements of output 1. As of 30 June 2014, the cumulative total for 'Institutional Capacity Development' is USD 6,104,370. For more details, please see Annex 2.

**Table 1: Progress Update Q1-2 2014 Output 1**

Below is a snapshot of where ELECT II is in relation to its annual targets

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1-2 Planned	Q1-2 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 1.1.a: No baseline</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.b. no structural database system established in the past to institutionalize a systematic way electoral data</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.c: lack of SOPs</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.d: 2012 post-training survey</p>	<p>1.1.a: (2014) Conduct of staff survey to gauge perception towards the IEC on the specified dimensions increased on business process efficiency and staff engagement to measure: 1. IEC perception as employer, 2) capacity development, 3) institutional efficiency</p> <p>1.1.b: (2014) An Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) database system and a Knowledge and Archiving System are developed and in place.</p> <p>1.1.c: (2014) implementation and review of all SOPs</p> <p>1.1.d.: (2014): 70 % of the staff trained in 2013 feel that that they are more effective in their job because of the offered training and capacity building opportunities</p>	<p>1.1.a. Development and implementation of staff survey</p> <p>1.1.b. Concept note finalized to IEC for development of Knowledge and Archiving system</p> <p>1.1.c. Ongoing implementation and review of SOPs</p> <p>1.1.d. development and implementation, if relevant during elections, of 2014 IEC (regular) training and</p>	<p>1.1.a. ELECT II assisted IEC in January 2014 with drafting the staff survey, including questionnaire allowing IEC staff members to evaluate impact of trainings. The staff survey was announced by IEC in February 2014. By lack of sufficient responses, the IEC closed the survey. No results could be extracted. With the focus on the electoral operations in Q1-Q2 (and ongoing in Q3), the idea of a staff survey can only be reconsidered once the next inter-election period starts.</p> <p>1.1.b. ELECT II recruited an Knowledge Management and Archiving specialist to assist the IEC improving its knowledge capacity as part of building long-term institutional memory. An in-depth review of the IEC’s information systems was carried out.</p> <p>1.1.c. See annex for all SOPs ELECT II assisted the IEC with. Development and implementation of Standard Operation Procedures for the IEC was completed by end of 2013. Renewed focus will take place after the election cycle.</p> <p>1.1.d. structured trainings of IEC staff in light of the conduct of the elections as well as cascade training of temporary IEC polling staff workers. The IEC cascade training schedule for electoral operations was as follows: February: 188 IEC provincial trainers (@IEC HQ); February: 1,450 CVEs and 3,200 DFCs (@IEC provincial offices);</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>1.1.a. As no regular capacity building trainings take place during the current ongoing electoral process, the idea of a staff survey can only be reconsidered once the next inter-election period starts.</p>



		capacity building programs	March - April: 100,000+ polling staff (@district level). March: training of 300 tally centre data operators (@IEC HQ). May-June: refresher trainings / first trainings for new recruitments	
Baseline 1.2.a: all existing electoral regulations are applicable for revision in case of a new electoral legal framework Baseline 1.2.b: All relevant codes of conduct, regulations and procedures need revision. "	1.2.a: (2014): the extent to which review electoral regulations and procedures for the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections are effectively implemented and review has taken place to identify lessons learned for the 2015 elections. With regard to the voter registration process, candidate nomination, campaign and campaign finance, polling counting, results tabulation.  1.2.b: (2014): the extent to which codes of conduct for ethical/electoral Codes of Conduct (CoC) for Electoral Officers, Observers, Media, Political Parties, Security Forces, and Government Officials have been successfully implemented during the 2014 elections and are reviewed for the 2015	1.2.a. All outstanding regulations finalized and approved before candidate campaign and electoral operations commence - Electoral procedures and regulations effectively implemented for the 2014 elections  b. IEC staff trained on ethical Code of Conduct. All other Codes of Conduct well communicated to relevant	1.2.a. (1) IEC approved in 2014 Q1-2 Electoral Regulations (16) <a href="http://www.iec.org.af/2012-06-21-06-19-20/regulations-procedures">http://www.iec.org.af/2012-06-21-06-19-20/regulations-procedures</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulation on Voter Registration</li> <li>Regulation on Accrediting Political Parties, Independent Candidates, Observer Organizations and Media</li> <li>Regulation on Registration of Candidates</li> <li>Regulation on Election Campaign Period</li> <li>Regulation on Managing Campaign Finance during 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections</li> <li>Regulation on Polling</li> <li>Regulation on Vote Counting</li> <li>Regulation on Tallying, Certification and Announcement of Election Results</li> <li>Regulation on Cancellation and Invalidation of the Votes as a Result of the Audit and Investigation</li> <li>Regulation on Participation of Agents and Observers of National and International Organizations in Open Meetings of IEC</li> <li>Regulation on Introducing New Vice Presidential Candidate In case of his/her Death, Resignation or Refractory Disease which are Hindrances to his/her Candidacy</li> <li>Regulation on Establishment of Media Commission</li> <li>Regulation on Media Activities during Elections</li> <li>Regulation on Temporary Electoral Staff Recruitment</li> <li>Regulation on Special Guests' Attendance at Different Electoral Processes</li> <li>Regulation on Validity Time, Archiving and Destroying Sensitive Electoral Materials</li> </ul> (2) IEC 2014 approved in 2014 Q1-2 Regulatory Decisions (24) <a href="http://www.iec.org.af/2012-06-21-06-19-20/iec-decisions-policies">http://www.iec.org.af/2012-06-21-06-19-20/iec-decisions-policies</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IEC Decision 1393-01: Draft Protocol between the IEC of Afghanistan and Central Election Commission of Russian Federation, presenting a replacement for Mr. Yonus Qanooni to Wolesi Jirga, Decisions of Independent Electoral Complaints Commission on disqualification of provincial council candidates and accrediting organizations that submitted their applications</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-02: Audit and recount of suspicious votes of polling centres/stations</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-03: Results forms without stamp and signatures</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-05: Regulation on nullifying and invalidating votes</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-06: Review of result forms sent to the IEC HQ without TEBs</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-07: Review of result forms of problematic polling stations</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-08: Regulation on nullifying and invalidating votes</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-11: Report of 444 PSs not included in the preliminary results</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-13: Certification of the IECC's decisions on presidential election</li> <li>IEC Decision 1393-14: Date of holding the second round of presidential election, Electoral</li> </ul>	On track

	elections	stakeholders.	<p>timeline in the second round of presidential election and Candidates' financial expenses and their campaign finance report in the second round of presidential elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-15: Announcement of preliminary results of 2014 provincial council elections</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-16: Determining and certifying polling stations for the run-off</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-18: Manner of announcing partial results 2014 Presidential run-off</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-19: Manner of distribution of result form copies to candidates, monitoring the female polling stations for which recruitment of female staff was not possible, and establishment of management committee in NTC</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-20: Manner of investigating the issues related to recount, audit, and invalidation of votes as a result of audit and all other issues related to tallying results for June 14, 2014 Presidential Run-Off Election</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-21: Reports of fraud received along with TEBs of 2 polling centres</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-22: Investigation of TEBs having problems</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393-23: Reviewing reports of ballot audit and recount of some polling centres in Balkh and Paktika provinces</li> <li>• IEC Decision 1393 - 24: Audit of all polling stations with 599 or 600 ballots</li> </ul> <p><b>(3) 2014 Elections Procedures approved (6)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run-Off Polling and Counting Procedures</li> <li>• Voter Registration Update Procedures</li> <li>• Procedure for Addressing the Media related Violations in the Electoral Process</li> <li>• National Tally Centre (NTC) Operations Procedures</li> <li>• Procedures And Guidelines Entry to the IEC Compound and observation Of The NTC</li> <li>• Audit and Recount Procedure</li> </ul> <p>1.2.b. On 9 February, the IEC endorsed updated Codes of Conduct for observers and political parties. The IEC conducted trainings for staff as well as different briefings for stakeholders to inform them on the following Codes of Conduct (approved by IEC in 2013):</p> <p><a href="http://www.iec.org.af/2012-06-21-06-19-20/code-conducts">http://www.iec.org.af/2012-06-21-06-19-20/code-conducts</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Code of Conduct for the Media</li> <li>•Political Parties and Coalitions Code of Conduct</li> <li>•Code of Conduct for the Observers</li> <li>•Code of Conduct for Electoral Staff</li> <li>•Code of Conduct for Candidates</li> </ul> <p>In addition, four presidential decrees have also been issued regarding the elections and which the IEC communicated to stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presidential Decree of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Code of Conduct of Security Forces in Election Process (2014)</li> <li>• Presidential Decree on Code of Conduct for Government Department Officials and Staff in 2014 Elections</li> </ul>	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presidential Decree on Non-Interference of Government Officials in 2014 Run-Off Presidential Election Process</li> <li>• Presidential Decree on Code of Conduct for Security Forces in 2014 Run-Off Election</li> </ul>	
<p>Baseline 1.3.a: The IEC owns 5 provincial offices and warehouses in the provinces</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.b: at HQ, existing space for training and data centre is not useable anymore</p> <p>1.3.c Physical security IEC premises is weak."</p>	<p>1.3.a: (2014): Construction of (7) IEC offices and warehouses 100% completed in Herat, Daikundi, Balkh, Jawzjan, Paktia, Kost and Kunduz; and of (3) warehouses only in Nangarhar, Wardak and Laghman - all buildings have proper quality certification and are well functioning. 14 other provincial construction works (offices/warehouses) identified, planned and construction commenced. Security upgrades 100% completed in Zabul, Ghor, Paktia, Khost, Balkh and Baglan (6) IEC provincial offices.</p> <p>1.3.b: (2014) 100% Finalization construction works IEC HQ regarding: North Wall, East Wall, West Wall, South Gate, watch towers, K span warehouse refurbishment, security offices and facilities.</p> <p>1.3.c. Internal IEC guard force (unarmed) fully trained and</p>	<p>a. Construction offices/warehouse s (10) as well as security upgrades (6) -if not delayed due to elections.</p> <p>b. construction IEC HQ West Wall, North Wall, South Gate 85% completed. Other construction ongoing.</p> <p>c. Internal IEC guard force (unarmed) fully trained and operational – enhanced outer security by Mol.</p>	<p>1.3.a. - 100% Completed: Nangarhar (W), Laghmand (W), Jawzjan (O/W)</p> <p>- 90% completed in Herat (O/W) and Bamyan (W) (Q3)</p> <p>- Started: Paktia (O/W) (completed by end of 2014)</p> <p>- Issues with land in Balkh, Kunduz and Daikundi: proposal to do construction instead for Saripul (O/W), Badakhshan (O/W), and Ghor (O/W); as well as to include Khost (O/W) (2015)</p> <p>- Security upgrades in most provincial IEC offices</p> <p>- most provinces share office space with IECC provincial staff.</p> <p>1.3.b. North Wall, West Wall, East Wall, South Gate including checkpoints: completed, although new upgrades continuing. Working on: Security Offices; Office / K Span Warehouse Refurbishment" (Asset Warehouse); Watchtowers for IEC Compound; Two RC Bunkers in IEC Compound; IEC Elevated Firewater Tank</p> <p>1.3.c. IEC guard trained and operational – further supervision and instructions remain needed. Outer security enforced given extra MoI personnel deployed (especially after 29 March attack).</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>1.3.a.</p> <p><i>Land issues in three planned provinces for IEC-owned offices and warehouses made ELECT II to opt for three other provinces (and adding a fourth one) – which implies a restart of the procurement and construction process for those locations.</i></p> <p>1.3.b/c. IEC HQ security upgrades remain ongoing attention</p>

	operational – enhanced outer security by Mol.			
Indicator1.4: IEC internal gender mainstreaming	See 3.4	See 3.4	See 3.4	See 3.4

## OUTPUT 2: A sustainable, long-term approach to voter registration in Afghanistan, which also promotes maximum participation of eligible citizens in the 2014 and 2015 elections, is developed and implemented

### 2.1 Voter Registration "top-up" exercise

On 2 April 2014, the IEC announced the end of the voter registration 'top-up' exercise for



the 2014 Presidential and Provincial council elections. This VR 'top-up' exercise ran from 26 May 2013 until 1 April 2014. Within this period, 3,842,504

eligible voters were registered, of whom 2,507,657 are males and 1,334,847 are females (34.74%). The IEC is in the process of compiling and retrieving this data.

The right to vote is the most basic element of a democratic election system. From the



Voter registration in a male centre in Bamyan (22 August 2013) Photo by ELECT II

individual's right to vote follows a duty of the election administration to facilitate effective exercise of that right through the

registration of voters. The 2013-2014 voter registration 'top-up' exercise paved the way for the 5 April 2014 presidential and provincial council elections. It has a primary focus on registering newly eligible and first-time voters. ELECT II was closely involved in the conceptual planning, as well as detailed operational planning, from procurement and packing of materials, to movement and tracking of materials. The project also assisted the

IEC with ensuring that gender-awareness was a key element being incorporated into different aspects of the VR planning, including the establishment of separate registration centres for women. ELECT II advisors further supported the IEC with public outreach initiatives to inform voters of their rights and encourage them to register, with a particular focus on women and youth.

As preparation of the presidential and provincial elections, the 2013-2014 voter registration 'top-up' was a very useful exercise for the IEC in terms of planning and logistics of country-wide operations. The main challenge related to the voter registry however refers back to the early conceptualization and voter registration planning stages in late 2012 and 2013, where the initial proposal of a comprehensive nation-wide registration exercise for all legitimate voters eventually had to be adjusted to a top-up registration campaign for predominantly first time users due to political reasons beyond ELECT II and the IEC.

Over the past ten years voter registration campaigns and 'top-up' exercises in Afghanistan have been conducted separately for the 2004 and 2005 elections, the 2009 and 2010 elections, and now the 2014 elections. This has led to a total number of 22 million distributed VR cards for all these elections, while in contrast the estimated voter population ranges between 12-13 million. Not only does this indicate the dramatic excess of legal voter registration cards in circulation. In addition, due to the different registration approaches, the IEC has not been able to compile all past voter registration data into a comprehensive voter registry. (For more information on ELECT II's and the IEC voter registration planning in 2012, refer to the ELECT II annual reports of 2012 and 2013, as well as the ELECT II sponsored voter registration feasibility study of July 2012.)

## **2.2 E-Tazkira synergies (electronic national ID card)**

Part of the ELECT II scope is to find synergies between the establishment of a sound voter registry and a future to be set-up civil registry. In this respect, on 12 May 2014, the National Assembly sanctioned the "Law on Registration of Population Records", which indicates a first step towards the establishment of a civil registry through the distribution of electronic national ID cards (E-Tazkira). Once an E-Tazkira project is raised under the Ministry of Interior, the IEC already confirmed earlier that it will cooperate to ensure that proper voter registration can be derived from the civil register in the future.

### **EXPENSES FOR Q1-Q2**

During Q1-Q2 2014, a total of USD 1,183,061 was spent for this output. For more details, please see Annex 2.

**Table 2: Progress Update Q1-2 2014 Output 2**

Below is a snapshot of where ELECT II is in relation to its annual targets

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1-2 Planned	Q1-2 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 2.1.a: 500,000 new voter ID cards were issued during the 2009/10 top-up exercise; only conducted at provincial capital level and following a wide-scale registration campaign in 2008 that issued 4.5 million VR cards.</p> <p>Baseline 2.1.b: previous voter registration campaigns appeared to have unreliable percentages of women</p>	<p>2.1.a: (2014) all 3 million+ voter cards distributed in 2013-2014 'top-up' prior to the Presidential and Provincial Council elections are properly verified and registered in the IEC database</p> <p>2.1.b. (2013): 30 % of the newly registered voters are women</p>	<p>a. Continuation of VR 'top-up' two weeks before polling day. Retrieval, verification, and proper filing of all VR documentation to HQ</p> <p>b. Analysis of female VR 'top' up campaign</p>	<p>On 2 April, the IEC announced the end of the voter registration 'top-up' exercise for the 2014 Presidential and Provincial council elections. This VR top-up exercise ran from 26 May 2013 until 1 April 2014. Within this period, 3,842,504 eligible voters were registered, out of which 2,507,657 are males and 1,334,847 are females (34.74%). The IEC is in the process of compiling and retrieving this data. During the next inter-election period, all data will be computerized at the IEC HQ data centre.</p> <p>The IEC's voter registration 'top-up' targeted mainly first time voters, as well as returnees, and people with lost or damaged old VR cards. The exercise was conducted in different steps: phase I: 41 IEC provincial registration centres (26 May 2013 - 1 April 2014); Phase II a: district registration in 395 districts (from 27 July until 10 November); Phase II b. 353 mobile district registration teams (October and early 2013.)</p> <p>As over the past ten years voter registration campaigns and 'top-up' exercises have been conducted separately for the 2004 and 2005 elections, the 2009 and 2010 elections, and now the 2014 elections, the total number of distributed VR cards for all these</p>	<p>completed</p>

			<p>elections is estimated to be around 22 million.</p> <p>The IEC Gender Unit conducted in February 2014 provincial seminars with stakeholders to discuss gender-related lessons learnt elements from the voter registration conduct, particularly in 2013.</p>	
<p>Baseline 2.2: to be defined once the e-tazkira project is established and implemented</p>	<p>2.2: (2014) MoU between IEC and Mol/MoCIT in place and implementation started once e-tazkira legal framework approved."</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>On 12 May 2014, the National Assembly sanctioned the "Law on Registration of Population Records"</p>



### OUTPUT 3: The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced

Sufficient voter information and civic education are necessary to ensure voters are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities as voters. Outreach initiatives can also ensure that voters have at least a basic understanding of the overall political process, and offices and institutions to be elected to ultimately serve the public interest. Significantly, ELECT II is supporting the IEC with the development and implementation of an integrated three-pronged information and public-engagement campaign being implemented through three IEC focal points: the Public Outreach Department; the External Relations Department; and the Gender Unit.



IEC billboard posted nationwide to encourage male and female first time voters to register and vote. IEC credit 2013

#### 3.1 Public Outreach

In Q1 and Q2, ELECT II was closely involved in the planning and preparation of the IEC's electoral public outreach campaign. ELECT II Public Outreach Advisors assisted the IEC closely with the development of the overall public outreach strategy as well as the planning for specific activities. ELECT II Public Outreach Advisors also worked on planning and script development of different public outreach activities, such as radio and TV public service announcements, mobile theatres messages in each province, call centre factsheets and Q&As, etc. All messages were developed in both Dari and Pashto. ELECT II Public

Outreach Advisors also made sure that specific messages have been developed for the country's nomadic Kuchi groups. ELECT II Gender Advisor engaged the IEC gender unit and public outreach focal points in ensuring gender mainstreamed messages are included in the IEC's public outreach, as well as underscoring the development of specific messages and script to enhance female participation. ELECT II graphic designers assisted the IEC with the development of logos, banners, mock ballots for training and outreach, besides the design of the original ballots including specific security features. ELECT II Procurement Specialists contracted through an open bidding process independent parties to broadcast electoral messages on 50 radio and 28 TV stations on a daily basis. In total, during the first six months of 2014, those 28 TV stations have an estimated Gross Rating Points of approximately 13 million viewers, with a peak of 400,000 viewers a day close to the second polling round of 14 June. Estimated data of radio listeners during the broadcast of electoral messages indicated up to 25 million people were reached. ELECT II further took care of international and domestic procurement of a wide range of printed materials used for public outreach (400,000 stickers; 1.7 million mock and sample ballots for training and outreach; 851 billboards; 10,000 poll signs; 1.6 million brochures; 600,000 posters; 4.8 million leaflets; 2 million factsheets, 200,000 calendars, 200,000 pocket calendars; and 4,000 flipcharts and manuals. ELECT II recruited a monitoring firm that followed-up for the IEC on the activities of the 1,450 civic and voter educators. The key challenge for the project and the IEC regarding public outreach remains the insecurity impossibility of field follow-up in the field given the insecurity.

### **3.2 External Relations**

The 5 April and 14 June elections brought the IEC in the middle of all attention. Structured and streamlined communications and external relations by the IEC are during this period of imminent importance given the wide expectations of all stakeholders and the public at large. An ELECT II advisor assisted the IEC with the development and implementation of an External Relations action plan with domestic partners: media, candidates and their teams, observer groups. In anticipation, during and the direct aftermath of the 5 April and the 14 June elections, the IEC conducted daily press conferences or briefings. After the second round, the IEC initiated with distributing daily updates to key partners to inform them on the technical part of the material retrieval, tally and audit process. The IEC further held regular meetings with the different candidate teams as well as with international and domestic observers. ELECT II also engaged the IEC in further enhancing online information sharing, by developing and posting on the IEC website regulatory documents, factsheets and FAQs, as well as geographic polling centre information and polling result. Margin for improvement included the IEC's sometimes meagre communication on voting information during the first round regarding, something also ELECT II had picked up in its lessons learnt analysis. To address this, during the second round, ELECT II assisted the IEC with releasing daily updates to key partners with the latest tallying information. Furthermore, the engagement of the IEC's provincial offices with provincial council candidates and local

stakeholders should improve in light of next year's parliamentary elections. At last, another challenge the project faced relates to the limitations of its capacity advisory support of structuring and streamlining 'political-tinted' public messages communicated by high-level IEC officials. ELECT II, together with efforts from the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General and key donor partners encouraged the IEC's leadership to respect internal communication guidelines and to make public statements unanimously, preferably at a press conference presided by all Commissioners and the IEC Chief Electoral Officer.

### **3.3. Candidate Nomination**

Candidate nomination for the 2015 Wolesi Jirga is scheduled for late 2014.

### **3.4 Gender**

(See separate Gender chapter)

#### **EXPENSES FOR Q1-Q2**

During Q1 and Q2 2014, a total of USD 4,244,457 was spent directly for this output, besides USD 5,621,817 spent under USAID-funded public outreach contribution (9.3). The cumulative total as of 30 June 2014 is USD 9,866,274. For more details, please see Annex 2.

**Table 3: Progress Update Q1-2 2014: Output 3**

The table below is a snapshot of where ELECT II is in relation to its annual targets

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1-2 Planned	Q1-2 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 3.1.a-d: Survey and Stakeholder Assessment along with secondary data obtained from external stakeholder data (i.e., Asia Foundation Survey, Democracy International Survey, and Altai's Media Landscape Study); Previous POD mechanisms; and quality of targeted messages and</p>	<p>3.1.a: (2014) the following public outreach approaches developed and implemented by the IEC: A. indirect: radio/TV PSA messages, radio drama, sms, billboards &amp; polesigns; B. deployment civic/voter educators (documentary/printed materials); mobile theatres, provincial and districts consultations, call centre.  3.1.b: (2014) at least 1 radio/TV PSA for women, at least 1 group of billboards/polesigns targeting women; at least 1 round of provincial consultations; mobile theatres include women participation component.  3.1.c: (2014) Call centre: 1 million calls (starting from 2013); Civic educators: approximately 2.3</p>	<p>3.1.a/b/c/d. All direct and indirect public outreach activities fully developed and implemented.</p>	<p><b>Radio PSA:</b> In total, with input from and procured by ELECT II, 24 Dari and 25 Pashto (<b>49</b>) radio PSAs have been developed and aired. ELECT II contracted through an open-bidding an independent group for the media placement on television broadcast. <u>50 radio stations</u>, national and local, were contracted to air the PSAs. While all messages also included gender aspects, four radio PSAs have been specifically developed to enhance female participation in the elections (2 Dari, 2 Pashto). Total PSA air time on all radio stations is <u>177,308 minutes</u>. See annex 8 for the full list. In total, those <u>50 radio stations</u> have an estimated outreach of almost <u>25 million</u> listeners.</p> <p><b>TV PSA:</b> In total, with input from and procured by ELECT II, 25 Dari and 26 Pashto (<b>51</b>) TV PSAs have been developed. ELECT II contracted through an open-bidding an independent group for the media placement on television broadcast. In 2014 in total 28 TV stations, national and local, to broadcast the PSAs. While all messages include gender aspects, four TV PSAs have been specifically developed to enhance female participation in the elections (2 Dari, 2 Pashto). Total PSA broadcast time on all TV stations is <u>11,843 minutes</u>. See annex 8 for the full list. In total, during the first six months of 2014, those <u>28 TV stations</u> have an estimated Gross Rating Points of approximately <u>13 million</u> viewers,</p>	<p>On track</p>

materials	<p>million people (40 people/day*36 days (7weeks)*1590 educators) ; Provincial consultations: 20,400 people (2 per province, average of at least 300 per meeting); District consultations: 20,000 people (at least 50% districts (depending security), 100 people per district). mobile theatres: 15,000 people (2*34 provinces, 200 people).</p> <p>3.1.d. (2014) at least 2.5 million people reached out to by TV and <u>15 million</u> by radio PSA, and <u>9 million</u> by polling day sms; 850 billboards and 10,000+ pole signs.</p>		<p>with a peak of 400,000 viewers a day close to the second polling round of 14 June. TV PSAs are also uploaded by the IEC on Youtube:  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ElectionAfghanistan">https://www.youtube.com/user/ElectionAfghanistan</a></p> <p><b>Call Centre:</b> Since the start of the process in August 2013, the IEC call centre has received so far <u>1,814,101</u> calls, of which <u>1,150,969</u> between 1 January and 30 June 2014. Around 13% of the calls came from women. The IEC received 462,174 calls related to the first round, and by end of June 2014 223,961 calls related to the second round. The IEC has 90 operators who respond to election related queries everyday including holidays from 07:00am to 08:00pm. Besides operational support, ELECT II also assists the IEC call centre with guidelines, instructions and fact sheets every operator, in line with the IEC’s general public outreach and external relations strategy. The call centre is expected to remain fully operational until at least the final results.</p> <p><b>Civic and voter educators (CVE):</b> The IEC recruited and trained in February 1,450 CVEs, of which 33% women. They have been deployed to the districts both for the first and second round of the elections, in particular raising awareness through face-to-face meetings and distributing leaflets and other printed materials. ELECT II hired a third party monitoring firm to assist the IEC in monitoring the operations of the CVEs, which overall was positive, but also identified areas for improvement, which included better training and improved planning in select provinces.</p> <p><b>Provincial stakeholder meetings:</b> In March, the IEC organized stakeholder meetings in all provincial capitals with religious and</p>	
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			<p>community leaders, government officials, civil society and women networks on the importance of participation by the public at large in the polling process. The average attendance per stakeholder meeting varied between 150 and 300 participants.</p> <p><b>Mobile theatre groups:</b> Between 22 February and 16 March, 68 shows with electoral messages have been conducted across Afghanistan, two per provincial capital. Each show attracted an average of 600 spectators. ELECT II facilitated the procurement of the company and provided input in the script, which included a significant gender focus, and was considered very successful and recommended to expand outside of provincial capitals in future elections (dependent upon security assessments).</p> <p><b>Public outreach materials:</b> ELECT II provided input and design for the development of a wide range of public outreach materials, as well as facilitated most of the international and domestic procurement for the following materials: <i>Stickers</i> 400,000; <i>Mock ballots</i> 406,000; <i>Sample ballots</i> – 1,300,000 (presidential and provincial council); <i>Billboards</i> – 851; <i>Poll signs</i> 10,000; <i>Brochures</i> – 800,000 (for IEC) and 800,000 (for CSOs) 1.6 million in total; <i>Posters</i> – 600,000; <i>Leaflets</i> – 2,400,000 (for IEC) and 2,400,000 (for CSOs) 4.8 million in total; <i>Fact sheets</i> – 1,000,000 (for IEC) and 1,000,000 (for CSOs) 2 million in total; <i>Pocket Calendars</i> – 200,000; and <i>Flipcharts and manuals</i> 2,000 (of each). From 16-20 March, the IEC organized an exhibition displaying all public outreach materials developed for the first round.</p> <p>The concept of radio dramas and sms alerts on polling day was</p>	
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			cancelled, but amounts budgeted for these activities were reallocated to POD activities.	
Baseline 3.2: zero – stakeholder interactions were in the past neither always systematically structured not consultative.	<p>3.2.a: (2014) At least 10 consultative stakeholder meetings a year with all relevant partners, take place in Kabul and at all the regional centres (depending on the security).</p> <p>3.2.b. (2014) At least half of all the consultative stakeholder meetings include a gender component</p> <p>3.2.c. (2014) At least 4 stakeholder meetings on annual basis with women groups</p>	<p>3.2.a: Structured External Relation's actions to engage inclusively all stakeholder and communicate on the elections progress and results</p> <p>3.2.b. At least half of all the consultative stakeholder meetings include a gender component</p> <p>3.2.c. at least 1 meeting of Gender and Elections Co-ordination Group"</p>	<p>In the run-up of both the 5 April as well as the 14 June elections, the IEC held frequent and structured meetings with the presidential candidate agents and their campaign teams, whether on Commission-level or organized by the Secretariat / External Relations Department. In the run-up of both elections, the number of meetings intensified to inform candidates on the latest updates regarding electoral preparations, the observers and candidate agents' accreditation process, campaign regulation, security, etc. The IEC also participated in high-level stakeholder meetings with the highest government officials, including the President, to urge all candidates to respect the electoral framework and process; as well as meetings with the international community. In the aftermath of the second round on 14 June, the IEC met both candidates and their teams to open the deadlock.</p> <p><u>Structured External Relations activities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Meetings with (mainly presidential) candidates – candidate teams:</i> on average, once per week since March – including meetings with candidates and meetings held with their agents. In addition, candidate representatives frequent the ERD for ad hoc discussions, and this occurs several times almost every day. Note: a lessons learnt from the 5 April 2014 elections was the lack of structured external relation meetings at the IEC provincial level with provincial council candidates.</li> <li>- <i>Meetings with observers (domestic-international):</i> 1 – 2 times per month during the election peaks in March, April, May and June; more frequently when the situation required it.</li> <li>- <i>Media events:</i> During the election peaks, the IEC conducted multiple <i>press conference</i>, from three times a day on E-Day to once a week, and <i>press releases</i>, in particular on E-Day events, the release of partial, preliminary and final results. Since April, the <i>IEC spokesperson</i> also</li> </ul>	On track

			<p>addressed the media daily around noon with update. As a lessons learnt from the first round, the IEC initiated during the second round with the release of <i>daily updates</i> to key partners, in particular regarding the tally process (and later the audit process).</p> <p>- <i>web-based communication</i>: The IEC improved its information sharing on the website throughout the two election rounds, with posting of each IEC regulatory decision, dozens of factsheets, GIS polling centre and station information, preliminary and final results, etc. Events are further covered on the IEC's facebook pages, while IEC TV PSAs are displayed on youtube.</p>																																																																												
<p>Baseline 3.3.a: NA Baseline 3.3.b: NA</p>	<p>3.3.: (2014) All provincial IEC offices (100%) are ready to roll out the candidate nomination process according to the timeline for the 2015 elections</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA – candidate nomination for the 2015 Wolesi Jirga is scheduled for late 2014.</p>	<p>NA</p>																																																																											
<p>Baseline 3.4.a: April 2013: a. fixed term staff+ long-term temporary staff: a-b) 57 women over 423 men (11%); 2010 elections: c) no baseline data found; d) civic</p>	<p>3.4.a: No new significant openings fixed staff/long-term temporary staff -&gt; Civil Service reform in 2015. - recruitment of all temporary elections staff: at least 35% gender balance</p> <p>3.4.b - Implementation of Gender Strategy for 2014 elections; - comprehensive gender components in TOT training for IEC elections staff ;</p>	<p>3.4.a: assistance to IEC for IEC female recruitment at HQ and provinces: - recruitment of at least 35% female temporary staff for elections</p> <p>3.4.b - Implementation Gender Strategy for 2014 elections - gender component ToT</p>	<p>3.4. a. <b>female staff</b> (I) <u>IEC office staff</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">% female IEC staff HQ</th> </tr> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Staff Category</th> <th colspan="3">Permanent Staff</th> <th colspan="3">Temporary Staff</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Female</th> <th>%</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Female</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Staff</td> <td>76</td> <td>11</td> <td>14%</td> <td>585</td> <td>72</td> <td>12%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ajeeran</td> <td>38</td> <td>2</td> <td>5%</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ajeeran Belmaqta</td> <td>76</td> <td>17</td> <td>22%</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Grand Total</b></td> <td><b>190</b></td> <td><b>30</b></td> <td><b>16%</b></td> <td><b>585</b></td> <td><b>72</b></td> <td><b>12%</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">IEC Female staff Provincial Offices</th> </tr> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Staff Category</th> <th colspan="3">Permanent Staff</th> <th colspan="3">Temporary Staff</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total</th> <th>Female</th> <th>%</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Female</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	% female IEC staff HQ							Staff Category	Permanent Staff			Temporary Staff			Total	Female	%	Total	Female	%	Staff	76	11	14%	585	72	12%	Ajeeran	38	2	5%	0	0	-	Ajeeran Belmaqta	76	17	22%	0	0	-	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>12%</b>	IEC Female staff Provincial Offices							Staff Category	Permanent Staff			Temporary Staff			Total	Female	%	Total	Female	%								<p>In progress</p>
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<p>educators 31% women (besides 7% Kuchis); DFC 19% (besides 6% Kuchis); g, h, i) no baseline data found. Baseline 3.4.b.: no gender strategy in place Baseline 3.4.c:</p>	<p>- Develop and distribution VR gender leaflets  3.4.c - establishment Gender Elections Co-ordination group that meets at least 10 times a year; - women elections engagement consultations (34) with community leaders, mullahs, women networks and other groups and individuals in all provinces, - VR + elections lessons learned seminars regarding gender issues during VR and elections (2*34 provinces + 1 national seminar in Kabul)</p>	<p>development - Develop and distribution VR gender leaflet (400,000)  3.4.c - at least 3 meetings Gender Elections Co-ordination group -gender presentations in general stakeholder consultations on electoral issues (CSO, Political parties, Media, Gov) in line with Strategy; - 34 provincial consultations on women participation elections - 34 provincial consultations on lessons learned women and VR "</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Staff</td> <td>130</td> <td>6</td> <td>5%</td> <td>1096</td> <td>259</td> <td>24%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ajeeran</td> <td>113</td> <td>5</td> <td>4%</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ajeeran Belmaqta</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>-</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Grand Total</b></td> <td><b>243</b></td> <td><b>11</b></td> <td><b>5%</b></td> <td><b>1096</b></td> <td><b>259</b></td> <td><b>24%</b></td> </tr> </table>	Staff	130	6	5%	1096	259	24%	Ajeeran	113	5	4%	0	0	-	Ajeeran Belmaqta	0	0	-	0	0	-	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1096</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>24%</b>	<p>(II) <u>Civic and voter educators (CVE)</u> Out of the approximately 1450 civic and voter educators the IEC hired from February onwards until completion of the second round, to conduct face-to-face public outreach activities in the field in the run-up of the first and second, 473 of them are female (<b>33%</b>).</p> <p>(III) <u>District Field Coordinators (DFC)</u> Out of the approximately 3,920 district field coordinators the IEC hired from February/March until completion of the second round, to assist in polling operations and to supervise polling centre managers, <b>681</b> (first round) and <b>519</b> (second round) of them are female (17%; 13%, respectively).</p> <p>(IV) <u>Polling staff</u> Out of the approximately 106,000 temporary polling staff the IEC recruited to assist the voting process on E-Day, <b>21,804</b> (first round) and <b>29,746</b> (second round) are female (21.8%, 29.7%).</p> <p>(V) <u>Female body searchers</u> The Ministry of Interior hired approximately <b>13,000</b> female searchers for more than 8000 female polling stations.</p> <p>3.4.b. <b>Gender awareness activities</b> - specific gender-election awareness trainings for IEC staff, CVE and DFC. - 400,000 gender leaflets printed and distributed, targeting literate population on women's role in elections</p>	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- gender elements incorporated in public outreach activities (see 3.1)</li> </ul> <p><b>3.4.c: Gender specific co-ordination meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 17 gender awareness consultations with Mullah's in Kabul</li> <li>- 8 gender co-ordination meetings in HQ</li> <li>- National Conference on Women and Elections (5 February)</li> <li>- 68 provincial meetings with youth separately for men and women</li> <li>- 68 provincial gender co-ordination meetings in each province (2*34)</li> <li>- 34 provincial lessons learnt meeting, one in each provinces</li> <li>- Lesson Learned meeting in Kabul withhold because of the delay in results.</li> <li>- 8 March: on the occasion of international women's day, the IEC organized a special event for stakeholders related to women's participation in elections.</li> </ul>	
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## **OUTPUT 4: The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner**

Output 4 relates to both the daily operational support for the IEC's functioning that ELECT II provides, as well as the management of the project's own resources mobilized to support the IEC. The former is broken down into services that - as per agreement between UNDP and the IEC - ELECT II provides for the IEC, and funds that ELECT II provides for the daily operations of the IEC that are managed directly by the IEC.

This output has a three-pronged focus:

- Enhancing the operational capacity of the IEC through advisory support in the areas such as Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, Administration, as well as providing the financial means for the IEC's operations;
- Proper management of ELECT II project resources;
- Providing support for electoral operations, in particular with regards to procurement, transportation, air transport and translation services.

ELECT provided considerable technical support in the field of operations of the IEC. This included the support by the procurement team to undertake critical sensitive and non-sensitive procurement for elections, asset management support during the election operations, general financial management provided by ELECT for the elections operations and regular operations of the IEC Headquarters and Provincial Offices.

The NIM Audit 2013 was also concluded with an Unqualified Audit Opinion and the report was satisfactory. For implementing the audit recommendations an Action Plan has been developed. To further strengthen the capacity of IEC, a Micro Capacity Assessment was completed and a capacity building plan developed to address the weaknesses identified by the report. Immediately after the completion of run-off elections discussions were started with IEC for integration of the ELECT and IEC operation teams and implementation of the capacity building plan through involvement of the Civil Services Training Institute and Ministry of Finance Procurement Policy Unit.

### **EXPENSES FOR Q1-Q2**

During Q1 and Q2 2014, a total of USD 5,583,024 was spent for output 4, added with USD 50,308 under Japanese funding (7.3) and USD 6,906,206 under USAID funding (9.4). The cumulative total is USD 12,539,538. For more details, please see Annex 2.

**Table 4: Progress Update Q1-2 2014 Output 4**

Below is a snapshot of where Output 4 is in relation to its annual targets.

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1-2 Planned	Q1-2 Actual	Comments
Baseline 4.1: Qualified auditor report (2012) - IEC	4.1. The IEC has an unqualified audit report	Guidance to IEC to properly use the IEC treasury account within MoF, according to Afghan financial and budget rules _> <u>implemented after 2015 elections</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The IEC has an unqualified audit report for 2013.</li> <li>- On 1 January 2014, ELECT II effectively implemented the National Implementation Modality (NIM) as agreed between IEC and UNDP.</li> <li>- In January 2014, the Ministry of Finance approved the IEC to open a Special Bank Account to manage UNDP funds.</li> <li>- In January 2014, ELECT II released a first NIM advance of USD 0.5 million for IEC expenditures in January and February.</li> <li>- In March 2014, ELECT II released the second NIM advance of USD 18 million for IEC expenditures for electoral operations and activities.</li> </ul>	On track
Baseline 4.2: a) qualified project audit report b) 2013: 90% budget execution c) 80% M&E compliance d) 1 PBM/quarter e) NA d)	4.2. a) unqualified project audit report rating; b) at least 80% project budget execution; c) 100% compliance with monitoring, evaluation and reporting plans; d) minimum of quarterly documented project board meetings (including virtual PBs); e) certification of payments to the IEC.	Audit of ELECT II 2013 by UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) At least one Project Board meeting per quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The 2013 UNDP audit for ELECT II is foreseen in Q3 of 2014.</li> <li>b) After Q2, ELECT II has a delivery rate of more than 50% of its annual 2014 budget</li> <li>c) compliance with M&amp;E plans: on track</li> <li>d) UNDP and the IEC organized a Project Board Meeting on 24 March 2014. A Project Board Meeting for Q2 was postponed given the ongoing electoral operations. The IEC and ELECT II hosted Technical Working Group meetings with donor partners on: 22 January, 26 February, 23 April, 11 May, and 21 May. In addition, definitely since April until now, ELECT II management have been meeting with high-level donor partners in electoral meetings convened/facilitated by UNAMA on average at least twice a week. During the peaks of the electoral</li> <li>e) All IEC payments in Q1-2 2014 were certified by UNDP/ELECT II</li> </ul>	On track

			finance team	
	4.3 support services for electoral activities ( 2014 elections; preparations 2015 elections) is provided in a timely and qualitative manner	Timely and qualitative support for 2014 elections, including procurement	<p>1) <u>Procurement</u>: ELECT II is directly involved in procurement of electoral commodities and other services for the IEC, out-of-country and domestic. For both electoral rounds, ELECT II procured out-of-country electoral commodities (ballots, screens, boxes, etc.) for US \$ <u>23,828,758</u>. (4,712,834 USD in 2014 on top of 19,115,925 USD already procured end of 2013.) Domestic procurement in 2014 for both election rounds totals USD \$ <u>18,953,350</u>: predominantly transport services (14,915,083), and TV and Radio PSAs (4,038,267).</p> <p>2) <u>Air transportation</u>: ELECT II is leasing to UN helicopters to assist the IEC with delivery and retrieval of electoral materials, as well as personnel movement. From March until June, ELECT II helicopters have assisted the IEC with <u>235</u> flights.</p> <p>3) <u>Translation and interpretation services</u>: ELECT II assists the IEC with translation from/to English of official documents, electoral plans, advisory notes and presentations/fact sheets; as well as with simultaneous interpretation services when required. In this respect, from January to June 2014, the ELECT II translation unit <u>translated more than 1,000 documents</u>.</p>	On track

## **OUTPUT 5: The conduct of polling, counting and results management operations by the IEC is improved**

Output 5 encompasses ELECT II's direct electoral assistance role: to assist the IEC with the conduct of the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections and the 2015 Wolesi Jirga and (possibly) District Council elections. The effectiveness of achieving this output, and the extent to which the 2014 and 2015 elections are prepared and conducted in a credible, transparent and accountable manner, will determine to a considerable extent the success of the overall electoral assistance dimension of the project. The elections are fully Afghan-led and Afghan-managed, and it is essential to underscore the decreasing role of the international community in this electoral cycle<sup>5</sup>. ELECT II plays a key technical advisory and operational support role for the proper conduct of the elections.

### **5.1 electoral operations**

In Q1 and Q2 of 2014, the substance of ELECT II's support was focused on output 5. ELECT II helped the IEC to ensure successful preparations and conduct of the 5 April and 14 June elections by assisting the IEC in its technical and operational capacity of electoral planning, logistical movement of electoral materials, E-Day operation, tally processing and results management. Already in 2013, ELECT II was intensely involved in the technical and operational planning of the 2014 elections, such as input to the development of an elections-operations plan, a security plan, a fraud mitigation plan, the procurement plan, public outreach plans, etc. In 2014, ELECT II advisors continued to assist the IEC with the implementation of all these plans. Furthermore, ELECT II was closely involved in the IEC's planning of polling centres and polling station locations as well as movement and retrieval planning for the materials, in close co-ordination with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the International Security Assistance Force for Afghanistan (ISAF). Once it became clear that a run-off election would be inevitable, ELECT II accelerated the pace to assist the IEC with planning towards the new election date of 14 June. Within a challenging window of merely a month, the success of developing and implementing new electoral plans, procedures and operations for the second round can be regarded as a major achievement.

ELECT II also was involved in direct support of the IEC's electoral activities, in particular, but not limited to: international and domestic procurement of electoral materials, customs handling, packing and bar-code scanning of electoral materials per polling station, air transport of materials, software development for e-day reporting as well as results tallying, etc. For both electoral rounds, ELECT II procured electoral election commodities (ballots, screens, boxes, ink, etc.) for US \$ 24 million out-of-country; while domestic procurement

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<sup>5</sup> Whereas the 2004 elections conducted by the Joint Electoral Management Body counted on more than 500 international advisors, the 2009 Presidential and Provincial Council elections on 160+ advisors and the 2010 Wolesi Jirga elections on 85 international advisors, the current project had a maximum of 60 international staff to assist the IEC during the peak moments of the preparation for the first and second round.

(transport services, radio and TV PSAs) conducted by ELECT II in 2014 totals USD \$ 19 million for both election rounds.

➤ The purchase of electoral commodities: For both electoral rounds, ELECT II procured election materials (ballots, screens, boxes, ink, etc.) for USD \$ 24 million out-of-country; while domestic procurement (transport services, radio and TV Public Service Announcements (PSA) conducted by ELECT II in 2014 totals USD \$ 19 million for both election rounds. The most prominent electoral commodities purchased for both election rounds include the more than 45 million different ballots (two times 15,121,200 ballots for both presidential rounds, as well as 15,121,200 ballots for the provincial council election), 100,000 bottles of indelible ink, 50,000 bottles of UV ink, 75,000 results release forms; 50,000 polling station kits and 15,000 polling centre kits, ballot boxes, etc.

➤ Transportation modalities for IEC locally deployed district field coordinators (DFCs) and Civic and Voter Educators (CVE), to move from the IEC provincial offices to the district hubs located in the various district centres or as close to as possible. While the IEC hired longer-term temporary staff i.e. CVE and DFC for the conduct of the 2014 elections, the project has been tasked to purchase the required transportation services for those IEC staff in the field. All preparatory planning works in relation to the 'invitation to bidding' (ITB) were executed by the project and the IEC, and the solicitation document included: (a) Schedule of Requirements and Technical Specifications, (b) Scope of Services, (c) Price Schedule Form. The evaluation was based on documents and information furnished by bidders in accordance with the ITB. Thus it is ensured that the tendering process conforms to established UNDP rules and procedures and meets the donor organization's requirements.

☐ Transportation modalities of material movement: ELECT II assisted the IEC's planning of movement and retrieval for the materials, in close co-ordination with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the International Security Assistance Force for Afghanistan (ISAF) A total of 3,900 lorries and 4,500 donkeys were used to move and retrieve 15 million ballots to some 6,200 polling centres across Afghanistan, for each election. The project supported the IEC with the transportation contract modalities. ELECT II has also been leasing two UN helicopters to assist the IEC with delivery and retrieval of electoral materials, as well as personnel movement. From March until June, ELECT II helicopters have directly assisted the IEC with 235 flights. These helicopters were extremely useful in the timely retrieval of the results forms to enable the IEC swift commencement of its tally process at HQ during both electoral rounds. Furthermore, together with ISAF and UNAMA air support, the ELECT II helicopters were also crucial in July for the retrieval of all 22,828 ballot boxes to Kabul during the audit process.

After the first election round of 5 April, ELECT II's role even expanded by providing electoral recommendations as well as foreseeing technical mediation support for the UNAMA's political offices and directly the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. On 30 April, ELECT II conducted an internal lessons learnt workshop to identify challenges and issues from the first round, and capture useful lessons learnt which were shared with the IEC for its lessons learnt workshop with staff from the Secretariat and the provinces on 22 and 23 May. Different key issues related to the lack of sufficient polling station planning during the first round, which lead to long queues of voters, as well as the IEC's insufficient transparency on results decision making by the Commissioners and inadequate and or slow website updates. Annex 7 provides a detailed overview of recommendations and improvements the IEC pledged to include in the second election round. ELECT II's political-technical role in the electoral process has deepened after the second round, including offering technical inputs into UNAMA's mediation efforts between both candidates to resolve the conflict; as Dr. Abdullah Abdullah disengaged with the process on claims of alleged bias of the IEC and the presidential palace in favor his opponent Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai. As the ultimate agreement between both candidates on 12 July, mediated by US Secretary of State John Kerry and the UN SRSG Jan Kubiš, foresees a full audit of all ballots under supervision of the UN, ELECT II's role is changing further in order to bring a legitimate conclusion to this electoral process.

## **5.2 Counting, tallying and results management**

ELECT II assisted the IEC with the development and implementation of software for e-day reporting, as well as tallying of the results. This reporting tool was a major improvement and provided live updates of open and closed polling centres throughout the day.

On 19 March, the "Regulation on Tallying, Certification and Announcement of the Elections Results" was endorsed by all Commissioners, as well as the "Regulation on the Participation of Observers and Agents in the Open meetings of the Commission". ELECT II Advisors provided input to the drafting process of these regulations.

Counting of votes for presidential and provincial council elections took place at each polling station, immediately after polling closed. After counting, polling station staff completed the results forms for both presidential and provincial council elections. There were four copies, of which one was placed in the transparent tamper evident bag (TEB) and sent to IEC HQ, one was placed in the ballot box with the counted ballots, one was shared with an observer or candidate agent (on a lottery basis if more than one is present), and one was displayed outside at a wall at the polling station. For the second round, it was decided that agents of both candidates received a copy of the results form, while no form was placed outside the polling station.

The primary copies of result forms were put in a polling station-specific bar coded envelopes and collected by Polling Centre Managers. All these envelopes went into the coded TEBs and were then be handed over to the DFCs. DFCs collected all TEBs from the



polling centres and further handed over them IEC Provincial Offices. IEC provincial offices entered details of all TEBs into provincial intake database and sent TEBs in sealed blue boxes to IEC HQ.



*Provincial council (green) and presidential (blue) results forms – images IEC*

All results forms were entered into the National Tally Centre database - developed with assistance of ELECT II advisors- through a 7-step/station process: station 1: Intake; station 2: Results Form Preparation; station 3: Data Entry of Results Forms; station 4: Double-Blind Data Entry; station 5: Forms Review and Correction; station 6: Quality Control; station 7: Archive.

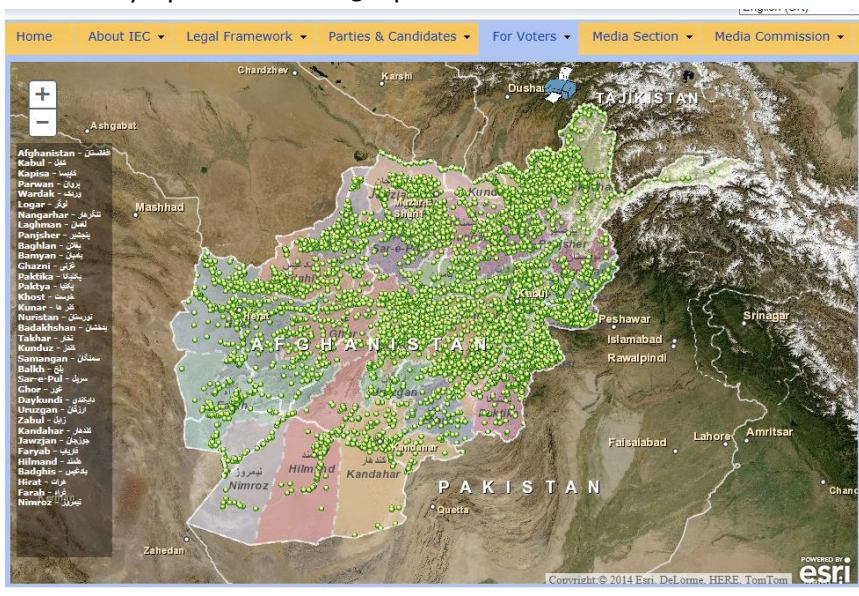
ELECT II further assisted the IEC with the testing of the tally software, as well as the provision of the highly available and secure hardware infrastructure. With ELECT II input, IEC developed a comprehensive approach for storing tally data back-up for disaster recovery at multiple locations. ELECT II also assisted the IEC with transforming its existing data operating centre into a national tally centre, including provision of IT infrastructure and layout adjustments. In the meantime, with the project’s support, the IEC has developed an online application to track polling day activities and progress. The National Tally Centre was open to agents, observers and media during operational hours. Prior to commencement of the tally operation, agents; observers and media were invited to the National Tally Centre to be briefed on how the National Tally Centre will operate.

After the 5 April elections, the IEC has been criticized for insufficient transparency of results decision making by the Commissioners, as well as inadequate and swift website information. With ELECT II support, provision of tally centre information as well as web-information has been improved for the 14 June elections. The release of the second round results was not finalized by the end of Q2.

### **5.3 polling centre location mapping**

ELECT II worked closely together to map equally across populations suitable polling centre locations. Already in April 2013, the IEC provided a list of 6,845 suggested polling centres. On 30 March, after additional reassessments by the IEC and the MoI in January and

February 6, the IEC announced the planned opening of 6,423 active polling centres, including 20,795 polling stations. (see IEC website: [http://www.iec.org.af/pdf/pc\\_list\\_2014\\_eng.pdf](http://www.iec.org.af/pdf/pc_list_2014_eng.pdf)) Electoral materials from polling centres that were not reported as opened on E-Day were automatically registered, and any potential votes from these locations were not to be counted. The list of planned polling centres for the 5 April elections was also displayed at the IEC's website (<http://www.iec.org.af/2012-05-31-16-45-49/pcmap>). On polling day, security incidents led to a number of polling centres to be closed, while some polling stations appeared to run out of ballots, resulting in a less than transparent release of contingency ballot boxes at the last minute. Ultimately, after audit and recount, 18,866 polling stations were considered as effectively opened for the 5 April elections.



<http://www.iec.org.af/2012-05-31-16-45-49/pcmap>

For the second round on 14 June, the IEC increased the number of planned polling stations to counter the issue on 5 April of long queues and the release of contingency ballot boxes. There were a number of security incidents against polling staff and security agents in the run-up of and during polling day, as well as in the aftermath when the materials were retrieved. According to the IEC's preliminary results (7 July), 22,828 polling stations were considered as open, still subject to audit.

<sup>6</sup> On 11 January 2014, the MoI shared with the IEC its new security assessment of the 6,845 proposed polling centres, of which it indicated 6,431 can be secured for polling day. The remaining 414 insecure centres (or 6%), located in 15 provinces, are taken off the list. The IEC submitted in the meantime in January 2014 an additional list of 323 polling centres for verification. On 18 February 2014, the IEC confirmed the list with maximum 6,775 polling centres, representing 21,663 polling stations, of which 8,958 are for women. Depending on security developments, the ultimate number of opened polling centres could be further reduced.

## EXPENSES FOR Q1-Q2

During Q1 and Q2 2014, a total of USD 15,969,298 was spent for output 5, together with USD 12,850,020 under Japanese funding (7.5) and USD 25,752,995 under USAID funding (9.5). The cumulative total for electoral operations as of 30 June 2014 is USD 54,572,313. For more details, please see Annex 2.

**Table 5: Progress Update Q1-2 2014 Output 5**

Below is a snapshot of where ELECT II is in relation to its annual targets

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1-2 Planned	Q1-2 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline: Baseline 5.1: qualitative statements in the observer reports of the 2009 presidential and 2010 parliamentary elections, respectively (Baseline: 2009 EU and OSCE reports)</p>	<p>5.1: (2014) improved statistical reporting and procedural and administrative error reduction measured, as well as qualitative statements in observer reports, which indicate the successful conduct of elections, acceptable to the Afghan electorate, aiming to achieve transition of political power.</p>	<p>(1) Deployment of materials in place; (2) Recruitment and training of approximately 100,000 temporary staff (3) successful operation of elections in each polling station that is opened (4) improved E-Day reporting. (5) successful retrieval of results</p>	<p>Successful preparations and conduct of both electoral rounds:</p> <p>1) Deployment of materials in place; (2) Recruitment and training of approximately. 100,000 temporary staff (3) Successful operation of elections in each polling station that is opened (4) Opening, midday and closing E-Day reporting. (5) successful retrieval of results</p> <p>ELECT II assisted the IEC with procurement of electoral materials, customs handling, bar-code scanning, delivery planning, procedures, training, polling day reporting system (3 reports a day), retrieval planning and assistance (ELECT II helicopters), tally procedures and software, etc. ELECT II was significantly involved in electoral planning. Electoral planning and operations for the second round, within a challenging window of a month time, can be regarded as a major project’s achievement.</p> <p>Observer statements and public perception were generally speaking positive about the conduct of the first round elections, widely seen as</p>	<p>On track</p> <p>No international observer reports have been released in Q2 related to both election rounds.</p>

			<p>a success by the Afghan authorities, including the IEC. On 19 June, in its assessment of the run-off election, Afghan election observer group Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA) said that the election process was 'good overall' although cases of irregularities and violations were reported at different polling centres throughout the country.</p>	
<p>Baseline 5.2: poor result management strategy during 2009 and 2010 elections (BASELINE: OSCE 2009: Observer reports indicate sub-optimal transparency and release of results at HQ (OSCE) -BASELINE: 2009 EU report: The sensitiveness of this [Results Release] process was not matched by a commensurate level of transparency and accountability in the IEC decision-making.)</p>	<p>5.2: (2014) implementation of a results management strategy that includes proper results certification and communication mechanisms to release partial, temporary and certified/uncertified results after the Presidential and Provincial Council elections</p>	<p>Tally database and Results Management System finalized and implemented (software) as well as Website and Results transmission policies finalized</p> <p>Co-ordination mechanism established between the IEC and IECC to address electoral complaints</p>	<p>ELECT II assisted the IEC with the development and implementation of software for e-day reporting, as well as tallying of the results.</p> <p>Related to the results of the 5 April elections, the IEC has been criticized for insufficient transparency of results decision making by the Commissioners, as well as inadequate and swift website information. Provision of tally centre information as well as web-information has been improved for the 14 June elections. The release of the results was not finalized by the end of Q2.</p> <p>On 3 April, the IEC and the IECC signed a mutual memorandum of understanding that facilitates cooperation between both institutions, in particular regarding the process of addressing electoral complaints.</p>	<p>On track</p>

<p>Baseline 5.3.a: Physical verification of 6,845 polling centres identified (2011) - zero mapped before 2012, 98.5% in 2013</p> <p>Baseline 5.3.b: No official district boundaries established</p>	<p>5.3.a: (2014) establishment of a co-ordination mechanism with IDLG and AGCHO on electoral boundary delimitation, for possible 2015 district council elections</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>
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## **OUTPUT 6: The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced**

In order to ensure a fair, transparent and accountable electoral process, it is paramount that an electoral dispute resolution body is established in a timely manner, and capable of receiving and adjudicating complaints and objections against polling day irregularities and preliminary election results. An effective electoral complaints adjudication system is critical to strengthening the legitimacy and credibility of elections in Afghanistan.

In support of this goal, IFES has continued to provide technical advice and assistance to the IECC on all aspects of electoral dispute resolution, including regulations and procedures; investigation and assessment; triage of complaints; strategic planning; institutional cooperation; case management; public outreach; and training. UNOPS has continued to support the IECC on all operational issues. In addition to key achievements outlined below, a significant overarching accomplishment has been the development and consolidation of strong, trusted working relationships with the IECC. IFES and UNOPS have worked tirelessly to ensure both institutions are seen as valued, trusted partners, supporting an independent, Afghan-led IECC. This has been reflected in the steady deepening of trust, which has enabled many of the results achieved during the reporting period.

### **Legal Framework and Complaints process for resolution of election disputes**

In Q1, IFES advisers provided advice to the IECC on developing and adopting procedures, regulations, plans and systems that will guide IECC activities through the remainder of the electoral cycle. IFES advisers together with the IECC established a drafting group composed of senior IECC legal officers that proposed draft regulations and procedures to the commissioners. Commissioners approved a package of procedure and guidelines on February 4th. IFES also assisted IECC develop forms for investigation and decisions, and 14 forms were approved by the Commissioners on January 22. IFES provided advice to the secretariat on the draft Code of Conduct and encouraged approval of the Code of Conduct ahead of the training of PIECC Commissioners. The IECC legal department also started working on procedure for open session and a regulation on fines with IFES advice. The IECC adopted an amendment to its adjudication procedure on filing complaints relating to preliminary results within 24 hours from publication by IEC. IFES provided advice on this amendment as well and it was adopted before the 1st round election.

In Q2, IFES provided continuous advice on the drafting of guidelines and instructions during the first round election as well as in preparation for the second round on key issues such as open sessions, publication of decisions, or taking cases on its own initiative. Throughout this period, IFES advisers have emphasized the importance of international standards and best practices such as judicially expedited decisions, pre-determined standards, established burdens of proof and standards of evidence, timely publication of decisions and complaints reports, and well publicized deadlines and timelines. Publication of decisions and

participatory open sessions represent particularly positive steps for transparency in Afghanistan's electoral process.

#### Regulations, Procedures and Guidelines:

- Procedure on Adjudication of election challenges and complaints ("Adjudication Procedure")
- 4 Guidelines on archiving, filing complaints at Polling Station on Election Day, filing complaints form at PS on Election Day, registration of complaints.
- Draft procedure on participation in open sessions
- Draft procedure on fines
- Regulations on validity of ballots
- Amendments on IECC Adjudication Procedure regarding filing of complaints about preliminary results.

#### Open sessions held by the IECC and PIECCs

- 1 day open session at IECC central for first round presidential election (April 30)
- 5 days open sessions at IECC central for first round presidential election (4-9 May)
- 6 days open sessions at IECC central for Provincial Council elections (31 May – 5 June).
- 1 day open session at 19 PIECC for 2nd round presidential election (20-25 June).
- 4 days open session at IECC central for 2nd round presidential election (5-8 July)

#### **Strategic and Operational Planning**

On January 15, the IECC adopted an interim strategic and operational plan, which was developed with the help of IFES and UNOPS. A comprehensive timeline for the IECC legal and operational deadlines was also developed and attached to the document. IECC also conducted several lessons learned events during the two election rounds and published its reports, as well as a tracking table - developed with IFES support - on the challenges and improvements from the two rounds of elections. The IECC has committed to undertaking a comprehensive, long-term strategic and operational planning process following the Presidential and Provincial Council election cycle ends.

#### **Training and Capacity Building**

IFES provided support to the IECC in training all 102 new Provincial Commissioners prior to elections, as well as central and provincial legal, financial and administrative staff. In Q1, IFES prepared and conducted a series of training sessions together with the IECC in February and March for the PIECC commissioners and staff. This included the development of training manuals, handbooks and other training materials. In March, IFES also provided coaching sessions and workshops for the IECC central legal team, focusing in depth on standards of evidence, types of violations, types of remedies available and case studies. In Q2, between the two elections, IFES also supported the IECC with the conduct of refresher



training and lessons learned events for both PIECC and IECC central staff. New training materials were produced to be more accessible and with a focus on addressing gaps from the first round. IFES assisted in the preparation of these new manuals/workbooks on complaints, which were adopted by the IECC Secretariat. Following IFES advice, the training reports were also published on the IECC website.

The IECC, together with IFES and UNOPS, prepared a lessons learned document capturing key operational lessons from the April 5 election, to inform IECC operations going into the June run-off election. This helped focus the IECC on key improvements needed, such as better IEC-IECC co-ordination, meeting legal and regulatory deadlines, timely publication of written and reasoned decisions and to continue to put in place processes to improve institutional capacity, such as a capacity-building unit. In addition, building on the IECC lessons learned refresher sessions and lessons learned note, the IECC developed a lessons learned checklist for the June run-off election with the support of UNOPS and IFES. This tracking document of lessons learned and improvements by the IECC was shared with donors and published on its website ahead of the run-off election on June 12. Along with all these activities, IFES has been provided ongoing advice and assistance to the IECC Capacity Building Unit, to encourage institutional strengthening.

#### *Key training and lessons learned events conducted by the IECC in Q1 and Q2*

- PIECC Commissioner seminar on February 18-20
- PIECC legal staff and heads of secretariat on March 8-10
- PIECC administrative and finance staff on March 11
- Additional IECC HQ legal training on March 17, 19 and 25.
- PIECC and HQ Database Training on March 26
- IECC Lessons learned event for HQ staff (public outreach, legal, administration, PIECC co-ordination) on May 30.
- PIECC refresher database training on June 1st
- PIECC refresher training for PIECC commissioners and staff on June 2-3.
- PIECC gender discussion for all PIECC women staff and IECC HR and Gender unit on June 3
- Joint IEC-IECC workshop/lessons learned event on June 7.

#### **Public Outreach and External Relations**

IFES provided ongoing technical advice and assistance to the IECC in crafting and broadcasting informational print, audio and video public outreach tools to educate voters about the electoral dispute resolution process. Before the first round, the IECC developed a communication /public outreach strategy, which was revised for the 2nd round. In order to strengthen outreach efforts, with IFES assistance the IECC drafted answers to FAQ for the IEC Call Centre. In January, the IECC launched its official website in Dari, Pashto and English and continues to further improve through the quarterly 1 and 2 with IFES support on

design, timeliness and content. The IECC also produced and disseminated brochures and posters on the IECC's mandate, election violations and how, when and where to file a complaint. The IECC produced three TV and radio spots, which were broadcasted in Dari/Pashto on 11 TV and 11 radio channels for 21 days. These PSAs informed the public, candidates and agents on the right to file a complaint relating to Election Day and relating to preliminary results. IFES and UNOPS supported the IECC in producing and monitoring broadcasting.

Following IFES advice, the IECC held several briefings for observers, domestic and international, candidates and agents, as well as media. The IECC held its first informational briefing for observers, media and civil society actors on March 16. This briefing marked the first public event where the IECC clearly explained its structure, the elements of a complaint and the complaints process itself. IECC Commissioners organized a briefing for Presidential candidates and agents on April 7th that was well attended by candidates' teams, and three Presidential candidates attended. IECC held a series of press conferences on Election Day and the following days (E-day; April 6th, April 7, April 8th and April 9th), with similar outreach after the second round election. In addition, with IFES and UNOPS advice, the IECC held a joint press conference with the IEC on April 9th, where the IECC Chairman showed a strong commitment to transparent adjudication of complaints. Following the election, the IECC presented ongoing reports on complaints received. In May and June, following IFES advice, the IECC coordinated with other international NGOs such as Creative Associates and Democracy International who offered to support the outreach efforts of the IECC in the provinces regarding where to file, how to file and when to file a complaint or appeal.

### **Complaints Case Management - Database**

IFES and UNOPS supported the IECC Complaints Registration Manager, Legal Director and Deputy Technical and Operations in developing a database action plan. With the election fast approaching, the IECC committed itself to tight deadlines for testing and finalizing the database, correcting any issues and holding training for PIECC staff and data-entry staff from the central IECC. While the IECC did not encounter any issues with the operation of the database, the IECC staff stopped registering all information on complaints in the database due to the extremely short 10 day deadline to adjudication complaints at the PIECC. The IECC complaints registration office resumed updating data after the adjudication of complaints period. After the first round, refresher training on the database took place. The IECC has committed to developing a comprehensive and sustainable online database following the resolution of the presidential and provincial council elections.

### **Donor and Stakeholder relations**

With ongoing support from IFES and UNOPS, the IECC held its first technical working group meeting on 29 December 2013, formally introducing the Commission and Secretariat

to donor partners. In its second technical working group meeting on 16 January, it presented its Action and Budget Plan for 2014, which were officially endorsed at its project board meeting on 12 February. Regular Technical Working Group meetings were held on 19 February, 26 February, 19 March, 17 April, 15 May and 12 June, as well as a second project board meeting on 26 March in anticipation of polling day on 5 April. This has resulted in productive exchanges of information, and the IECC continued to proactively share information on the complaints process in between formal donor meetings. IFES and UNOPS have continued to support the IECC in its outreach to donors and other stakeholders, and have also been responsive to ongoing requests for information and co-ordination with donors, including through informal meetings.

### **IEC/IECC Cooperation**

The IECC and IEC Commissioners approved the MoU on April 2 after several months of discussion at the secretariat and commissioners level. During the drafting process, both UNOPS and IFES provided their inputs to the draft to the IECC Secretariat. After the adoption of the MoU, IFES developed a note providing comments and noting gaps in the MoU for UNDP and donors. Building on the MOU agreed in Q1, the IECC developed a note outlining mechanisms for deeper IEC-IECC cooperation and information, with the support of UNOPS and IFES, together with UNDP ELECT II. The IECC Secretariat conducted a joint IEC-IECC lessons-learned review in preparation for a joint IEC/IECC workshop held on June 7. Both the IEC and IECC Secretariat met to discuss challenges and recommendations for the 2nd round election, including colocation issues (internet, office, generator and security), communication between the two institutions, sharing of information relating to the PS/PC list, open and closed PS/PC on Election Day, and participation in training sessions. This workshop also included discussion on the retrieval of complaints from PS/PC as well as sharing of relevant regulations and procedures in a timely manner. The IEC and IECC secretariats both agreed on formalizing a cooperation mechanism with regular meetings and focal points. UNOPS and IFES also regularly encouraged direct co-ordination meetings between the IEC and IECC legal directors and CEOs during the first and second round elections.

### **Gender**

On June 3, the IECC held a lunch discussion with 14 female staff members from PIECCs and the central IECC. This event included a presentation on the work environment and harassment, a discussion on challenges and recommendations related to PIECC female staff in their daily work; and challenges and recommendations related to women's access to the complaints process in the provinces (specifically, filing complaints and submitting evidence). IFES and the IECC facilitated the event, in co-ordination with the IECC HR and Gender Unit. The IECC published a report of this discussion on its website. Following UNOPS and IFES advice, the IECC agreed to hire a national consultant to work with the Gender Unit of the IECC. IFES assisted the IEC in developing the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the IECC's Gender Adviser. The position is being recruited to help the IECC develop a

comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy and to enhance the capacity of the Gender Directorate.

### **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**

During this reporting period, UNOPS agreed with IECC on the following SOPs:

- o SOP Recruitment - 26 January
- o SOP Travel Guideline – 17 February
- o SOP Operational Advance – 2 April
- o SOP Petty Cash – 7 April
- o SOP Overtime – 8 May
- o SOP Payroll – 7 May
- o SOP *Safaria* (Housing Allowance) – 24 June 2014

### **Security**

Security at the IECC HQ was an issue that was addressed during the beginning of 2014 as it was originally intended that the premises would be made fully compliant with UNDSS MOSS. It is essential for UNOPS and IFES to be embedded within the IECC so they may work closely with their counterparts and to meet capacity building obligations. Following concerns from the IECC, which did not want international armed guards within the compound, it was agreed that it would be acceptable for the facilities to be Ministry MOSS compliant. A revised SRA (Security Risk Assessment) was then undertaken after which the IECC Chairman formally endorsed the recommendations. Following a site visit with security and engineering staff, UNOPS proceeded with the procurement required to make the facility Ministry MOSS compliant and a company was contracted to implement the security upgrades. The security upgrades that subsequently were put in place exceeded the standards for Ministry MOSS compliance.

UNOPS Security has continuously liaised with all levels of security present at the IECC HQ. Regular monitoring of security was conducted in all three buildings in addition to auditing of body checks at entrances and ensuring guards' stand-by. Also, providing oversight, advice and assistance to all security entities operating at the HQ to ensure integrity of security for the donors Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting held at the premises for the first time in April 2014, followed by subsequent TWG meetings in May and June 2014. Security at IECC HQ premises was further improved. After much debate and discussion during the first quarter of the year, consensus was finally reached between UNOPS and the IECC HQ on the provision of an unarmed guard force at the IECC HQ. The agreement permitted the IECC to contract a suitable company whose services would be paid by UNOPS. The contract was put in place on an initial three-month trial basis from March to June 2014. Due to time constraints, the IECC directly contracted a company that was able to deploy on short notice and deemed to be both a competent and effective service provider.

During the reporting period, the IECC HQ Secretariat was expected to formally tender the contract for the longer term. However, unfortunately, that did not happen and approval was granted by UNOPS to permit the IECC Secretariat to extend for a one-month period. Additionally the contract for provision of three unarmed guards in each of the IECC Provincial Offices was also approved for a two-month period exceptionally to cover the period during the run-off election. The project has been working with the IECC HQ Secretariat to ensure efforts are made to recruit a national Security Assistant and to have had the recruitment completed prior to the installation of a Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) system to enable training of the post holder. It is expected that the IECC HQ premises will have CCTV surveillance and alarm system in place in the near future – the procurement procedures for which have been completed by UNOPS.

### **EXPENSES FOR Q1-Q2**

During Q1 & Q2 2014, a total of USD 440,768 added with USD 6,154,850 under USAID funding (9.6). The cumulative total for IECC expenses as of 30 June 2014 is USD 6,595,619. For more details, please see Annex 2.

**Table 6: Progress Update Q1-2 2014 Output 6**

Below is a snapshot of where ELECT II is in relation to its annual targets

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1-2 Planned	Q1-2 Actual	Comments
Baseline 6.a.: 6 months before polling day	6.1.a (2014) Electoral dispute resolution mechanism is fully established and staffed in all provincial offices and HQ	6.1.a (2014) IECC is fully established and staffed in all provincial offices and HQ by start of 2014 - including Strategic Planning and Operational Plans in place, as base for AWP.	<p>By early October 2013 the IECC HQ was only very recently established and commenced the month with less than 9% (29) of the actual staffing structure. The build of staff commenced from this point and came to almost full operational strength in the HQ by June 2014. Recruitment of the Provincial Offices staff only commenced in late February 2014 with sufficient numbers to be operational in March (with almost 70% of staff on contract).</p> <p>The IECC held its first technical working group meeting on 29 December 2013, formally introducing the Commission and Secretariat to donor partners. In its second technical working group meeting on 16 January, it presented its Action and Budget Plan for 2014, which were officially endorsed at its project board meeting on 12 February. Following Technical Working Group meetings with donor partners, which demonstrated operational updates and readiness status were held on 19 February, 26 February, 19 March, 17 April, 15 May and 12 June, as well as a second project board meeting on 26 March in anticipation of polling day on 5 April.</p>	On track
NA	6.1.b. (2014) Systems, procedures and processes developed/ revised and	6.1.b. (2014) Systems, procedures and processes developed/ revised and	The IECC adopted its adjudication procedures as well as guidelines and forms on February 4, 2014. IECC later approved a regulation on validity of ballots on April 10. The IECC also developed a series of workbooks and guidelines for its training,	On track

	implemented for filing, hearing and resolving complaints and appeals during and after elections. Improvement of the triage system for dispute handling	implementation initiated for filing, hearing and resolving complaints and appeals during and after elections	outlining in detail the complaints and appeals process at PIECC and IECC level. In the course of its adjudication, the IECC also adopted a series of instructions on the conduct of open session, legal deadlines, and on quarantine decisions.	
NA	6.1.c (2014) development of a co-ordination mechanism between the IEC and IECC to address electoral complaints	6.1.d (2014) development of a co-ordination mechanism between the IEC and IECC to address electoral complaints	On 3 April, the IECC and the IEC signed a mutual memorandum of understanding that facilitates cooperation between both institutions, in particular regarding the process of addressing electoral complaints. Following the first round election, the IEC and IECC held a post-election review workshop on June 7. The IEC and IECC Secretariat discussed challenges and recommendations in preparation for the second round (legal, training, public outreach, provincial co-ordination).	On track
NA	6.1.d. (2014) IECC unqualified asset audit report (end of year)	6.1.d. NA		

## **OUTPUT 7: The integrity of the electoral process is enhanced through a fully-supported media regulatory body**

### **Media Commission**

After the official establishment of the IEC Media Commission on 4 December 2013, ELECT II provided the IEC all the technical and operational planning support to ensure timely staff recruitment and office equipment for the Media Commission to be fully operationally well ahead of the start of the campaign period. ELECT II's Media Commission Advisor focused on assisting the Media Commission with the development of an official Regulation regarding 'Media Activities during the Electoral Campaign'(initially passed last 17 December), as well as to have this regulation embraced by all direct stakeholders in an inclusive manner. In this respect, ELECT II welcomed the IEC's adoption of amendments on 14 January 2014 following consultations with representatives of the media sector, in particular on media covering of candidates before the campaign period as well as on the conduct of opinion polls. On 9 February, the IEC approved the Media Commission's internal procedures for adjudication of electoral media violations, drafted with input from ELECT II.

ELECT II also encouraged and supported the Media Commission to reach out to media stakeholders beyond Kabul. In this respect, the Media Commission conducted in February and March eight regional-level consultation sessions with journalists, candidate agents and other stakeholders in each of Afghanistan's eight regions (Jalalabad, Herat, Parwan, Helmand, Kandahar, Mazar, Kunduz and Badakhshan).

ELECT II assisted the Media Commission with contracting a third party media monitoring firm. ELECT II was involved with the contracting of the firm as well as provided advice through a recruited specialist. The third-party media monitoring reports are bi-weekly and focused on media-activities before and during both elections, which provide the Media Commission an unbiased monitoring overview of all media activities.

On 17 March, the IEC Media Commission gave its first press conference regarding media monitoring findings in the run-up during the candidate campaign period. Other press conferences followed related to media campaigning, the silence period, the results release, as well as the imposition of financial penalties. On 23 April, the Media Commission announced the imposition of financial penalties to 14 media outlets (13 TV and one radio) for violation of violation electoral media regulations during the first election round. On 6 July, the Media Commission announced that 25 outlets (13 TV, five radio, 4 newspapers) have been fined due to violation of media regulations during the second election round. The Media Commission will release a final report at the conclusion of its mandate, due 45 days following the announcement of the final results by the IEC.



## EXPENSES FOR Q1-Q2

During Q1 and Q2 of 2014, a total of USD 213,693 was spent for output 7. For more details, please see Annex 2.

**Table 7: Progress Update Q2 2014 Output 7**

Below is a snapshot of where ELECT II is in relation to its annual targets

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1-2 Planned	Q1-2 Actual	Comments
Baseline 7.1.a.: legal: 1 month before campaign period start	7.1.a (2014) Media Commission (MC) fully established and staffed by early January (1 month before campaign period)	7.1.a (2014) MC fully established and staffed by early January (1 month before campaign period)	The Media Commission was officially established on 4 December 2013. The IEC Media Commission was fully staffed and established, as required one month before the campaign period (2 February).	
Baseline 7.1.b: NA	7.1.b. (2014) Media monitoring systems, procedures and processes developed/ revised and implemented before start of campaign period	7.1.b. (2014) Media monitoring systems, procedures and processes developed/ revised and implemented before start of campaign period, including selection and installation of third party monitoring  Observance of MC regulations by media and political actors. Full implementation of Media monitoring	On 14 January, following consultations with representatives of the media sector, the IEC adopted amendments to the ‘Regulation on the Media Activities during the electoral campaign’ (initially passed last 17 December), in particular on media covering of candidates before the campaign period as well as on the conduct of opinion polls.  On 9 February, the IEC approved the Media Commission’s internal procedures for adjudication of electoral media violations, drafted by the MC with input from ELECT II.  In February and March, the MC conducted 8 regional-level consultation sessions with journalists, candidate agents and other stakeholders in each of Afghanistan’s eight regions (Jalalabad, Herat, Parwan, Helmand, Kandahar, Mazar Kunduz, Badakhshan).  ELECT II assisted the IEC MC with the establishment on 15	

		systems, procedures and processes	<p>February of a third party media monitoring firm. ELECT II was involved with the contracting of the firm as well as provided advice through a recruited specialist. The third-party media monitoring reports are bi-weekly and focused on media-activities before and during both elections.</p> <p>On 17 March, the IEC Media Commission gave its first press conference regarding media monitoring findings in the run-up during the candidate campaign period. Other press conferences followed related to media campaigning, the silence period, the results release, as well as the imposition of financial penalties.</p>	
Baseline 7.1.c: 45 days after closing of elections	7.1.c. Final Media Commission report released 45 days after release of the final results of the 2014 elections	7.1.c. NA	<p>On 23 April, the Media Commission announced the imposition of financial penalties to 14 media outlets (13 TV and 1 radio) for violation of violation electoral media regulations during the first election round. On 6 July, the Media Commission announced that 25 outlets (13 TV, 5 radio, 4 newspapers) have been fined due to violation of media regulations during the second election round.</p> <p>No final media commission report yet, as the IEC still has released the final results of 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections.</p>	

## I. GENDER SPECIFIC RESULTS

In terms of broadening democratic participation in the electoral process, women are a top priority. In 2014, the IEC, with ELECT II assistance, incorporated gender issues in its all electoral planning and wherever possible, implementation.

Some significant gender specific results:

### Female Voters:

Women's participation as voters in the first round was noteworthy with nationwide 36 % of all valid votes were cast by women. In line with past elections, provinces in the southeast with security and socio-cultural challenges saw the lowest participation of female voters namely Zabul (8%), Urojgan (14%), Helmand (18 %), Kandahar (20%), Logar (24 %) and Nimroz (28 %). Similarly, female participation was highest in provinces with relatively better security situation and sociocultural context such as Panjshir (44 %), Bamyan (43 %), Daikundi (43 %), Herat (41 %), Samangan (41%), Sarepul (44 %), Faryab (40 %) and Takhar (40 %). Valid votes cast by women in rest of the provinces were -Khost (30%), Kabul (32%), Kunar (33 %) Kunduz (34 %), Nangarhar (34 %), Parwan (35 %), Ghazni (35 %), Kapisa (36 %), Wardak (36 %), Nuristan (36 %), Paktika (37%), Paktia (37 %), Ghor (5%), Badghis (38%), Badakhshan (38%), Baghlan (38 %) Farah (39%), Balkh (39 %), Laghman (39 %) and Jowjan (39 %).

The run-off result is not yet finalized at the end of Q2, however, preliminary reporting from various sources including media did suggest that women's participation was encouraging. The enthusiasm was also reflected in the BBC reporting of a woman who came to vote carrying a new born baby in the province of Helmand.<sup>7</sup> The FEFA director Nader Naderi said that "despite more security incidents, rocket attacks, roadside bombs, people still showed up in the most difficult areas, also saw women in areas we did not expect."<sup>8</sup>

### Female PC Candidates:

Article 30 (2) of the electoral law provides that at least 20 % of each Provincial Council seats shall be allocated for female candidates. Accordingly, out of 458 total seats, 96 are reserved for women.

The final results are not yet released as both the IEC and the IECC have been heavily involved with the presidential run-off results and audits. According to the *preliminary* PC result, 18 women won regular seats in PC election from 10 provinces namely Daikundi (3), Farah (1), Helmand (2), Herat (1), Kabul (6), Kunduz (1), Logar (1), Nimroz (1), Samangan (1)

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<sup>7</sup> BBC news 14 June 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Spokesman UNAMA, morning media monitoring, June 15, 2014.

and Wardak (1). However, only in Daikundi there was one more seat for woman than the 20 % allocated. Notably, the top three candidates in Kabul and topmost candidate in Daikundi are women. Out of 7 reserved seats for women in Kabul , women won 6 seats outside reservation. Allocation of reserved seats to female candidates who won without the support of quota, however is not due to lack of female candidates, for example in Kabul 49 female candidates were are in the final list.<sup>9</sup>

Based on the *preliminary* results, the reserved seats for women would be distributed as this:

- In 9 seat provinces, 2 reserved seats - 15 provinces (Badghis, Bamyan, Daikundi, Farah, Kapisa, Kunar, Laghman, Logar, Nuristan, Nimroz, Paktika, Panshir, Samangan, Urozgan and Zabul)
- In 15 seat provinces, 3 reserved seats- 13 provinces (Badhakshan, Baglan, Faryab, Ghor, Helmand, Jauzjan, Khost, Kunduz, Paktiya, Parwan, Sar-i-pul, Takhar and Wardak)
- In 19 seat provinces, 4 reserved seats - 5 provinces (Balkh, Ghazni, Herat, Kandahar and Nangarhar)
- and 33 seat province, 7 seats reserved in Kabul

In parallel of reducing the quota of reserved female seats from 25 to 20 percent in the new Election Law, the total number of Provincial Seats were increased from 420 to 458. In '09 elections women won 122 seats representing 29 percent representation at national level (irrespective of the 25 percent breakdown per province) while in '14 elections women won 97 seats out of 458 (21 percent aggregated at national level). Consequentially, there is a substantive reduction of female representation in PCs from '09 to '14 elections. In numerical terms, the quota has been reduced by five percent while female representation has decreased by 8 percent nationwide.

### **Female polling stations:**

ELECT II assisted the IEC with ensuring that a sufficient and equally proportionally-distributed number of female polling stations were allocated in each polling centre. In this respect, on polling day on 5 April, the IEC had opened 8,544 polling stations for women constituting, 40% of the total stations (20,795). In run-off of 14 June, even a higher number of female stations were opened, still ensuring that 40% (9,218) of the total planned 23,136 polling stations were female.

One of the significant concerns from the gender stakeholders, as well as the media was the recruitment of male staff in approximately 2100 female polling stations. TEFA and observers expressed concern over IEC hiring male workers in the female polling stations,

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<sup>9</sup> (Data Source: IEC website-<http://results.iec.org.af>).

and stated that this could dissuade female voters from participating and possibly open door to more fraud by preventing female observers from monitoring those sites.<sup>10</sup>

### **Female searchers:**

MOI hired approximately 13,000 female searchers for more than 8000 female polling stations. MOI coordinated with relevant ministries including with Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), Ministry of Women's Affairs, and Ministry of Education in preparation of the list of searchers for recruitment. The finalization of the list was repeatedly delayed to the extent that it resulted in rushed and chaotic recruitment and training processes very close to the election. Given the number of problems surrounding female searchers, the question of value addition was raised by electoral stakeholders. Given the fact that female voters cannot be searched by men, recruitment of female searchers in future election cannot be ruled out.

ELECT II assisted the IEC with conducting Gender Co-ordination meetings, including Mol – Mol invited to make presentations to electoral stakeholders on recruitment and training of female searchers. Although the female body searchers were contracted by the Mol, ELECT II facilitated their payment.

### **Security for Female PC Candidate:**

The ELECT II Gender Advisor assisted the IEC with the conduct of gender co-ordination meetings, where the MOI briefed that there were sufficient measures in place to provide security for female PC candidates. As reported in the media, in the candidates meeting, female provincial council candidates raised voice over security threats that could overshadow election campaigns. The candidates in the meeting demanded that the security institutions undertake effective measures to ensure security of the forthcoming elections and campaigns. MOI reported that although security guards and vehicles were provided as part of security measures, not many female PC candidates requested MOI for such measures. MOI however, did not provide information on how many female PC candidates actually submitted their requests.

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<sup>10</sup> Tolo news June 13, 2014.

## II. PARTNERSHIPS

### A. Implementation partner

The *IEC* is UNDP's implementing partner for the ELECT II project. However, the revised ELECT II project document foresees also UNDP support to the *IECC* but within the overall aegis of ELECT II and not as a separate implementing partner. To avoid any real or alleged conflict of interest, assistance to the IECC was subcontracted by the UNDP to *UNOPS* (administrative support) and to *IFES* (advisory/technical support), with funding channeled through ELECT II.

### B. International donor partners

ELECT II is currently funded by 15 international donor partners<sup>11</sup> and intends to maintain very close donor relations. Through the various forums such as the Project Board meeting, the Technical Working Group and the ELECT II Donor Group, partners are kept abreast of matters, and have an input on issues related to the project.

### C. UN (UNAMA / UNWOMEN / UNOPS/ LOTFA)

On 17 March 2014, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of UNAMA for another year through resolution 2145. The mandate foresees a specific section on electoral support. The deputy SRSR is the co-chair of the ELECT II project board. UNAMA and ELECT II are in regular discussion on electoral issues, in particular since UNAMA plays a convening role with political stakeholders of the electoral process. In addition, UNAMA also organizes co-ordination meetings on elections with the international community in which ELECT II also participates.

Synergies are also established between UNDP, UNWOMEN and UNOPS to support and or implement different electoral initiatives. UNOPS is, as mentioned above, one of the two partners UNDP is subcontracting to establish the IECC.

### D. Civil society organizations and I/NGOs, government agencies, political parties, observers and media

Together with the IEC, ELECT II closely works together with other national and international partners to optimize the electoral process. In 2014, the IEC and ELECT II were in close consultation with (electoral) civil society organizations, government agencies, political parties, observers and media. ELECT II in particular enhanced its relation with

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<sup>11</sup> From a technical-administrative perspective, the Government of Japan supports the IEC through two separate project contributions, which however are implemented by ELECT II and directly serve ELECT II outputs.

international non-donor partners, such as the EU election assessment team, the OSCE/ODIHR to discuss the voter registration updates as well as the possibilities and modalities for observers accreditation, in particular to inform them on electoral updates as well as to engage them in public outreach, gender messaging and participation in electoral operations, such as voter registration and candidate nomination. ELECT II participates regularly in UNAMA-convened information sharing meetings with a range of international partners working on electoral issues, as well as regularly attending meetings convened by USAID with implementing partners.

In addition, as mentioned above, UNDP is subcontracted IFES to provide technical assistance to the IECC. IFES also supported the ELECT II project in conceptualizing and preparing of provincial seminars for influential women's networks.

#### **E. Afghan National Security Forces and ISAF/NATO**

ELECT II, together with UNAMA, assisted the IEC in bringing together the Afghan National Army (ANA), Ministry of Defense (MoD), the National Directorate of Security (NDS), the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and ISAF/NATO to discuss the security aspects of electoral operations, with the immediate focus being on IEC premises security, polling centres security verification, polling day security and air transport of materials.

#### **F. Other Afghan government partners (MoI, MoCIT, MoF)**

In 2013, the IEC commenced first engagement with Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Communications and IT to discuss linkages regarding the implementation of the electronic national ID card (e-Tazkira). This engagement is planned to be reactivated after the current electoral peak period.

The IEC was in consultation with the MoF (Ministry of Finance) and approval was given to the IEC to open a special bank account on 1 January 2014 to receive UNDP budget transfers as part of the NIM.



### III. RISKS

New project risks have been identified after the conduct of the first and second election rounds on 5 April and 14 June, respectively, and in light of the full audit of all ballots in Kabul under supervision of ELECT II.

For more details, see Risk Log in annex 4.

Main risks to the project and possible issues to take care of include:

- Political rejection of the audit process and/or the final audit results, accusing the international community and in particular the UN and the ELECT II project— affecting the credibility in the electoral process.
- Independence of the IEC/IECC undermined due to political interference or bias.
- Recurring disagreements between political candidates and their teams on the audit framework and actual implementation, leading to numerous halts, and ultimately severely prolonging the entire process.
- IEC and IECC audit decision-making is not open and transparent, leading to rejection of the final audit results and undermining the credibility of the electoral process.
- Demotivated or resigning of IEC audit staff due to political pressure and/or work pressure during the audit.
- Significant delays in the audit process do not only affect the final presidential outcome but also the results of the provincial council elections. In addition, delays in the audit process could further affect the preparations for the 2015 Wolesi Jirga elections.
- Competing (project) priorities given total focus of ELECT II on the conduct of the full audit, negatively affecting other activities and tasks part of the project’s objectives.
- Political tension resulting in violence and or assault, undermining the audit process or even targeting (directly or indirectly) UN/ELECT II staff.
- Attack against the IEC and/or the UN/ELECT II staff to derail the electoral process and/or targeting internationals given their large presence at the IEC.

## IV. ISSUES

Prominent already on-going issues, derived from the risk log, include:

### a. Security

Security threats are not only a risk but also an ongoing issue, as it requires constant mitigation planning and flexibility of staff moral to deal with it – including difficulties for the project regarding recruitment and staff retention in this environment.

Action: ELECT II security and UNDP CO security work closely together with UN DSS as well as IEC security, external international (ISAF) and nation security (ANSF) partners to secure the IEC HQ and ballot box movements. Full support from all levels within the UN to ensure security of the audit process, including security of UN supervisors and international observers, as this is prerequisite for the success of the audit.

### b. Delay in the audit process

a. Incomplete or incoherent audit procedures, or procedures and criteria not being accepted by the candidates and/or their agents cause numerous halts to the audit process, delaying significantly the timeliness and quality of the operation.

b. Political unwillingness to move the audit process forward in a timely and qualitative manner

Action: ELECT II together with IEC as well as UNAMA (SRSG and DSRSG) work intensely to keep the candidates and their teams closely involved in every discussion, in order to refine where necessary every procedure as well as to demine any obstruction in a participatory manner. Besides the electoral audit part of the discussion, UNAMA takes up the UN role to facilitate between the candidates to achieve political progress. High-level UN electoral experts assist the project in development of procedures and criteria and interactions with the IEC as well as the candidates.

### c. Lack of credibility of the IEC

Although former IEC CEO Ziaulhaq Amarkhil underscored his innocence and the claims he is victim of conspiracy, the accusations against him by presidential candidate Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, amongst other complaints against the IEC and IEC staff, affected the IEC's credibility in general. In this respect, the UN, in particular the UNDP ELECT II project has been requested to play a more prominent role in supervising the process.

Action: ELECT II and UNAMA work closely together with the IEC to ensure the most neutral position.

#### **d. ELECT II Audit Supervision**

1) The developed ELECT II project was not set up to supervise in an unprecedented manner the IEC audit of more than 8 million ballots and the existing team structure is insufficient to take up this role intensively for multiple weeks. Urgent expansion of temporary ELECT II audit supervision consultants was essential.

2) In addition, the scope of ELECT II aimed for Afghan-led and Afghan-managed elections. The 11 July 2014 agreement between US Secretary of State and both presidential candidates placed the UN, including ELECT II, at the request of the Afghan partners, in a position to take up a more prominent role.

Action: 1) The UN Secretariat, UNDP HQ, and UNDP CO support with the highest priority the ELECT II project and ensured swift and smooth recruitment of temporary audit supervisors in this limited timeframe. In addition, UNAMA, other UN agencies as well as non-ELECT II team members assist the audit supervision process.

2) The UN SRSB for Afghanistan is taking the lead within the UN, as the unprecedented audit process and its outcome does not only affect the credibility of ELECT II but the entire UN's political role in the country as well as the role of the international community in the electoral process.

#### **e. Resource mobilization**

The current (and likely prolonged) focus on the full audit of all votes of the second presidential round, requires funding not foreseen in the initial 2014 budget. Furthermore, the audit process could affect the project's preparations of the 2015 Wolesi Jirga elections, including necessary resource mobilization.

Action: the UNDP CO and ELECT II project keep key donors close abreast about all the latest developments while updating them on financial needs. Key donors, such as the US, EU and DFID have committed full support to the project.

For more details, see Issues Log in annex 5.

## **V. LESSONS LEARNT**

See in annex 7 highlights of ELECT II's lessons learnt workshop of 30 April related to the preparation and conduct of the 5 April presidential and provincial council elections.

Based on the lessons learnt from the 5th April elections, multiple stakeholders have come

up with suggested improvements to the electoral process for the second round of the Presidential elections on 14th June. This is a compilation of some select recommendations from Presidential campaigns, domestic and international observer groups, donors, UNDP ELECT and UNAMA, for the attention of the electoral management bodies - the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC). IFES and UNOPS did not contribute to the recommendations document sent to the IEC and IECC between the two rounds. However both parties conducted a joint lessons learnt document. Both IFES and UNOPS participated in the ELECT II workshop between the two rounds.

## VI. ELECTION AUDIT – ELECT II FUTURE PLANS

### Q3 2014: Audit process, lessons learnt, ELECT II mid-term review

Since the conduct of the presidential run-off election ELECT II has been shifting its role towards also providing electoral-technical advice to UNAMA's mediation efforts between both candidates to resolve the dispute. As the ultimate agreement between both candidates on 11 July, mediated by US Secretary of State John Kerry and the UN SRSG Jan Kubiš, foresaw a full audit of all ballots under supervision of the UN, ELECT II's role has since been changing more drastically in order to bring a legitimate conclusion to this electoral process. At the request of both candidates as well as the authorities, the UN has been taken a more prominent role in the electoral process. With regards to the project, ELECT II not only assisted the IEC with the development and proper implementation of audit procedures, it also became be the main actor to ensure UN supervision of the entire audit of all eight million ballots casted. All international ELECT II staff, beyond their regular duty and responsibilities, have been involved in the audit process. In addition, the project recruited some 120 extra temporary international audit supervision experts.

The project's enhanced role in the audit process to ensure a logical conclusion of the electoral process, however generated some risks and issues, in particular risk that the audit – not foreseen in the project's original scope- is competing or even has overtaken other priorities, such as timely preparations for the 2015 Wolesi Jirga elections (Lower House of Parliament) as well as sustainability efforts and continued necessary capacity development. Furthermore, in case no logical conclusion of this electoral process can be achieved and the entire electoral-political Afghan dialogue collapses, there could also be a perception of failure of not only ELECT II but of international electoral support in general. It is therefore crucial that a logical outcome of the electoral process goes hand-in-hand with international efforts to achieve a political consensus.

In order to capture lessons learnt from the past round of elections and the audit process, ELECT II plans to conduct a series of lessons learnt workshops internally, with auditors, and with the IEC. In addition, in order to ensure that all plans, tools and reports developed earlier by international advisors are properly and systematically handed over to the IEC as well as to preserve and institutionalize all knowledge, ELECT II commenced with the development of a series of booklets that comprehensively captures all technical and operational aspects of the entire 2014 election process.

In quarter three, as agreed with ELECT II donor partners, a project mid-term review is taking place to evaluate past achievements and reassess the project scope and objectives. Key challenges in the upcoming period include preparations and readjustment of the 2015

electoral timeline (see below); future funding; enhanced efforts to achieve long-term sustainability of the IEC beyond 2015; and a possible organizational restructure of the ELECT II project, including the appointment of a new Chief Technical Advisor. Current Chief Technical Advisor Deryck Fritz, who led the project since end 2011, has assumed a new position with UNDP in the region.

## **2015 elections**

In terms of next electoral goals, the first priority is to finalize the provincial council process. Once the presidential electoral (and political) process has been completed, ELECT II and the IEC as well as IFES and the IECC will resume efforts to finalize the provincial council results, which are still pending after the preliminary release on 20 June. From then onwards, ELECT II will assist the IEC with the preparation of the 2015 Wolesi Jirga elections, and possibly district-level polls. Given the prolonged process of the 2014 presidential elections, it is more than likely that the timeline for the 2015 elections has to be adjusted. The following narrative outlines the context, challenges, specific steps and plans for the 2015 elections, in this respect directly shaping ELECT II's role and activities in 2015.

### Afghanistan elections in 2015: context – key issues - planning

1. Consistent with the provisions of the 2004 Constitution and the 2013 electoral law, the year 2015 should see elections for a new Wolesi Jirga and possibly district-level polls. The country's demanding electoral calendar means that even before the dust settles on Afghanistan's 2014 presidential elections, national electoral management bodies and partners are beginning to look forward to subsequent processes. The following elements intend to assist ELECT II and international partners orient key steps and challenges and are to be considered in the early stages of planning for the upcoming polls.

#### ***Electing a Wolesi Jirga in 2015: Key issues***

2. As during past electoral cycles in Afghanistan (2004-05 and 2009-10), the gruelling experience of the presidential elections throws up additional challenges for succeeding national elections, which must be contemplated as early as possible so responsible authorities can take appropriate action:

3. Electoral calendar. A cursory reading of Article 83 of the 2004 Constitution would lead one to believe that polling should take place between 30 and 60 days before 22 June 2015, however a timeline culminating in polling around early September or October would be legally justified, politically and institutionally preferable, and operationally feasible:

a. Legal. There are conflicting criteria bringing the term of the Wolesi Jirga to a close, according to Article 83 of the Constitution: a five-year term, announcement of results and the date of 22 June. If the 2010 announcement of results (1 December 2010) is accepted as the start of the Wolesi Jirga's five-year term, however, polling should take place prior to the

close of the term in December 2015. Precedent would support this approach: the two previous Wolesi Jirga elections (2005 and 2010) took place in September rather than April/May.

b. Political. Following a period of protracted political instability in 2014, the new government will require a period to familiarize itself with the circumstances of governing and articulate priorities prior to entering into another potentially contentious political process. The new president may wish to consider whether membership of the Independent Elections Commission (IEC) and Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) should be reviewed.

c. Institutional. Periods before and after an election are crucial to the development of sustainable capacity to plan, prepare, and successfully conduct elections. The IEC and IECC require an opportunity following the 2014 election to engage in evaluations, institution-strengthening, long-term capacity building, amendments to the legal framework, and planning for subsequent electoral events.

d. Operational. If an April or May 2015 date was pursued for polling in the Wolesi Jirga election, the process would be expected to begin as soon as one month after the results of the contentious 2014 presidential polls, in October 2014. Such a timeline is neither politically nor operationally advisable. On the other hand, a polling date in late September or October would provide six months between final results in the 2014 presidential election (September 2014) and the start of the operational phase of the 2015 lower house election (March 2015). This timeline, though still tight, would enable a greater degree of planning and co-ordination, as well as time for the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) and Central Statistics Organisation (CSO) to execute their responsibilities under law (i.e. providing population statistics and defining constituency boundaries).

4. IEC/IECC credibility. Electoral management bodies in Afghanistan have proven themselves capable of managing complex electoral processes when afforded sufficient support, however the IEC and IECC must be allowed a period of time - preferably between four and six months - to consolidate their capacities prior to launching into a hectic electoral process. An operational pause of this duration would enable the incoming president to consider any outstanding appointments and would permit the IEC and IECC time to reinforce relationships with key stakeholders, thereby bolstering trust in the institution.

5. International electoral assistance. International electoral assistance currently provided by UNDP ELECT will continue to be required in light of the challenges described in this paper. Key partners indicated that they remain willing to support forthcoming electoral processes on two fronts: support to electoral operations (resources needed to conduct the election itself) and technical assistance (expert advice and support). The IEC and UNDP ELECT expect to articulate the level of additional resources required to sustain both technical and operational assistance through 2015 electoral processes.

6. Voter registration. The IEC is well positioned to administer a provincial-level "top-up" prior to polling in September 2015, an exercise that would require two or three months

and could be implemented in tandem with the early stages of the electoral process. Although neither a full voter registration exercise nor a country-wide top-up are practical in light of time constraints and the ongoing E-Tazkira initiative, a provincial-level top-up would provide voters turning 18 or who lost their registration cards with the opportunity to obtain a new card in time for polling.

7. Kuchi constituencies. A September 2015 polling date would provide sufficient time for IDLG to delineate Kuchi electoral “zones,” which were introduced in the 2013 electoral law (previously the entire country was considered one constituency for Kuchis). IDLG is required by law to provide electoral constituencies 180 days before polling and would therefore require several months of lead time to define these zones in consultation with Kuchi leaders. A nationwide Kuchi shura would be a sensible means to ensure that Kuchi leaders, government entities such as IDLG and electoral stakeholders are fully coordinated. Though such an initiative would necessarily be led by IDLG, the IEC would be able to support including by providing information on Kuchi polling patterns to date.

8. Electoral irregularities. Electoral irregularities have proved to be a persistent issue in all elections in Afghanistan to date, a tendency that is likely to continue in 2015 in the absence of decisive action on the part of law enforcement and the judicial branch of government. Measures implemented by electoral authorities can mitigate but cannot fully overcome the permissive environment created by broader security, political and rule of law issues. In the case of district-level elections, large numbers of candidates combined with small constituencies mean that relatively small amounts of fraud carry the potential to seriously impact results. It is likely, therefore, that results in some areas will be contested.

9. Allocation of polling centres. One of the ways in which the absence of a voter register affects implementation of elections is that polling needs must be estimated based on previous voting patterns. On the one hand surplus centres can fuel irregularities; while on the other overcrowding of centres can undermine trust in the process. The IEC must carefully review allocation of polling centres to ensure voting patterns are accommodated.

### ***Electing district councils in 2015: key issues***

10. The fast-approaching nationwide Wolesi Jirga election presents an opportunity for the IEC and IECC to simultaneously implement district council races which - though they are constitutionally mandated - have not this far been conducted in Afghanistan. The opportunity to ‘double-up,’ a process that would imply far lower costs than a stand-alone exercise, will likely not present itself again until at least 2020 and therefore it is a good time for wider discussions on whether the political, legal and institutional conditions exist to install these bodies. Upon initial examination from an electoral standpoint both an adequate legal framework and sufficient capacity on the part of electoral authorities exist to carry out district council elections but concessions would need to be made in several areas.

11. Council size. Population figures updated in 2012 indicate that between 3,600 and 3,900 district council seats should be up for grabs (depending on the treatment of Kabul



nahias), with an average of nine seats per district. The absence of reliable census data and the consequent uncertainty surrounding population figures, however, could result in complaints from populations that feel the number of seats allocated to their districts is incorrect. As part of the electoral process the Central Statistics Organisation (CSO) would establish a mechanism to manage disputes that fall outside the purview of the IEC and IECC, a function that can take place concurrently with the electoral process.

12. Voter registration. A voter register that includes residential information is desirable but is not a necessary precondition to holding district-level polls. Neither the 2004 Constitution nor the 2013 electoral law specify a residency requirement and therefore there is no legal obligation to assign voters to districts prior to opening polling or to verify their residence in a district. There are, of course, risks implied in this approach - for instance, spoilers could move voters across districts in order to buttress their favoured candidate or undermine rivals - and for this reason it is advisable that district council elections for the 398 districts take place concurrently, i.e. on the same day.

13. Boundary delineation. The Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO) and IDLG in 2012 completed the definition of boundaries of districts, with maps subsequently provided to IEC showing 365 official districts, 33 provincial capitals, and Kabul and its nahias as a special administrative zone – for a total of 399 electoral constituencies. Independent experts have pointed out minor flaws in the delineation of boundaries, however the absence of a residency requirement means it is not necessary for boundaries to be minutely defined to conduct district council elections. Put simply, it is not necessary for voters to identify which district they are resident in prior to voting: s/he is free to vote on whichever side of the border s/he prefers.

14. Temporary districts. At present there are nine temporary districts that have been established by presidential decree. They are recognized by the Afghan government – indeed, the Afghan cabinet asked to include these districts in the 2013/14 voter registration exercise - however none of the nine temporary districts has yet received parliamentary approval, even though some of the presidential decrees are now six years old. From an electoral perspective, because these temporary districts have no legal basis they cannot have their own elected representatives at present. However, if district council elections are to occur in 2015, then that may well provide the necessary impetus for the Afghan government to formalize them. As with the voter registration exercise mentioned above, such a move could be easily accommodated by the IEC and IECC if made prior to the start of candidate nomination.

15. Special measures (quota). There is currently no quota for women in district councils mentioned in either the Constitution or the 2013 electoral law, as there is for provincial councils (20%) and the Wolesi Jirga (25%). IDLG's 2010 policy on sub-national governance states that 25% of district councils should be women however this figure does not currently have a basis in law.

16. Electoral dispute resolution. District-level elections would oblige the IECC to strengthen their abilities to manage processes originating at the district level, which could

include hiring and training of district-level staff as well as procedures to accommodate district-level challenges and complaints.

17. Accreditation. The intensely local nature of district council polls is likely to result in increased deployment of candidate and party agents to polling stations, monitoring the process closely. The presence of agents, observers and media are key safeguards in electoral processes, and greater numbers of agents denote greater integrity of the polls.

18. Internal elections. The IEC has or could reasonably be expected to have a supervisory role over several internal elections related to district councils, many of which are mirrors of those already conducted by the IEC at the level of provincial council.

a. Meshrano Jirga. The 34 posts in the Meshrano Jirga reserved for district council members are currently elected by provincial councils. It would be necessary to define a process for these seats to be vacated, for district council members to be elected, and for vacant seats in the affected district councils to be filled.

b. Administrative board. The 2013 electoral law stipulates that the IEC is obliged to supervise internal elections of councils' administrative boards within twenty days of the final results, with re-elections would be held annually, however the exact composition, role and responsibilities of the board are not yet defined in either policy or law.

c. Council president. Articles in the Constitution explicitly state that presidents of the district councils should form part of the Loya Jirga, including constitutional Loya Jirgas, though the relationship of this person to the administrative board is not explicitly stated, nor is it stated whether the election of this post is overseen by the IEC.

19. Security. Security conditions in some areas of the country preclude polling for district councils, in particular "black districts". In other districts such few polling centres are able to open and consequently district councils may not be considered sufficiently representative of the electorate for the results to be accepted, as was the case in some provinces following the 2010 Wolesi Jirga elections. A threshold percentage of polling centres open per district could be established.

20. Electoral irregularities. The risk exists that irregularities amongst several few centres could invalidate the results of entire districts, leaving them with no district council. Due to the smaller size of districts as compared with constituencies such as provinces, relatively small-scale electoral fraud would have the potential to seriously undermine the integrity of the polls in some areas.

21. By-elections. The electoral law states that by-elections should be held in case of assassination of any members, however it is unlikely that such elections are feasible in light of the security conditions, capacity levels and resource levels that existed at the end of 2014.

## VII. ANNEXES

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