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ENHANCING LEGAL AND ELECTORAL CAPACITY FOR TOMORROW Phase II
ELECT II

SECOND QUARTER PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT 2013

Donor Partners



Australia



Canada*



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EU



Germany



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Japan**



Norway



Republic of Korea*



Sweden



Turkey*



United Kingdom



United States of America*

Prospective donors with pledged support: France and the Netherlands (2013).

* Continued support from ELECT I budget

** Japan signed an agreement with UNDP to support the electoral process and the IEC from Q3 2012 until Q2 2014, contributing to ELECT II capacity development 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: US \$ 89,784,946 (2012-2013)

Implementing Partner: Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan (IEC)

Chief Technical Advisor: Deryck Fritz

UNDP Country Office - Portfolio Manager : Mir Nadia Nivin



Cover Photo: Pole sign developed by the IEC to inform voters how to register, including a voter information call centre number .
Photo by IEC

Acronyms

AGCHO	Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CD	Capacity Development
CDA	Capacity Development Assessment
CDAP	Capacity Development Action Plan
CEO	Chief Electoral Officer
CoC	Code of Conduct
CSC	Civil Service Commission
CSO	Community Service Organization
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DFC	District Field Coordinator
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General
ECC	Electoral Complaints Commission
EDR	Electoral Dispute Resolution
ELECT / II	Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow / II
ERD	External Relations Department
GIROA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIS	Geographic Information System
GU	Gender Unit
IEC	Independent Election Commission
IECC	Independent Electoral Complaint Commission
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MoCIT	Ministry of Communications and IT
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
MJ	Meshrano Jirga
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NID	National ID
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEO	Provincial Electoral Officer
PERO	Provincial External Relation Officer
PO	Public Outreach
POD	Public Outreach Department
PPSU	Policy and Program Support Unit
PSA	Public Service Announcement
QA	Quality Assurance
SC	Security Council
SNTV	Single Non-Transferrable Vote
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SRS	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
TMAF	Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework
ToT	Training of Trainers
T&CB	Training and Capacity Building
T&CBD	Training and Capacity Building Department
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VR	Voter Registration
WJ	Wolesi Jirga

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I. Executive Summary

The second quarter of 2013 was momentous for the UNDP ELECT II project, as ELECT II donor partners endorsed a **revised Project Document** at the 12 June Project Board meeting, extending the project throughout the upcoming 2014-15 electoral cycle in Afghanistan. According to the Project Document revision, ELECT II will now run until December 2015, and will build upon its largely capacity building role to further encompass direct support to electoral operations. The successful conclusion of the revised Project Document was the result of effective coordination and open dialogue between UNDP and donor partners, and facilitated with input from the UN Needs Assessment Mission and the project 2012-2013 Mid-Term Review.

The IEC's transition to an operational phase during the second quarter of 2013 was highlighted by the successful launch on 26 May of the first phase (provincial level) of the IEC's **voter registration (VR)** "top-up" exercise. Citizens of Afghanistan have the right to vote upon reaching the qualifying age of 18 years old prior to 5 April, 2014. The IEC's "top-up" exercise is therefore focused largely on newly eligible and first-time voters, although returnees, eligible voters who have moved to another constituency and those with damaged or lost voter ID cards are also eligible. The integrity of all new VR cards has been assured by enhanced security features.

There are 41 voter registration centres that have been established at provincial level, consisting of 82 VR stations (41 for men and 41 for women). At the end of the second quarter of 2013, so far a total of 75,926 eligible persons had already been issued new voter registration cards. This included 59,668 men (78.6 %) and 16,258 women (21.4%). The IEC has noted its concern over the lower levels of fe-

male registrants, and is undertaking analysis and pro-active steps to further engage women in the process. The launch of the VR exercise was also accompanied by the launch of the IEC's public outreach campaign, spearheaded by informative, motivational and well-produced TV and radio public service announcements, including TV and radio PSAs specifically encouraging women to register.



Voter registration at Kunduz provincial capital
Photo by UNAMA

Further underscoring the IEC's transition to an operational phase was the work undertaken by the IEC during the second quarter, with ELECT II assistance, in finalizing a comprehensive **Electoral Operations Plan**. The Operations Plan was developed in line with the principles of integrity and inclusiveness, and targets an estimated 13 million eligible voters through more than 7,000 polling centres and 22,000 polling stations across the country. It provides a detailed overview of the inter-dependent processes required to underpin a successful election process,

meeting legal deadlines and in line with IEC regulations. The Operations Plan was developed in line with an accompanying **Fraud Mitigation Plan**, outlining pro-active measures that can be undertaken, including: high quality materials, chain of custody, handling of contingency materials, error reduction and wider community engagement and ownership of the process. As a component of the Electoral Operations Plan, a **Security Concept of Operations** has also been developed to facilitate optimal cooperation and coordination between the IEC and the security forces.

Electoral Codes of Conduct are intended to complement electoral legislation and regulations. While they are not legally binding, they aim to commit stakeholders to ethical conduct and professional standards, thereby contributing to an environment conducive to democratic elections. During the second quarter, the IEC has finalized Codes of Conduct for **political parties, media, IEC staff** and **election observers**.

Observers Accreditation: Election observation enhances accountability and transparency, thereby boosting both domestic and international confidence in the process. On 27 April, the IEC commenced observer accreditation contingent upon signing the observer code of conduct, which emphasizes high professional standards and the independent and impartial conduct of observers. This is enabling relevant international and domestic organizations, individuals and media, to register to observe the upcoming electoral process, commencing with the voter registration exercise. The accreditation process runs until shortly before the elections. In the first two months, the IEC already accredited 219 observers from 12 observer organizations (of which 10 are national – FEFA and TEFA -

and two are international – NDI and DI). In addition, 16 media organizations (11 domestic and 5 international, including CCTV and AFP), as well as 9 political parties, have also been accredited so far.

Gender: During the second quarter, the IEC Gender Unit launched the thematic Gender and Elections working group, which will serve as a regular IEC-led discussion platform. It will provide an opportunity to regularly bring together individuals and entities working for gender equality in the election context. The IEC also launched in Kabul ten consultations with religious leaders to encourage their understanding of the electoral process and the importance of women’s participation. These consultations will continue in the next quarter in each province. In addition, planning for provincial seminars for influential women and women’s networks was also initiated by the IEC.

Legal Framework: In order to establish a clearly defined, stable and predictable framework for the conduct of elections, ideally major revisions to legislation should not be introduced shortly before an election. ELECT II has therefore been concerned about the protracted legislative process with a view to possible significant amendments to electoral legislation. An already challenging environment for the conduct of elections could be further exacerbated if changes to the Election Law result in very compressed timelines to adapt operational planning to amended legislation. The Operations Plan has thus far been developed according to the current legal framework/Presidential Decree. It was developed, for the first time, one year ahead of the elections, which can be seen as a major achievement of the IEC in terms of ownership and planning capacity.

Adding to an atmosphere of uncertainty is the fact that the term of the IEC Chairman was supposed to expire in mid-April. The President announced, after a consultative meeting with political parties and civil society, that an official decision on the new term of IEC Chair will be taken only after the revised Structures Law is approved. The ambiguity regarding the appointment process does not facilitate IEC leadership within a clear and predictable electoral framework. In addition, it is also not clear if the approval of a new Structures Law requires the reappointment of all Commissioners whose term has not expired yet, or whether transitional provisions will apply.

Electoral Dispute Adjudication: An important aspect to the election process, which awaits final definition according to the amendment of election-related legislation, is the electoral complaints dispute mechanism. In anticipation of final legal parameters, a Specialist was deployed by ELECT II in May to explore initial planning of an Electoral Dispute Resolution mechanism.

Capacity Development Assessment and Action Plan: With ELECT II support, the IEC finalized its institutional Capacity Development Assessment in April, which identifies gaps and discrepancies at institutional, organizational and individual level. To address these issues in a targeted manner, the IEC developed a subsequent Capacity Development Action Plan.

Following Presidential Decree 45, which essentially states that electoral assistance should move on-budget, discussions have been taking place among donor partners, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA) and the UN. As these discussions are intended to be forward looking, an

informed analysis assessing the strengths and liabilities of moving electoral assistance 'on-budget' was deemed desirable. UNDP therefore fielded a high-level independent mission, termed as the **Grants Agreement and Risk Management (GARMIN) mission**. The mission looked into the respective budget lines of the electoral operations, and recommended certain budget lines that could possibly move on-budget. However, the predominant factor depends on the negotiation and agreement by the IEC and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) as to specific categories that may move on-budget, and what percentage of the overall electoral budget that this will represent. Following the mission, this dialogue process has been ongoing. The GARMIN mission report has been circulated to all stakeholders.

II. Introduction

The ELECT II Project Board meeting extended the ELECT II Project Document beyond the original December 2013 closing date, to enable ongoing and enhanced ELECT II support to the Independent Election Commission (IEC) throughout the upcoming 2014-15 electoral cycle in Afghanistan. ELECT II has been revised accordingly to expand beyond its original institutional strengthening and capacity development role, and is now to incorporate direct assistance in support of the conduct and operations of the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections and the 2015 Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) elections.

This project review and ultimate extension underscores the need to strengthen the political and electoral processes, including ensuring the engagement of voters. This should be followed by significant investment to rebuild the social contract and broaden the democratic focus from institution building to state building. The 2014 and 2015 elections, and the need for them to be Afghan-led and credible processes, is of paramount importance at the cusp of such a transition. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework reiterated the Government of Afghanistan's commitment "to conduct credible, inclusive and transparent Presidential and Parliamentary elections in 2014 and 2015 in accordance with the Afghan Constitution, in which eligible Afghan citizens, men and women, have the opportunity to participate freely without internal or external interference and in accordance with the law."

The entire project, from 2012 to 2015, is budgeted to expend \$338 million USD. The objectives of the project will be achieved through the following expanded project outputs:

- Output 1** Sustainability of the IEC is enhanced via both its institutional and staff capacity development;
- 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;
- Output 3** The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders, including the electorate, is enhanced;
- Output 4** The IEC's operational management functions, and the project support services, are strengthened;
- Output 5** The conduct of key electoral operations for the 2014 and 2015 elections by the IEC is improved;
- Output 6** The electoral dispute resolution mechanism is enhanced;
- Output 7** The media regulatory mechanism for the electoral process is enhanced

III. Results

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

A major objective of ELECT II is to further develop institutional, organizational and staff capacity. This is intended to ensure that the IEC, as the constitutionally-mandated institution, takes the lead in organizing the upcoming elections in a credible, professional and successful manner. It is the role of the project to enhance the capacity of the IEC to plan and conduct credible future elections with minimal external support. In the second quarter of 2013, the project in particular continued to focus on human resource capacity development (capacity assessment) and the organization's institutional knowledge capacity (electoral planning and procedures, standard operating procedures/SOPs).

1.1 Organizational and Staff Capacity

Indicators:

- a. Perception of IEC staff towards working in the IEC**
- b. The extent to which the IEC uses data management systems and trend analysis to inform its planning and communication**
- c. The extent to which institutional plans are developed and implemented**
- d. Percentage of trained IEC staff who feel they are more effective in their jobs because of training and capacity development opportunities**

A key step to ensure enhanced organizational and staff capacity, and to measure the progress in this regard, was the conduct by ELECT II of an all-inclusive **capacity development assessment**

(CDA) of IEC. This was conducted in late 2012 and early 2013. Survey questionnaires for IEC staff were prepared for the very specific purpose of acquiring essential data. In addition, all ELECT II advisers assessed the existing capacity in their respective counterpart departments, as well as identifying prevailing gaps and needs.

On 30 April, the IEC CDA report was finalized and shared with donor partners. The report assessed both institutional and organizational capacity development needs and corresponding challenges for the IEC. The key findings point to a variety of competency and performance gaps in each of the following respective levels.

- a. *At the institutional level:* gaps in the electoral legal framework clearly defining the relationship to the other state powers, the responsibility of the Parliament and the Ministry of Finance to provide adequate budgetary resources, as well as a lack of sufficient legal provision regulating the internal structure of the IEC, e.g. responsibilities of the Secretariat in relation to the Commission.
- b. *At the organizational level:* challenges include a certain lack of sufficient policy guidelines, standard operating procedures, outdated or inadequate systems, and unclear administrative and operational processes and procedures. These have been mostly identified as non-training interventions.
- c. *At the individual level:* performance discrepancies are mostly rooted in shortcomings with regards to professional knowledge and specialized skills of the permanent staff and personnel. Due to the nature of its work with peak opera-

tional periods every three to four years, the IEC is heavily dependent on temporary or project contractual personnel. Low retention and high turn-over of staff adds to the challenges that the IEC is facing.

1.2 Legal framework, regulations and Codes of Conduct

Indicators:

- a. number of electoral regulations that are developed or revised in line with the electoral legal framework
- b. number of codes of conduct developed/ revised in a consultative manner



Training of Kabul province VR staff

Photo by ELECT II

In response to the findings and recommendations of this CDA report, ELECT II has supported the IEC with the development of a **Capacity Development Action Plan (CDAP)**. The CDAP covers all the interventions to bridge the gaps and discrepancies at institutional, organizational and individual level. The IEC aims to implement CDAP from July 2013 until December 2015. Important aspects of the CDAP include the specification of non-training needs, such as the extensive development/revision and implementation of Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs), a monitoring plan in line with the Strategic Plan, or high-level policy advice; as well as the further fine-tuning of different training needs. The CDAP identified 37 areas for SOPs to be developed and implemented. Annex 7 provides in detail an integrated training plan to be undertaken at the level of the Commission, Senior Management, and the different departments

In order to establish a clearly defined, stable and predictable framework for the conduct of elections, ideally, major revisions to legislation should not be introduced shortly before an election. ELECT II has therefore shared concerns about the protracted legislative process with a view to possible significant amendments to electoral legislation. An already challenging environment for the conduct of elections could be further complicated if changes to the Election Law result in very compressed timelines to adapt operational planning to amended legislation. The Operations Plan has thus far been developed according to the existing legal framework including the 2009 Presidential Decree.

In quarter two, the Wolesi Jirga (WJ), or the Lower House of Parliament, passed on 22 May 2013 the new draft of the **Electoral Law**. Significant provisions in this draft include:

- Art. 5 (5) introduction of Out-of-country-voting.
If included in the final bill, the IEC will have to review its Elections Operational Plan since it does not foresee the preparation, conduct and the budget for out-of-country voting.
- Eligibility criteria: Literacy requirement for village council candidates Art. 16 (2); baccalaureate requirement for municipal council candidates (Art 18 (1) 4; graduation certificate of 12th class requirement for provincial councils (Art. 15).

This criterion will likely deprive many people (in particular women) from being a candidate and stands in contrast to the respective provisions for presidential and WJ candidates which do not contain any educational requirement.

- Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) remains the electoral system for the WJ and all council elections.

- Art 25 (3): The proposed provision does not prevent that a seat reserved for female candidates will be occupied by a man in case there are not enough female candidates.

This clause might cause a reverse effect where potential female candidates are intimidated not to stand in order free a seat for a male candidate.

- Art 29: Reserved seats for female candidates in provincial councils.

Unlike the existing Electoral Law (Art 29), the WJ draft does not contain reserved seats for female candidates in the provincial councils. The draft further does not foresee any reserved seats for female candidates in district, municipal and village councils.

- Art 54 (1) 7: International observer missions have the right to object and to file complaints.

As a rule, international observers should not have the right to object or to file complaints as this could be seen as interference and would go beyond an observation and reporting role.

- Art. 61ff: Election complaints shall be adjudicated by the Election Complaints Commission (ECC). The draft does not regulate the appointment and composition of the ECC (which is regulated in the draft structural law still pending approval).

- Art 58 (4, 5): In case of a disagreement between the IEC and the ECC over an election result the final decision remains with a nine-member panel consisting of three members of the IEC, the ECC and the

Independent Commission for Supervision of the Implementation of the Constitution.

- Art. 65 (3): Central and provincial electoral courts are in charge of election violations committed by election staff.

- Suspension of elections: Unlike Art 65 of the current 2010 electoral law the new WJ approved draft does not contain any regulation regarding who is responsible for the decision to suspend elections.

On 1 July, the Meshrano Jirga, or Upper House of Parliament, approved its Draft Electoral Law, containing 65 articles. Important decisions, in addition to the points above approved by the Wolesi Jirga, include:

- Maintaining the Single non-transferable vote

- Reserving 1 seat for the Hindu and Sikh minority¹

- Reserving 10 seats for the Kuchi community, to be contested across seven regions covering the entirety of the country

- Reintroducing the 25% female quota for Provincial, District, as well as Village council elections seats for women, and²;

- Agreeing on 250 seats, the total number of seats for the Lower House, of which 10 will be assigned to Kuchis across 7 regions, 1 to Hindu/Sikh³ and 239 to electoral constituencies based on population.

After the Meshrano Jirga approved its version, with some differences compared to the version of the Wolesi Jirga, a Joint Committee of both Houses was established in early July⁴.

Further, in quarter two, the Joint Commission of the Lower and Upper House approved on 13 April the draft revision of the **Law on the Structure, Duties**

¹The final version of the Law does not include a seat for Hindu and Sikh minority.

²The final version of the Law reserves a female quota of 20%.

³Ibid 1

⁴On 15 July 2013, the Joint Committee of both Houses approved a final revision of the Electoral Law to be submitted to the President's Office, which the President endorsed on 20 July.

and Authorities of the IEC and ECC (or simply called 'Structures Law'). On 27 April, the Office of Administrative Affairs, under the authority of the President, returned the proposed draft, citing inconsistencies with the Constitution. On 10 June and on 23 June, the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga approved a new draft law for submission to the President, renaming the ECC as Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) and revising the selection procedures for appointment of IEC and IECC Commissioners. A Joint Committee of both Houses was established and looked into a final version⁵.

Adding to an atmosphere of uncertainty is the fact that IEC Chairman Manawi's term was supposed to expire in mid-April. The President announced, after a consultative meeting with political parties and civil society, that an official decision on the post of IEC Chair will be taken once the revised Structures Law is approved. The ambiguity regarding the appointment process does not facilitate IEC leadership within a clear and predictable framework. In addition, it is also not clear if the approval of a new Structures Law requires the reappointment of all Commissioners whose term is not expired yet, or whether transitional provisions will apply.

a. Electoral regulations developed or revised in line with the electoral legal framework

It is obvious that continuing uncertainty surrounding the legal framework of the IEC could have a serious impact on the development and revision of subsequent IEC electoral regulations and procedures. However, in order to ensure timely preparations and momentum, with the assistance of ELECT II, the IEC Secretariat revised and updated in the second quarter

ter the following regulations in line with the existing laws. Significant regulations reviewed and finalized, or about to be finalized, include those for:

- Candidate Nomination procedures;
- Polling and counting procedures;
- District Field Coordinators (DFC) Recruitment Guideline for Provincial Electoral Officers;
- Procedures for Nomination of Provincial Council Candidates;
- Procedures for Nomination of Presidential Candidates;
- Tally Center Operations and Procedures – in progress;
- Vetting Procedures (Candidate Registration Process for the Presidential & Provincial Elections) – in progress.

Furthermore, ELECT II assisted the IEC with review of forms for: Observers Accreditation; Candidate Nomination Application; Political Party and Coalition Endorsement; Symbols; Notice of Withdrawal of Nomination or Endorsement; Campaign Finance; Supporter's Signatures; and others. In total, around 10 electoral regulations and procedures as well as more than 20 forms are expected to be completely reviewed in detail in 2013.

To further enhance the institutionalization process, ELECT II also advised the IEC to introduce the concept of standardization of manuals, procedures, and forms, as well as the re-introduction the notion of standardized terminology.

b. Codes of Conduct developed/revised in a consultative manner

On 16 April, the Commission endorsed the new electoral Codes of Conduct for Political Parties and Coalitions; Media; and Electoral Officers. On 19 May, the

⁵The Joint Committee approved a final version of the Law on the Structure, Duties and Authorities of the IEC and IECC on Saturday 13 July, which the President endorsed on 17 July.

Commission approved a revised Code of Conduct for Observers. These Codes are drafted based on the existing codes from the previous elections and include lessons learnt. ELECT II provided the IEC with in-depth advice to be considered for finalizing the new Codes.



Consultation with Political Parties on the electoral Code of Conduct . Photo by ELECT II

For all respective Codes of Conduct, the IEC solicited input and feedback through different stakeholder consultations held at the end of March and beginning of April. The consultation sessions on 27 March for the Code of Conduct for Media was well attended by a large group of media organizations, CSOs and observers who all provided their input and feedback on a draft presented by the IEC. The consultation session for political parties and candidates on 1 April was attended by around 30 different political parties, who likewise gave their feedback to the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates. The Ethical Code of Conduct for Electoral Officers, which was extensively discussed with staff in group in 2012, includes recommendations of the IFES Afghanistan Electoral Integrity Assessment Report.

1.3 Physical infrastructure and security

Indicators

- a. **Number of IEC newly constructed well-functioning and secured provincial offices**
- b. **Number of additional permanent infrastructure construction works at HQ level**
- c. **The extent to which security at IEC premises (HQ/provinces) is established**

Part of the long-term sustainability plan for the IEC is the ownership of safe and secure premises in Kabul and the provinces. A major construction undertaking in the first part 2013 has been the construction of a training centre at HQ, which will be able to accommodate the training of all IEC permanent staff as well as the large numbers of temporary staff that are recruited in the upcoming periods for different electoral operations, such as Civic and Voter Educators, District Field Coordinators, Call Centre Officers, Voter Registration Assistants, Polling Day Assistants, and others. The Training Centre is expected to be completed by the end of the third quarter.

Also at HQ, ELECT II and IEC engineers are re-assessing the security walls and entrance points for staff and visitors, which will be significantly upgraded in the next quarters. To improve the security of the IEC, ELECT II assisted the IEC in the cooperation with the Afghan National Police, which guards the premises; the drafting of different security Standard Operating Procedures; and the establishment of an unarmed internal IEC guard force which is now planned to be operational in the third quarter.

At the provincial level, ELECT II is supporting the IEC with the construction and ownership of offices and/or warehouses in the provinces. In the first phase, nine main provinces are targeted that serve as regional centres for adjacent provinces. These provinc-

es are Herat (office and warehouse construction), Daikundi (office and warehouse), Paktya (office and warehouse), Khost (office and warehouse), Jawjzan (office and warehouse), Balkh (office and warehouse), Nangarhar (warehouse construction only), Bamyan (warehouse only) and Laghman (warehouse only). Plans for the construction of the Kabul Province regional office will be part of a separate phase. In the second quarter, ELECT II completed the design and construction documentation for offices or warehouses in these provinces. The bidding process started at the end of June. Effective construction is expected to start in July and August, with the aim of having them finished by the 2014 elections. ELECT II, by deploying a significant team of international and national engineers, is closely involved with the different quality assurance steps related to construction of buildings. This includes all phases, from drawings of the plans and development of thorough bidding requirements, to field monitoring in conjunction with IEC engineers. Furthermore, ELECT II is supporting the IEC with the security upgrades of the premises in Baglan, Ghor, Zabul, Khost and Paktya, all to be completed in 2013.

EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During Q2, a total of USD 4,126,546 was spent for Output 1. Combining the expenses of Q1 and Q2, Output 1 has a cumulative expenditure of USD 5,992,600.

The funding from the Government of Japan to the IEC is not part of the ELECT II basket fund and therefore allocated in the separate Output 8. In Q2, a total of USD 242,272. Cumulating with Q1, the total spending from Japan so far in 2013 is USD 310,780. This amount is expected to be increased significantly in the next two quarters given the actual construction of the planned offices and warehouses in the provinces. Since this funding enhances the capacity of infrastructural and HR capacity in the IEC, its targets are directly incorporated in the targets of Output 1 of ELECT II.

Other related expenses in Q2 2013, financed with remaining funding carried-over from the ELECT I project but also contributing to Output 1 and Output 2 of ELECT II, are according to accounting procedures booked in the separate old ELECT I Outputs 5 and 6, respectively USD 152,090 and USD 76,989 (Q1 and Q2 cumulative). For more details, please see Annex 2 Expenses by Output.



Construction of the IEC Training Centre

Photo by ELECT II

Below is a snapshot of Output 1 progress in relation to its annual targets after Q2

Output 1: Sustainability of the IEC is enhanced via the development of both its institutional and staff capacities				
2013 Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 1.1.a: 2013 staff survey</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: No Strategic Plan in place. Significant part of IEC's operation lack internal SOPs.</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.d: individual staff development plans does not exist in 2011.</p>	<p>1.1.a: (2013): perception of staff towards the IEC on the specified dimensions increased from year to year</p> <p>1.1.b: (2013) The database is developed and database populated</p> <p>1.1.c (2013) SOPs for all relevant business areas prepared and implemented;</p> <p>1.1.d. (2013): 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; (2013) Training tailored and modified according to assessments and survey results</p>	<p>a. finalization of CDA</p> <p>b. Conceptualization of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.</p> <p>c. Finalizations of drafts of SOPs (list)</p> <p>d. development CDAP</p>	<p>a. CDA released on 30 April</p> <p>b. Conceptualization of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system proposed to IEC. (Presentation of Concept EDR to all IEC department heads first week of July)</p> <p>c. Status of SOPs in CDAP</p> <p>d. development CDAP</p>	On track
<p>Baseline 1.2.a: all existing electoral regulations are applicable for revision in case of a new electoral legal framework</p> <p>Baseline 1.2.b: All relevant codes of conduct, regulations and procedures need revision.</p>	<p>1.2.a: (2013): updating of electoral regulations and procedures with regard to the voter registration process (2013-2015): revision of electoral regulations and procedures for electoral operations related to 2014 and 2015 elections</p> <p>1.2.b: (2013): codes of conduct for ethical/electoral Codes of Conducts for Electoral Officers, Observers, Media, Political Parties, Security Forces reviewed and finalized in a consultative manner</p>	<p>a. Input provided to IEC drafts of electoral procedures on voter registration process, candidate nomination, campaign and campaign finance, polling counting, results tabulation.</p> <p>b. Codes of Conduct for Electoral Officers, Observers, Media, Political parties approved by Commission.</p>	<p>a. Review of drafts of IEC electoral procedures on Candidate Nomination procedures; Polling and counting procedures; District Field Coordinators (DFC) Recruitment Guideline for Provincial Electoral Officers; Procedures for Nomination of Presidential and Provincial Council Candidates; Tally Center Operations and Procedures – in progress; Vetting Procedures – in progress. Forms for Observers Accreditation, Candidate Nomination Application, Political Party and Coalition Endorsement; Symbols; Notice of Withdrawal of Nomination or Endorsement; Campaign Finance, Supporter's Signatures; and other.</p> <p>b. Codes of Conduct for Electoral Officers, Observers, Media, Political parties approved by Commission on 16 April</p>	On track

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

2013 Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 1.3.a: The IEC owns five offices and warehouses in the provinces</p> <p>Baseline 1.3.b: At HQ, existing space for training and data centre is not useable anymore</p> <p>Baseline 1.3.c: Physical security of IEC premises weak at several provincial offices and need to be reviewed at HQ level; Weak security access SoPs; No IEC guard force exists. Access to IEC HQ controlled by ANP.</p>	<p>1.3.a: (2013): Construction of first batch (9) of provincial premises (offices and warehouses) completed for at least 70%</p> <p>1.3.b: (2013-2014) Construction of the training centre, data centre and security upgrades to the IEC HQ undertaken.</p>	<p>a. design finished for 9 Provincial Offices/warehouses; bidding process initiated</p> <p>b. Shell (reinforced concrete structure) of training centre at HQ completed</p>	<p>a. design for Offices/warehouses in 9 provinces approved; bidding process initiated</p> <p>b. Shell (reinforced concrete structure) of IEC training centre 95% completed</p>	<p align="center">On track</p>

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

The right to vote is the most basic element of a democratic election system. From the individual's right to vote follows a duty of the election administration to facilitate effective exercise of that right through the registration of voters.

In light of decisions by the Council of Ministers, and as guided by political realities, the IEC therefore decided in January 2013 to undertake a "top-up" voter registration campaign in preparation of the 2014 Presidential and Provincial elections. In the longer-term, and in anticipation of the establishment of an electronic national ID card (e-tazkira) by the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Communications and Technology, the IEC has stated an intention to extract the voter register from the civil registry that will be developed as the foundation of the e-tazkira exercise.

ELECT II continues to support the IEC in the endeavor of planning the concept, approach and operations of the voter registration "top-up" exercise.

ELECT II provided assistance during the procurement of process of VR kits, the logistical operation, as well as coordination with the security forces. Another part of ELECT II assistance includes input to various trainings organized for IEC staff, both fixed-term and temporary, including: Provincial Electoral Officers (PEO); the Provincial External Relations

Officers (PERO); the Provincial Public Outreach Officers; Provincial IT staff; District Field Coordinators (DFCs); Civic/Voter Educators; Kuchi Liaison Officers; Call Centre operators; and others. The table below indicates the different trainings related to VR facilitated by the respective IEC Departments, and supported by ELECT II. The majority of trainings are coordinated by the IEC Training and Capacity Building Department.



IEC CEO Ziaulhaq Amarkhil and ELECT II CTA Deryck Fritz inspecting the newly printed voter registration books
Photo by UNDP ELECT II

Voter Registration related trainings

VR Trainings	Date	Location	Number of people trained (male/ female)
VR Ops plan workshop: for PEOs	23 – 24 Apr 2013	IEC HQ	33 (31 male/1 female) Note: Gender presentation incorporated in the training
External Relations: PEROs training	5 – 7 May 2013	IEC HQ	34 (all male) Note: Gender presentation incorporated in the training
VR – ToT for Provincial Training Officers	8 – 12 May 2013	IEC HQ	83 (48 male/35 female) Note: Gender presentation incorporated in the training
VR – ToT for Provincial Public Outreach Trainers	11 – 28 May 2013	IEC HQ	76 (33 female) Note: Gender presentation incorporated in the training
VR Phase 01 – training for VR staff and Kuchi Liaison Officers	18 – 24 May 2013	Province	369 (205 M / 164 F) VR staff and 31 Kuchi Liaison Officers Note: Gender presentation incorporated in the training (through ToT)
Provincial IT staff (VR equipment use)	22 – 26 June 2013	IEC HQ	34 (34 male)
Civic Educators	24-26 June	In Provincial Offices (same dates in all Provinces)	864 (male and female breakdown in two days) Note: Gender presentation incorporated in the training (through ToT)
Call Centre training	24-26 June (IEC HQ) 14-15 July (Roshan)	24-26 June (IEC HQ) 14-15 July (Roshan)	62 (51 male/11 female) Note: Gender presentation incorporated in ToT
Data Centre training	After Eid	IEC HQ	120 (aim for at least 40% female)
DFCs	8 – 13 July 2013	Province	399 (370 M / F29)
VR Phase 02 – District VR staff	21 – 24 July 2013	District	3555 (2215/1340) Note: Gender presentation incorporated in ToT

2.1. Voter Registration

Indicators

- a. **Number of new eligible voters enfranchised with voter ID cards**
- b. **Percentage of women registered as new voters**

On 26 May, the IEC successfully commenced the first phase of the “top-up” voter registration (VR) campaign at provincial level, aimed primarily at newly eligible and first-time voters. All materials arrived at their intended destinations with logistical support from Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) where necessary. After one month (30 June), a total of **75,926** eligible persons, of which 217 were Kuchis, were issued new voter registration cards. This included 59,668 men (78.6 %) and 16,258 women (**21.4%**). (See annex 8 for detailed VR figures per province.)

The current VR “top-up” campaign only targets those citizens who: a) will be 18 years of age by 5 April, 2014; b) have recently returned to the country; c) have moved from one electoral constituency to another; d) have lost or damaged their old VR cards; and e) are eligible voters who have not obtained VR cards in the past. In this respect, voters with an eligible old voter ID card, as well as those in possession of a national electronic ID card (e-tazkira), are not required to register for the new VR card. To improve upon the integrity of the new VR cards, the IEC included enhanced security features, including: a registered IEC hologram; the “guilloche” pattern which is difficult to reproduce; micro-text; and other anti-fraud features.

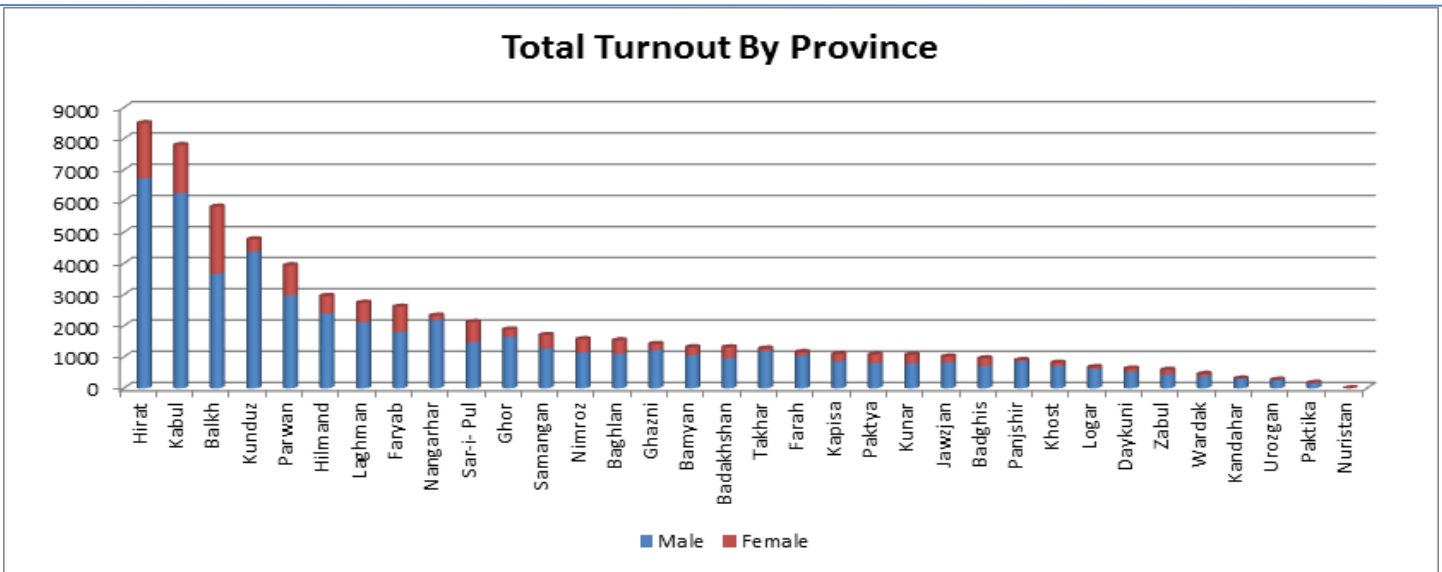
The “top-up” VR campaign got off to a successful start. It has also served as a forerunner to subsequent electoral operations, informing the IEC with

regards to operational and logistical realities in the current environment. To date, no significant security problems have been reported. Erroneous reports about demonstrations in the north against VR were in fact focused on the issue of whether or not ethnic data should be registered in the context of the e-tazkira exercise, and were not VR-related.

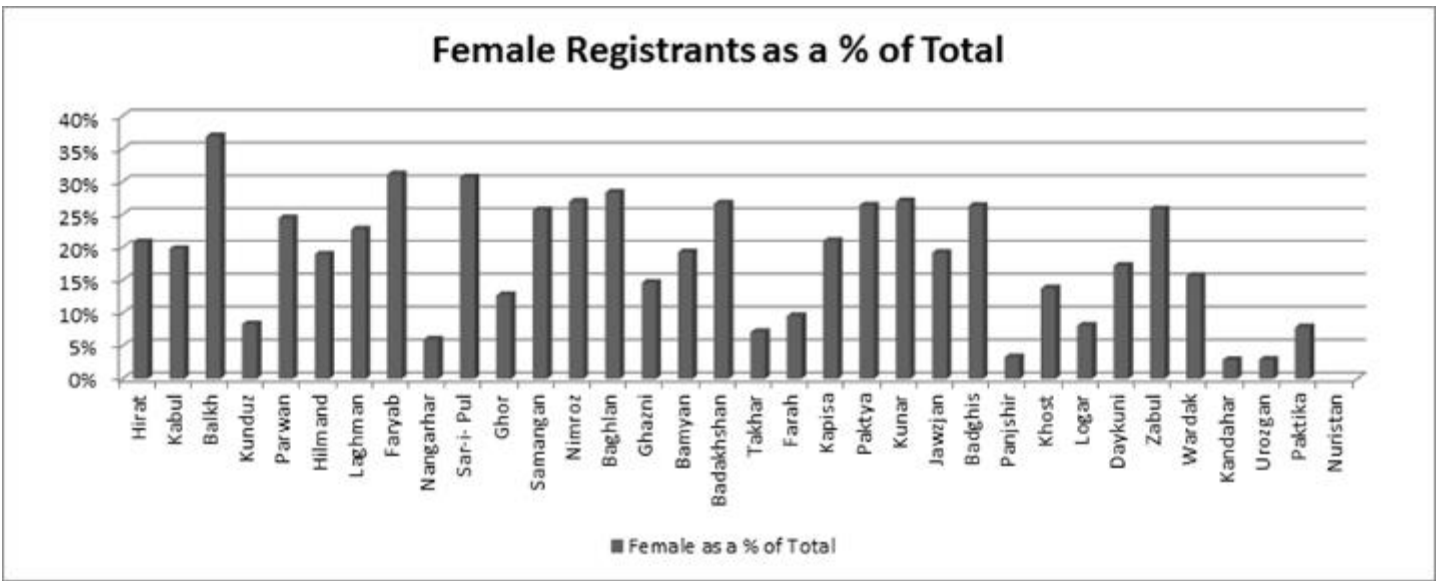


Voter registration at Kunar provincial capital
Photo by IEC

The lower turn-out of women, especially in the first two weeks, is a concern for the IEC. In order to encourage women’s participation, the production of radio and TV Public Service Announcements (PSA) have specifically targeted eligible female voters. In addition, the IEC instructed on 1 June, immediately after the first figures rolled in, that its provincial offices should seek support to bolster women’s participation from: Governors; Directorates of Women’s affairs; women’s councils and other organizations working on women’s issues. In addition, province-level consultations are being planned with Mullahs, CSOs, influential women and women’s networks, with the aim of encouraging women’s participation in the VR process, and by extension in the upcoming elections. (See output 3)



Graphic: Provisional voter registration figures per province as of end of June 2013



Graphic: Provisional female voter registration figures per province as of end of June 2013

According to its VR operational plan, the IEC opened at least one VR centre in all provincial capitals, with Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Kunduz having more than one VR centre. In total 41 VR centres are active, consisting of 82 VR stations (41 for men and 41 for women). These VR centres will facilitate on-going registration until a month before the 2014 elections. A two-month district level registration exercise, which incorporates

the second phase of the VR plan, will commence on 26 July. A third VR phase at polling centre level prior to Election Day is considered as an additional option for those areas where security issues may discourage eligible persons from participating in the first or second registration phases.

The Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA), which was accredited by the IEC in May

2013 to conduct independent domestic observation, deployed 82 male and female long-term observers to all designated male and female voter registration centers in the provincial capitals. In its assessment of the first two weeks of voter registration, FEFA indicated that there are “not yet major irregularities in the process of registration in the first phase”. “The lower turnout is a function of the “top-up” registration as not large numbers of people are expected to remain unregistered after four rounds of voter registrations in the past”⁶. Issues reported refer to practical or technical problems at certain stations; the difficulty in finding the exact voter centre location in certain provinces; and the need for further public outreach. The IEC has taken these comments onboard and will address these and other issues where necessary.



ELECT II staff assisting the IEC with the scanned data entry of VR books as part of the capacity development support
Photo by ELECT II

On Saturday 15 June, the IEC convened a meeting with the Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Communications and IT (MoCIT), and the Ministry of Finance (MoF). The meeting focused on the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the IEC, MoI, MoF, and MoCIT to pilot the electronic national ID card (e-Tazkira) project for Kabul.

The IEC has committed to accepting the e-Tazkira as a valid voting card in the forthcoming elections. Furthermore, it has agreed that in the longer-term, once the e-Tazkira is issued in other provinces, it shall be used as a standard voting card in lieu of all VR cards previously issued by the IEC. The IEC also agrees it will work in full coordination with the MoI, and once the e-Tazkira project fully commences, it will re-assess its voter registration operations in Kabul. The IEC intends to sign the MoU once the legal framework of the e-Tazkira is in place.



IEC staff receiving IT training on how to handle the voter registration kits
Photo by ELECT II

2.2. e-Tazkira synergies

Indicator:

- a. **the extent to which the IEC engages in ongoing dialogues with MoI to make the e-Tazkira long-term database as a long-term solution for the generation of a VR database**

⁶<http://feffa.org.af/index.php/report/144-voter-registration-process-for-the-2014-presidential-and-provincial-councils-elections>

EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During Q2, a total of USD 1,080,012 was spent for Output 2. Combining the expenses of Q1 and Q2, Output 2 has a cumulative expenditure of USD 1,304,698. These expenses are expected to increase significantly in the next quarter given the commencement of phase II of the voter registration in the district centres, in particular due to the large increase of registration centres (from 41 to 399), and hence materials, as well as the increased transportation costs. For more details, please see Annex 2 Expenses by Output.

Below is a snapshot of Output 2 progress in relation to its annual targets after Q2

OUTPUT 2: The quality of the voter registry to support future electoral processes is improved				
Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 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: (2013) 1.5 million new voters are enfranchised with new VR cards</p> <p>2.1.b. (2013): 30 % of the newly registered voters are women</p>	<p>a. Commencement Phase I of VR</p> <p>b. Specific female VR stations and staff / women-specific public outreach</p>	<p>a. Phase I of the VR commenced successfully as planned in all 34 provinces (41 centres) on May 26 2013</p> <p>b. After 1 month, female VR turnout is 21%. Equal number of female VR stations. Gender PSA, 200,000 leaflets, mullah consultations initiated</p>	On target
<p>Baseline 2.2: to be defined once the e-tazkira project is established and implemented</p>	<p>2.2: (2013) to be defined upon establishing e-tazkira registration project</p>	<p>UNDP encourages coordination between Mol, MoCIT, and IEC</p>	<p>Meeting between IEC, Mol, MoCIT, and MoF that produced a draft MoU between all four agencies to pilot e-Tazkira in Kabul upon legal framework in place</p>	On target

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

Sufficient voter information and civic education is necessary to ensure voters are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities as voters, as well as having at least a basic understanding of the overall political process. Significantly, in the second quarter of 2013, ELECT II supported the IEC with the development of public outreach, external relations and gender plans that specifically focus on the voter registration exercise.

3.1 Public Outreach

Indicators

- a. Means of different public outreach methods developed and implemented by the IEC
- b. Number of public outreach activities that specifically target women
- c. Number of participants reached through direct public outreach activities
- d. Number of participants reached through indirect public outreach activities

For the start of the VR campaign, three TV and three radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) were produced on behalf of the IEC (in both Dari and Pashto), focusing on: the announcement of the VR process; the five categories of voters eligible for new VR cards; and encouraging female participation. The TV PSAs were placed on seven of the most influential national channels including RTA, Tolo, Ariana, TV Yak, and Shamshad TV with the detailed media planning guidelines considering all eligible Afghan voters as of 5 April 2014. More than 80% of

the TV PSAs have been broadcasted in prime time. It is estimated that the TV PSAs reached out to approximately 45% of the target population, or **2.7 million** people. (See annex 9 for detailed breakdown and calculation of the TV PSA outreach.)

The following samples of TV PSAs can be viewed online:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FTsEF7ELS8>

(Start of the VR: Dari)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tz-xI0PRABl>

(Eligibility Criteria: Pashto)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aDb-qzGjtE>

(Women's participation: Dari)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNJkCiuvEA>

(Women's participation: Pashto)



Making-off of the TV PSA to engage women voters
Photo by UNDP ELECT II

The radio PSAs have been broadcast on thirty radio stations, with a total broadcast dissemination of over 1,800 minutes. The number of people covered by these radio stations is approximately **16.7 million**. (See annex 9 for detailed breakdown and calculation of the radio PSA outreach.) The IEC has called upon CSOs and other organizations to assist in distributing the PSA broadcast messages, and intends to conduct a coordination meeting in the near future to discuss avenues for further collaboration between the IEC and partners to further ampli-

fy IEC voter education efforts.

In addition, 500 billboards and 5,000 pole signs will shortly be installed nationwide, along with the establishment of a 60-operator Call Centre to answer voters' queries. Some 800 Civic / Voter Educators, 31 Kuchi Liaison officers, and 76 Provincial Trainers (33 females) have been recruited and trained. They will conduct direct face-to-face meetings for the transfer of voter education information, and corresponding materials (leaflets, brochures and factsheets), commencing at the start of July.



TV PSA to announce the launch of the voter registration campaign
Photo by UNDP ELECT II

In a specific effort to achieve also a significant female participation, the IEC has developed a gender strategy and action plan for VR public outreach, both through indirect (TV/radio) and direct activities (seminars, face-to-face interactions). One TV PSA specifically targets eligible female voters. The IEC instructed its provincial offices to: meet with Governors, Directorates of Women's affairs, women's councils and other organizations working on women's issues and seek their support; contact provincial council members to seek their support to encourage women's participation; contact provincial Hajj Directorates and call for their support; organize individual meetings with principals of girls'

schools; and to analyze the trends and potential influencing factors with regard to women's participation in respective provinces.

Furthermore, province-level consultations are scheduled with Mullahs, CSOs, and influential women and women's networks, with the aim of encouraging women's participation in the VR process and by extension in the upcoming elections. IFES offered a consultant in May/June to assist the IEC Public Outreach Department in the focused development and planning of provincial level voter education seminars for influential women. More than 200,000 gender-specific voter registration leaflets have already been printed (Dari/Pashto) and are currently being distributed nationwide. In July, the IEC will also establish a Call Centre, where IEC-trained staff will assist people with questions on all aspects of the voter registration exercise. For the second phase of the VR, the IEC further plans the use of mobile theatres and radio dramas as public outreach mediums. The radio dramas will specifically target rural women.

3.2 External Relations

Indicators

- a. **number of consultative dialogues, inclusive and across the country, that take place with all key stakeholders on relevant electoral issues and plans**
- b. **number of consultative dialogues that include gender elements**
- c. **number of consultative dialogues with women groups on wide range of electoral issues and processes**

Stakeholder Meetings

The IEC organized in the second quarter of 2013 ten major stakeholder meetings and consultations, on different topics such as: the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates; the voter registration process; observers' accreditation; women's participation in the elections; the ELECT II project extension; and cooperation with Mol and MoCIT on e-

Tazkira. These frequent stakeholder meetings play an important role in the IEC's attempt to inform and engage national and international partners to support the conduct of credible elections. Two stakeholder meetings relate to the Gender and Elections Coordination Group that has been established under the lead of the IEC. (See further down under 3.4.)

Date	IEC Activity	Theme	Participants	Provisional Agenda topics
Sunday 01 April	Coordination Meetings with Political Parties (Executive Level) First Group	Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates	Political Parties Electoral Committees Members (60 to 75-par)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct • Discussion on topic • Questions and Answers
Monday 02 April	Coordination Meetings with Political Parties (Executive Level) 2nd Group	Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates	Political Parties Electoral Committees Members (60 to 75-par)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct • Discussion on topic • Questions and Answers
Monday 15 April	Donor Technical Working Group	Electoral and project updates ELECT II Project Document extension	ELECT II donor partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter registration preparation • 2014 elections operational plan • ELECT II project document extension
Wednesday 17 April	Coordination meeting with IEC stakeholders on Gender and Election	Women Participation in elections	IEC stakeholders and IEC key staff 60 participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to women participation in elections • IEC Gender Strategy on VR
Tuesday 21 April	Donor Technical Working Group	Electoral and project updates ELECT II Project Document extension	ELECT II donor partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014-2015 elections budget
Wednesday 22 May	Coordination Meetings with Political Parties and CSOs	Observers Accreditation Voter registration	Political Parties Electoral Committees Members 50 and 50 CSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter Registration process • Accreditation updates
Wednesday 5 June	Donor Technical Working Group	Electoral and project updates ELECT II Project Document extension	ELECT II donor partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral updates • ELECT II project document extension
Wednesday 12 June	ELECT II Project Board Meeting	Electoral and project updates ELECT II Project Document extension	ELECT II donor partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral updates • Project updates • ELECT II project document extension
Saturday 15 June	Coordination meeting IEC, Mol, MoF, MoCIT	e-Tazkira	IEC, Mol, MoF, MoCIT, UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development MoU e-Tazkira
Wednesday 19 June	Coordination meeting with IEC stakeholders on Gender and Election	Women Participation in elections	IEC stakeholders and IEC key staff 60 participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter Registration updates • Accreditation updates • Women participation in VR / elections

Accreditation of Observers

کمیسیون مستقل انتخابات
د پاکستانو چیلواک کمیسیون
Independent Election Commission

د کتونکي نوم/اسم مشاهد:
Name of Observer

د کارت شمېره / شماره کارت:
Badge Number

د موسسي نوم / اسم نهاد:
Organization

کورني کتونکي / مشاهد داخلي
Domestic Observer

معياد اعتبار : این کارت الی ختم انتخابات ریاست جمهوری مدار اعتبار است.

Observers Accreditation badge sample (IEC)

The IEC External Relations Department also takes the lead in the accreditation of observers for VR and the 2014 elections, which commenced on 27 April. Two months after the start of the observers accreditation process, the IEC had already accredited 219 observers from 12 observer organizations (of which 10 are national including FEFA and TEFA – and 2 are international - NDI and DI). In addition, 16 media organizations (11 domestic and 5 international, including CCTV and AFP), as well as 9 political parties, have been accredited so far.

The online application process can be found at the following link of the IEC website:

<http://www.iec.org.af/2012-06-22-04-25-18/accreditation/apply-online>

The accreditation process will continue until two weeks before polling day (5 April 2014) for entities, and one week before polling day for individual observers. Interested national stakeholders (political parties, civil societies, media institutions), and as well as international organizations, can apply for accreditation at the IEC's External Relations Department at its headquarters or at each provincial office. The IEC also provides an online accreditation application system on its website, together with all information regarding accreditation regulations, code of conduct, factsheets, and required information and forms. In order to apply for accreditation, interested organizations will have to submit the "entity accreditation" application form and sign the Code of Conduct for Observers.

3.3 Candidate Nomination

Activities related to Candidate Nomination will commence in the third quarter of 2013.

3.4 Gender

Indicators

- ratio of female/male temporary and permanent IEC staff members**
- the extent to which gender mainstreaming is implemented in line with the strategic plan and the gender strategy**
- the number of internal IEC thematic working groups that engage in a meaningful way gender issues and sensitivities**

Gender Strategy

ELECT II is has assisted the IEC with the develop-

ment of a Gender Strategy, and is offering ongoing support to its implementation.

[More information on the Gender Strategy, see below: Chapter IV - Gender Specific Results]

Gender and Voter Registration / Public Outreach

After one month of the start of the first phase of the voter registration, women include so far 21% of turnout, while the IEC aims to reach at least a 30% female turnout.

The IEC is giving focused attention to women in its public outreach initiatives. It developed, both in Dari and Pashto, specific radio and TV PSAs for women. In addition, on 1 June, immediately after the first VR figures identified a shortfall in female registrants, the IEC instructed its provincial offices to: meet with Governors, Directorates of Women's affairs, women's councils and other organizations working on women's issues and seek their support. Province-level consultations are being planned with Mullahs (10 consultations already took place in Kabul in late June), CSOs, influential women, and directly with women voters, with the aim of encouraging women's participation in the VR process and by extension in the upcoming elections.

Furthermore, a specific 'gender and voter registration' leaflet has been developed. Leaflets (200,000) will be printed both in Dari and Pashto and will be distributed in provinces. The leaflet includes information on the importance of female participation in voter registration, with an objective to provide relevant information to women voters, as well as to motivate women voters to register.



Female voter registration at Kunar provincial capital
Photo by IEC

IEC Gender mainstreaming

The IEC Gender Unit, with the support of ELECT II, also looked into internal strengthening of promoting gender mainstreaming. The Gender Unit provided input, through a gender lens, to: the development of the VR Operations Plan; the Elections Operational Plan; a number of regulations to further elaborate upon the Electoral Law, including the regulations on campaigning, campaign financing, and vote count. ELECT II also supported the IEC with the conduct of several internal presentations and trainings in relation to the upcoming voter registration "top-up" exercise.

[More information on the Gender Mainstreaming and related activities, see below: Chapter IV - Gender Specific Results]

- Gender Presentation on the Consultation with Heads of Provincial Offices
- On 24 April, a consultation was organized for the heads of IEC Provincial Offices. The objective of the consultation was to inform the officers on the voter registration processes. There were 34 participants,

out of which one was a woman. Information on the Gender Strategy was shared, including the consultations with Mullahs and women voters that will be organized at provincial level.

- Gender Presentation on the External Relations Workshop

The workshop for the provincial external relations officers on 5 and 6 May also included a gender component, providing information on the IEC Gender Strategy, and needed actions from the provincial officers to ensure that gender is integrated in their work.

- Gender Presentation on the Voter Registration Training for Trainers (ToT)

The ToT for newly recruited provincial training officers from 8 to 12 May included a presentation by the IEC Gender Unit in which the gender strategy on the election operations was shared, as well as an emphasis on the importance of gender responsive services for the voter registration. In total, 84 trainers participated in the TOT, out of which 34 were women.

Gender-related stakeholder meetings

- Gender and Elections Coordination Group

A broadly attended stakeholder consultation meeting conducted by the IEC on 17 April resulted in the establishment of a Gender and Elections Coordination Group. This brings together a wide range of national and international partners with similar objectives to promote women's participation, and to this end to develop mutually reinforcing cooperation and initiatives. A follow-up meeting was held at the IEC on 19 June.

- Provincial seminars with religious leaders

Province-level consultations are being planned with Mullahs, CSOs, influential women and women's networks, with the aim of encouraging women's participation in the VR process and by extension in the upcoming elections. Consultation meetings (10) with Mullahs in Kabul have already taken place.

[More information on other gender meetings, see below: Chapter IV - Gender Specific Results]



Female IEC staff attends a Voter Registration Training of Trainers session. Photo by UNDP ELECT II

EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During Q2, a total of USD 288,064 was spent for Output 3. Combining the expenses of Q1 and Q2, Output 3 has a cumulative expenditure of USD 476,049. These expenses are expected to significantly increase in the next quarters due to a) the deployment of 800 civic and voter educators as well as the call centre operators; b) the public outreach campaigns at the district level; and c) the long-term agreements with companies with regard to the production of public outreach materials, in particular the TV Public Service Announcements. For more details, please see Annex 2 Expenses by Output.

Below is a snapshot of Output 3 progress in relation to its annual targets after Q2.

OUTPUT 3: The capacity of the IEC to encourage democratic participation is strengthened				
Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
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 materials	3.1.a: development and broadcast radio PSA, TV PSA, radio drama, TV/radio round table, call centre, sms, mobile theatre, printed materials 3.1.b: Number of public outreach activities that specifically target women 3.1.c: Number of participants reached through direct public outreach activities 3.1.d.: Number of participants reached through indirect public outreach activities	3.1.a. Development and implementation of VR Public Outreach campaign (direct and indirect messaging): 3 radio+TV PSA; call centre; 500 billboards, 5,000 polesigns; printed materials; seminars and workshops 3.1.b: Separate radio and TV PSA that target women participation in VR 3.1.c: Number of participants reached through direct public outreach activities 3.1.d.: Number of participants reached through indirect public outreach activities	3.1.a. Launch of VR Public Outreach campaign on 18 May 2013 with TV and radio PSA (3 different messages, in both Dari and Pashto). (direct and indirect messaging): 3 radio+TV PSA; 500 billboards and 5,000 polesigns placed in the last week of June; call centre deal signed with Roshan on 25 June – training call centre operators 24-27 June. Call centre operation first week of July. Printed materials distributed to provinces for Civic and Voter Educators (Q3); seminars and workshops (Q3) 3.1.b: 1 out of 3 radio and TV PSA specific for women. 3.1.c: Q3 3.1.d: approx. 2.7 million and 16.7 million people reached through TV and radio PSA, respectively.	On target

OUTPUT 3: The capacity of the IEC to encourage democratic participation is strengthened

Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
Baseline 3.2: zero – stakeholder interactions were in the past neither always systematically structured nor consultative.	<p>3.2.a: (2012-2015) 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. (2012) At least half of all the consultative stakeholder meetings include a gender component</p> <p>3.2.c. (2012-2015) At least 3 stakeholder meetings with women groups on annual basis</p>	<p>3.2.a: (2012-2015) At least 5 consultative stakeholder meetings</p> <p>3.2.b. (2012) At least half of all the consultative stakeholder meetings include a gender component</p> <p>3.2.c. Establishment of Gender and Elections Coordination Group</p>	<p>3 Coordination meetings with Political Parties and CSOs were held; 2 Coordination meetings with a wide range of stakeholders on Gender and Elections; 1 Coordination meeting with IEC, Mol, MoF, MoCIT; and 4 meetings with international donor partners.</p> <p>3 meetings went specifically about women and elections (Coordination Group and UNAMA Ambassadors meeting). In all other meetings, significant attention was given to gender sensitive issues.</p> <p>3.2.c. Establishment of Gender and Elections Coordination Group (17 April) as well as first follow-up meeting (15 June)</p>	On target
Baseline 3.3.a: NA Baseline 3.3.b: NA	<p>3.3.a: (2013) establishing of the vetting mechanism and procedures by September 2013</p> <p>3.3.b: (2013) All provincial IEC offices (100%) are ready to roll out the candidate nomination process on 16 September 2013</p>	NA	NA	To be started in Q3

OUTPUT 3: The capacity of the IEC to encourage democratic participation is strengthened

Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
<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 educators 31% women (besides 7% Kuchis); DFC 19% (besides 6% Kuchis); g, h, i) no baseline data found.</p> <p>Baseline 3.4.b.: no gender strategy in place</p> <p>Baseline 3.4.c:</p>	<p>3.4.a: assistance to IEC for IEC female recruitment at HQ and provinces: - ratio fixed term staff + long-term permanent staff increased by 7% by end of 2013 - recruitment of at least 40% female VR trainers - recruitment of at least 40% female civic educators - recruitment of at least 30% female DFCs - recruitment of at least 25% female voter registration</p> <p>3.4.b - development of Gender Strategy for electoral operations (incl. VR); - implementing gender related VR activities - comprehensive gender Training of Trainers for IEC VR staff; - Develop and distribution VR gender leaflet (200,000)</p> <p>3.4.c - establishment Gender Elections Coordination group - gender presentation on general stakeholder consultations on electoral issues (CSO, Political parties, Media, Gov) in line with Strategy; - consultations (34) with mullahs in all provinces, seminars with women voters in all provinces</p>	<p>3.4.a: assistance to IEC for IEC female recruitment at HQ and provinces</p> <p>3.4.b - development of Gender Strategy for electoral operations (incl. VR); - implementing gender related VR activities - comprehensive gender Training of Trainers for IEC VR staff; - Develop and distribution VR gender leaflet (200,000)</p> <p>3.4.c - establishment Gender Elections Coordination group - gender presentation on general stakeholder consultations on electoral issues</p>	<p>3.4..a The IEC was able to recruit a 50% ratio of male/female VR temporary staff for the first phase at provincial capital level. All VR centres have separated female stations operated by female staff only, including Nuristan and Paktya, which is an improvement compared to previous VR exercises. Also, regarding VR Trainers, the IEC managed to recruit the planned number of female trainers in all provinces except Kunar and Nuristan – which can be seen as a success. Regarding the Civic/ Voter Educators, Data Centre Operators, Call Centre Operators, District Field Coordinators, and District VR staff, recruitment is still ongoing.</p> <p>3.4.b. - Gender Strategy for VR finalized in April 2013 - Development and distribution to the provinces and districts of 200,000 gender VR leaflets - Initiation of meetings with mullahs in 10 provinces (to be continued and expanded to other provinces in Q3) - Training of Trainers</p> <p>3.4.c. - Gender and Elections Coordination Group established 17 April 2013; first follow-up meeting on 19 June. - IEC Gender strategy on women participation in elections presented at UNAMA convened Ambassadors meeting. (13 May)</p>	<p>On target</p>

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, HR, administration, as well as providing the financial means for the IEC’s operations;
- Proper management of ELECT II project resources;
- Providing operations support for electoral operations, in particular with regards to procurement and translation.

Indicator 4.1: the auditor’s opinion on the IEC’s operational management

Indicator 4.2: the extent to which the project is efficiently and effectively managed

- a. in terms of transparency: auditor’s opinion;**
- b. efficiency: delivery rate; and**
- c. effectiveness: percentage of project outputs according to work plan;**
- d. the number of regular and documented project board meetings;**

e. quality of payments to the IEC

Indicator 4.3: Quality and timeliness of support services for electoral activities

In Q2, the new Operations Manager for ELECT II arrived to take up his post. In addition, ELECT II reinforced its procurement unit by opening three extra international positions of electoral procurement specialists, of which two were already filled within the quarter. By the end of quarter two, all last essential positions within the project were filled or recruited. Quarter three will see an expansion of the project with the recruitment of the 24 regional advisers for Kabul, Jalalabad, Gardez, Kandahar, Herat, Bamyan, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Kunduz. In the second quarter, ELECT II continued to support the IEC with the streamlining of its financial and procurement and other operations processes, in particular with the further development of SOPs. With the uncertainty around the IEC leadership positions linked to the revised Structure Law, most of these SOPs will be formally approved in the next quarter (see attachment 10). ELECT II further recruited an HR Advisor to the IEC, commencing in July, who will assist the IEC with its HR plan.



Candidates taking the exam for IEC Officer for Procurement, Finance, and Administration
Photo by UNDP ELECT II

EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During Q2, a total of USD 1,323,592 was spent for Output 4. Combining the expenses of Q1 and Q2, Output 4 has a cumulative expenditure of USD 2,169,317. The deployment of 24 extra international regional advisors in 8 provinces will significantly increase the expenses for output 4.2. Intensified preparation for electoral operations will also escalate the expenses in output 4.3 in the next quarters.

Below is a snapshot of Output 4 progress in relation to its annual targets after Q2.

OUTPUT 4: The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner				
Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
Baseline 4.1: unqualified auditor report	4.1. The IEC has an qualified audit report	NA	NA	On target
Baseline 4.2: NA	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.	Revised Project Document	New ELECT II Operations Manager recruited and in function UNDP Office of Audit and Investigation conducted an audit of ELECT II 2012 Project Board meeting took place at 12 June 2013 Revised Project Document with revised RRF, new output structure and budget. new M&E plan 2012-2015 as well as 2013 specific developed.	On target
Baseline 4.3: NA	4.3 support services for electoral activities (2013 VR; 2014 elections; 2015 elections) is provided in a timely and qualitative manner		Recruitment of two extra international Electoral Procurement Specialists, one more in the pipeline	On target

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

Output 5 is one of the new outputs as part of the Project Document extension and relates to the organization of the elections in 2014 and 2015. Since this output is still unfunded, expenditures are linked to the preparation of the 2014 and 2015 elections are currently covered under output 2.

Indicator 5.1: the success of the conduct of the 2014 and 2015 elections, measured by qualitative assessment in observer reports; and by statistical reporting and procedural and administrative error reduction

Indicator 5.2: the quality of the results management strategy and the extent to which the results management implementation adheres to the strategy.

Electoral Operations plan and Security Concept of Operations

On 7 April, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) shared a draft of the 2014 Electoral Operational Plan with donors with a view to consideration of additional feedback, as well as further input from IEC internal Working Groups based on lessons learnt from past elections. The plan includes a timetable with key election-related planning dates preceding the Presidential and Provincial Council elections of 5 April 2014, as well as key dates in the election process subsequent to polling day. This includes the date of a presidential inauguration possibly on 22 May or a run-off on 28 May 2014. The timetable also includes the establishment of the (Independent)

Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) and the Media Commission, as well as the candidate nomination and the political campaign periods. Annex 6 provides a detailed timeline of key dates.

The plan is built on the principles of integrity and inclusiveness. The IEC aims to enhance the integrity of the elections by improving the recruitment and oversight process of (temporary) polling station staff; enhanced training, monitoring and observation; engaging outreach to secure community ownership; formalizing strong relations with the ECC; and developing a comprehensive fraud control plan that analyses every aspect of the process and stakeholder engagement to ensure maximum fraud mitigation. As a component of the Electoral Operations Plan, a Security Concept of Operations has also been developed to facilitate optimal cooperation and coordination between the IEC and the security forces. To promote inclusiveness and ensure voting rights, the IEC Operational Plan envisages the operation of around 7,000 polling centres across the country.



IEC meeting with security forces co-facilitated by ELECT II
Photo by UNDP ELECT II

The plan is based on the current legal framework. Any changes in the Electoral Law and the IEC Structures Law as presently under discussion could affect

current planning and procedures. However, in order to improve the process and not have a negative impact on the preparation and conduct of the elections, it is recommended that a revision of both laws will be approved shortly.

Security-wise, the IEC has already shared the list of 6,845 polling centres to the security forces. Three months prior to polling day, a full security assessment will be finalized by the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense and the National Directorate of Security. The President previously ordered that all government agencies will support the electoral process.

The IEC elaborated the plan based on feedback from partners and lessons learnt from internal IEC past experiences, as well as incorporating an IEC Fraud Mitigation Strategy and additional anti-fraud measures. The Electoral Operational Plan is expected to be formally approved by the Commission shortly.

IEC Fraud Mitigation Strategy 2014 Presidential and Provincial Elections

On 18 June, the IEC Fraud Mitigation Plan was shared with partners. This Plan outlines pro-active measures that can be undertaken, including high quality materials, chain of custody, handling of contingency materials, error reduction, and wider engagement and ownership of the process.

Anti-fraud measures include fraud deterrence measures which are built on international best practices and specific lessons learned from previous Afghan elections. Fraud mitigation encompasses these different elements of fraud prevention and fraud deterrence; fraud identification and fraud de-

tection; and fraud correction (invalidation of fraudulent results, prosecution of culprits). In order to achieve increased integrity, the IEC intends to implement a three-fold strategy addressing three levels:

1. Technical level improvements;
2. Error reduction and statistical reporting;
3. Wider community engagement in the process.

Technical level

Technical anti-fraud measures are built around four principles:

- a. Use of highest quality materials;
- b. Strict controls on movement and handling of sensitive materials;
- c. Improved elaboration of procedures which discourage fraud and ensure its detection;
- d. Maximum transparency – in particular scrutiny of observers and agents, as well as media – to maximize detection of error or malfeasance, and to increase confidence. These involve placing specific anti-fraud policies which cover all phases of elections.

Statistical level

Ensuring that the IEC also has accurate polling center data, improved E-day reporting and reduction of administrative errors through provincial counting should also dramatically reduce perceptions of fraud. In order to reduce perceptions of fraud generated by errors (malpractice) which can be just as damaging to the process as real fraud (malfeasance), the IEC intends to reform its coordination with the Mol, MoD, the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to improve data sharing, ensure improved communications and reduce error rates in the process.

For the upcoming 2014 elections the IEC will follow this fraud mitigation strategy during all phases of the electoral process, which will focus on fraud prevention, with fraud identification and fraud correction being second and third layers to improve the integrity of the process. The IEC also recognizes that malpractice (or errors) in the process add considerably to perceptions of fraud and is engaged in trying to reduce these.

Wider community level

Wider community ownership of and engagement in the electoral process is necessary for the IEC to improve the electoral process. The points discussed below outline a process of widening the responsibility for the process. Each person from the voter, to the village elders, to the Mullahs, to the teachers and district officials, to the security forces and various ministries at the provincial and capital level, to the international community, all have a part to play and a corresponding responsibility for the process. This view is to be promulgated through outreach to the stakeholders, and the IEC is actively seeking to strive for an election as a “celebration of human rights” for all of Afghanistan’s diverse peoples.

An important caveat is that electoral fraud is primarily a problem relating to political and security conditions. Measures taken will serve to deter and detect fraud, but not to eliminate fraud. The first line of fraud mitigation is always the engagement and integrity of those involved in the process, including electoral management bodies, polling staff, political parties, candidates, observers, and voters themselves. Election integrity depends on the cooperation and commitment of many different stakeholders, in particular government and local authorities, political parties and candidates, law enforcement agencies, civil society and media. To this end the IEC

encourages a wider ownership and engagement in the process.

Indicator 5.3.a: percentage of polling centres physically verified and with GIS mapped

Indicator 5.3.b: the extent to which the IEC is engaged in the government boundary delimitation policy

After the physical verification of 6,845 polling centres in 2011 and the geographic coding of 69% of them in 2012, the IEC shared all this data already with security forces to allow them well in advance to commence proper security planning for the 2014 elections. The newly recruited GIS advisor assisted the IEC with the continued geo-coding of polling centres. A crucial element in this process is the availability of data from the Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO).

EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

This output is newly added to the extended Project Document and still awaits corresponding funding and implementation. The activities linked to this output and implemented so far have in Q2 been allocated under Output 2.

Below is a snapshot of Output 5 progress in relation to its annual targets after Q2.

OUTPUT 5: The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved				
Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
Baseline 5.1: qualitative statements in the observer reports of the 2009 Presidential and 2010 Parliamentary elections, respectively	5.1: (2013) timely and qualitative implementation of the electoral operations plan according to timeline and procedures	Election Operational Plan 2014 / Fraud Control Plan / Security Concept of Operations / Sharing polling centre list with ANSF	The IEC developed and shared its 2014 Election Operational Plan 2014 with donors in the April TWG for comments. The Commission is expected to formally release this plan shortly. The IEC developed Fraud Control Plan in June with stakeholders. The Security Concept of Operations is developed and shared with security forces, as well as the polling centre list with ANSF	On target
Baseline 5.2: poor result management strategy during 2009 and 2010 elections	5.2: (2013) development 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	NA	NA	On target
Baseline 5.3.a: zero Baseline 5.3.b: No official district boundaries established	5.3.a: (2013) 100% of all polling centre locations mapped with GIS	60% of all polling centre locations mapped with GIS		On target

OUTPUT 6: The electoral dispute resolution mechanism of the electoral process is enhanced

Indicator 6.1.a. timely establishment and full staffing at HQ and in the provinces of an electoral dispute resolution body

Indicator 6.1.b. the extent to which regulations and operating procedures are developed in a qualitative and timely manner

Indicator 6.1.c. timely establishment of a coordination mechanism between the IEC and the electoral dispute resolution mechanism to address electoral complaints

Indicator 6.1.d. the extent of proper assets management of the electoral dispute resolution body

In order to ensure a fair, transparent and accountable electoral process, it would be paramount that an Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) body is fully operational for receiving and adjudicating the challenges related to candidate nomination – which is scheduled to start from 16 September 2013. According to the Election Timeline developed and announced by the IEC already in October 2012, the IEC indicates the need for the establishment of an EDR body by 24 August 2013. The current uncertainty surrounding the legal framework of an EDR mechanism, with draft laws that mention the *Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC)* as a perma-

nent body (Wolesi Jirga draft), or the establishment of a Special Court (Ministerial Council draft), impedes proper planning and preparation.

Given the urgency and importance for the electoral process to establish a proper EDR system, ELECT II hired an Electoral Dispute Adjudication Consultant for six weeks to conduct a review of planning options for technical assistance to an EDR mechanism. Initial planning includes both scenarios for an ECC as well as a Special Court. The expert further provided input on the impacts of including support to the establishment of the EDR mechanism as part of the ELECT II Project Document extension, however through a subcontracting modality in order to avoid any potential allegation of conflict of interest through UNDP ELECT II providing to both support to the IEC and an EDR body⁷. More clarity from donor partners is expected shortly with regard to the responsibilities and implementation modalities.

⁷In July, in line with the recommendations of the Concept Paper on Election Dispute Resolution, discussions commenced regarding subcontracting arrangements for support to the IECC both through UNOPS (establishment of administrative framework) and IFES (electoral dispute resolution support).

EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

This output is newly added to the extended Project Document and still awaits corresponding funding and implementation.

Below is a snapshot of Output 6 progress in relation to its annual targets after Q2.

OUTPUT 6: The electoral dispute resolution mechanism of the electoral process are enhanced				
Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
Baseline a.: no structures exist Baseline b,c,d: NA	6.1.a (2013) Electoral dispute resolution mechanism is fully established and staffed in all provincial offices and HQ by October 2013 6.1.b. (2013) Systems, procedures and processes developed/revised and implemented for filing, hearing and resolving complaints and appeals. Improvement of the triage system for dispute handling 6.1.d. (2013)	Recruitment of Electoral Dispute Adjudication Specialist to define framework for EDR mechanism Donor agreement (revised Prodoc) to define implementation modality of EDR (e.g. sub-contracting)	An electoral dispute adjudication specialist was deployed in June 2013 by ELECT II to define the EDR framework. Agreement reached on the modality of support to the IEC- i.e sub-contracting.	Need to also develop separate management arrangement for the ECC to prevent conflict of interest.

OUTPUT 7: The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced

Indicator 7.1.a timely establishment and fully staffing of media regulatory body

Indicator 7.1.b. the extent to which regulations and operating procedures are developed in a qualitative and timely manner

Indicator 7.1.c. timeliness of the release of Commission report

According to current legislation, the Media Commission is expected to be fully established by October 2013. In Q2, ELECT II initiated the recruitment of a Media Commission Advisor to the IEC, who is expected to arrive in July, and advise the IEC on the establishment of the Media Commission and the media regulatory framework for elections.

EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

This output is newly added to the extended Project Document and still awaits corresponding funding and implementation.

Below is a snapshot of Output 7 progress in relation to its annual targets after Q2.

OUTPUT 7: The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced				
Baseline	2013 Annual Targets	Q2 Planned	Q2 Actual	Comments
Baseline a.: 1 month before polling day Baseline b: NA Baseline c: 45 days after closing of elections	7.1.a (2013) Media regulatory body fully established and staffed 17 October (1 month before campaign period) 7.1.b. (2013) Media monitoring systems, procedures and processes developed/ revised and implemented	a. Recruitment of Media Commission Advisor	Recruitment of Media Commission Advisor completed. Expected to be in function by July	On track

IV. Gender-specific Results

IEC Gender Strategy

ELECT II has closely assisted the IEC with the development of a Gender Strategy and related action plans that address gender needs within the institution, as well as during electoral operations. The overall IEC Gender Strategy aims to provide a strategic direction towards achieving the goal of gender equality in electoral processes, and within the IEC structure itself. Significant gender mainstreaming actions and activities by the IEC, in line with its Gender Strategy for Electoral Operations, include:

1. Ensuring gender responsive voter registration services: Separate voter registration facilities for women voters; female staff in female stations; and photos on voter registration cards are optional for women.
2. Gender responsive public outreach messages: messages developed targeting women, as well as incorporating a gender perspective in the overall gender messages for TV, radio, billboard, leaflets, and other modalities. A leaflet on the importance of women's voter registration has been developed in Dari and Pashto targeting literate population (200,000 copies). The IEC Gender Unit contributes in public outreach message development to ensure that a gender perspective is incorporated in all public outreach aspects.
3. Awareness on women's participation in elections: Consultation with Mullahs and their engagement to speak to women voters in seminars and to with men in mosques, on the importance of female participation in elections. Seminars with influential female leaders will be organized by public outreach officers in the provinces.
4. Recruiting female staff for the electoral activities: Female trainers, female registration staff, polling staff, district field coordinators and voter educators are/will be hired.
5. To encourage female applicants, IEC vacancies are posted in the Ministry of Women Affairs, and other relevant organizations, seeking CVs, and applications from female candidates. UNAMA and other international organizations are welcomed to observe the process in the Headquarters, as well as in the provinces.
6. Hiring of gender officers at the provinces to carry out provincial level gender work including engaging with local level stakeholders in promoting female participation.
7. A gender component is incorporated in the trainings for electoral staff, and gender session are organized in the trainings, as well as discussed as a cross-cutting issue in various electoral topics.
8. Gender Issues are shared in the stakeholders consultations organized by the IEC.
9. Review of legislation and policies from a gender perspective and submission of recommendations for consideration.
10. The issue of electoral security falls under jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior (MoI). The IEC is willing to meet with MoI to discuss issues of female body searchers, and security of female candidates.
11. The establishment of a Gender and Election Coordination Group (established on 17 April, second meeting on 19 June)

Gender and Voter Registration / Public Outreach

As mentioned above, after one month of the start of the first phase of the voter registration, women include so far 21% of turnout. The IEC gives extra attention to reach out to women. It developed both in Dari and Pashto specific radio and TV PSAs for women. In addition, on 1 June, immediately after the first VR figures rolled in, the IEC instructed its provincial offices to: meet with Governors, Directorates of Women's affairs, women's councils and other organizations working on women's issues and seek their support.



Female voter registration in Kunar Province Photo by IEC

Province-level consultations are being planned with Mullahs, CSOs, influential women, and directly with women voters, with the aim of encouraging women's participation in the VR process and by extension in the upcoming elections. Furthermore, a specific 'gender and voter registration' leaflet has been developed. Leaflets (200,000) will be printed both in Dari and Pashto and will be distributed in provinces. The leaflet includes information on the importance of female participation in voter registration, with an objective to provide relevant information to women

voters, as well as to motivate women voters to register.

IEC Gender mainstreaming

The IEC Gender Unit, with the support of ELECT II, also looked into internal strengthening of promoting gender mainstreaming. The Gender Unit provided input, through a gender lens, to: the development of the VR Operations Plan; the Elections Operational Plan; a number of regulations to further elaborate upon the Electoral Law, including the regulations on campaigning, campaign financing, and vote count. ELECT II also supported the IEC with the conduct of several internal presentations and trainings in relation to the upcoming voter registration "top-up" exercise.

- **Gender Presentation on the Consultation with Heads of Provincial Offices**

On 24 April, a consultation was organized for the heads of IEC Provincial Offices. The objective of the consultation was to inform the officers on the voter registration processes. There were 34 participants, out of which one was a woman. Information on the Gender Strategy was shared, including the consultations with Mullahs and women voters that will be organized at provincial level.

- **Gender Presentation on the External Relations Workshop**

The workshop for the provincial external relations officers on 5 and 6 May also included a gender component, providing information on the IEC Gender Strategy, and needed actions from the provincial officers to ensure that gender is integrated in their work.

- **Gender Presentation on the Voter Registration Training for Trainers (ToT)**

The ToT for newly recruited provincial training officers from 8 to 12 May included a presentation by the IEC Gender Unit in which the gender strategy on the election operations was shared, as well as an emphasis on the importance of gender responsive services for the voter registration. In total, 84 trainers participated in the TOT, out of which 34 were women.

Gender-related stakeholder meetings

- **Gender and Elections Coordination Group**

A broadly attended stakeholder consultation meeting conducted by the IEC on 17 April resulted in the establishment of a Gender and Elections Coordination Group. This brings together a wide range of national and international partners with similar objectives to promote women's participation, and to this end to develop mutually reinforcing cooperation and initiatives. A follow-up meeting was held at the IEC on 19 June.

- **Provincial seminars with religious leaders**

Province-level consultations are being planned with Mullahs, CSOs, influential women and women's networks, with the aim of encouraging women's participation in the VR process and by extension in the upcoming elections. Consultation meetings (10) with Mullahs in Kabul have already taken place.

- **UNAMA Ambassadors' meeting**

On 13 May, the IEC and the ELECT II Gender Advisor attended the weekly held Ambassadors' meeting convened by UNAMA. One of the agenda points included the issue of women's participation in elections. The IEC briefed in the Ambassadors' meeting on the IEC's efforts to increase women's participa-

tion in the electoral processes. Given that the security and the socio-cultural context are the main challenges, the IEC has put measures into place to encourage female participation in the electoral process, as voters, candidates and electoral administrators. The discussion further elaborated on key elements of the IEC Gender Strategy for Electoral Operations, part of the overall general IEC Electoral Operational Plan.

- **Meeting with Ministry of Women's Affairs**

The Gender Unit met with the Ministry of Women's Affairs on 2 June 2013 to discuss low participation of women in voter registration process, and called for their support in the provinces through the Directorate of Women's Affairs. The Ministry stated that they will be sending out a directive to their offices in the provinces for greater coordination with IEC offices in spreading voter registration messages to women.

- **Roundtable on Women's Participation**

A roundtable on women's participation was organized by IFES on 4 June 2013, on radio. Ms. Farida Khinjani, Head of Gender Unit (acting) participated in the radio programme, and shared initiatives of the IEC on promoting female participation in the electoral process, and in voter registration process in particular.

V. Partnerships

The IEC is the implementing partner of the ELECT II project. Together with the IEC, ELECT II closely works together with other national (and international) partners to optimize the electoral process.

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

During Q2 of 2013, the IEC and ELECT II were in close consultation with (electoral) civil society organizations (FEFA, TEFA) and international NGOs (including IFES, NDI, DI and others), government agencies, political parties, observers and media to discuss the voter registration updates as well as the possibilities and modalities for observers accreditation.

In addition, ELECT II received support from IFES through a consultant made available in May-June to assist IEC in the conceptualizing and preparation of provincial seminars for influential women. Furthermore, UNDP and the IEC are exploring the possibility of an IFES technical support contribution to the eventual electoral dispute mechanism.

B. Afghan National Security Forces and ISAF/NATO

ELECT II, together with UNAMA, assists the IEC in bringing together the ANA, MOD, NDS, Mol and ISAF/NATO to discuss the security aspects of electoral operations, with the immediate focus being on voter registration security and the possibility of air transport of materials to remote areas. When the logistical and security preparation for the voter registration 'top-up' exercise intensified throughout

the second quarter, the frequency of meetings increased to multiple sessions a week on different levels. Furthermore, the IEC provided the geographic details of 6,845 verified polling centres to the Mol to allow proper security planning for polling day.

C. Other Afghan government partners (Mol, MoCIT, MoF)

The IEC met with Mol and MoCIT with regards to the e-Tazkira project to discuss and maximize possible linkages. On Saturday 15 June, the IEC convened a meeting with the Ministry of Interior (Mol), Ministry of Communications and IT (MoCIT), and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) on the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the IEC, Mol, MoF, and MoCIT to pilot the electronic national ID card (e-Tazkira) project for Kabul. The IEC has committed to accepting the e-Tazkira as a valid voting card in the forthcoming elections. Furthermore, it has agreed that in the longer-term, once the e-Tazkira is issued, it shall be used as a standard voting card in lieu of all previous VR cards issued by the IEC. The IEC also agrees it will work in full coordination with the Mol, and depending upon e-Tazkira progress, the IEC can re-assess its voter registration operations in Kabul. The IEC intends to sign the MoU once the legal framework of the e-Tazkira is in place.

The IEC is also in consultation with the MoF regarding the budget discussion that relates to electoral assistance being 'on' and 'off budget' (i.e. being channeled through the national treasury or otherwise) for electoral assistance.

D. International donor partners

ELECT II is currently funded by 14 international donor partners and intends to maintain very close donor relations. Through the various forums such as the technical working group and the ELECTII donor group, partners are kept abreast of matters, and have an input on issues related to the project.

E. UNAMA / UNWOMEN / UNOPS

On 19 March 2013, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of UNAMA with another year through resolution 2096. The mandate foresees a specific section on electoral support. The deputy SRSG is the co-chair of the ELECTII project board. UNAMA and ELECT II are in regular discussion on electoral issues, in particular since UNAMA plays a coordinating role in political issues around electoral assistance. In addition, UNAMA also organizes coordination meeting on elections with the international community in which ELECT II also participates.

UNDP and UNWOMEN have also discussed possible synergies related to electoral support initiatives.

Possible collaboration with UNOPS is also being explored within the context of providing support to the Electoral Adjudication Body.

VI. Issues

Legal reform of the electoral framework

The ongoing discussions of the revision of the Electoral Law and the Structure, Duties and Authorities Law of the IEC and the ECC increase the current uncertainty -especially with elections planning being ongoing and in full swing. Therefore a late finalization of the laws will significantly affect the planning and execution of electoral operations.

Establishment of ECC

In order to ensure a fair, transparent and accountable electoral process, it would be recommended that an Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) body is fully operational one month before the beginning of the candidate registration on 16 September 2013. According to Election Timeline developed and announced by the IEC already in October 2012, the IEC indicates the need for the establishment of an EDR body by 24 August 2013. The current uncertainty surrounding the legal framework of an EDR mechanism, with draft laws that mention the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) as a permanent body (Wolesi Jirga draft), or the establishment of a Special Electoral Courts (Ministerial Council draft), impedes proper planning and preparation.

Transition to operational phase

ELECT II is assisting the IEC with the voter registration 'top-up' exercise. For ELECT II, this exercise initiates the shift from merely institutional capacity development project to an electoral operations support phase. For the IEC also, the start of the voter registration exercise includes a transition to the operational phase and reflects an increased level of

ownership and *Afghanisation* of the electoral process both at the level of leadership and implementation. This brings naturally also challenges with it that involves gearing up for faster processes and shorter turnaround time. The IEC and the project are so far being able to keep up with the pace and all relevant activities are proceeding according to plan.



IEC staff unloading VR materials

Photo by UNDP ELECT II)

IEC leadership (Commission)

The issue of perception of independence of the IEC is also related to the position of the IEC Chairman. The current term of Chairman Manawi was supposed to end in April 2013 but the President mentioned that a new appointment the IEC Chair will only be decided after the approval of the revised Structures Law. It is important that the appointment process is consultative and includes all relevant national political stakeholders, in order to preserve the image and status of the IEC as a neutral and independent institution. The newly appointed Chair (and Commission) should display an early and firm commitment to the constitutionally-mandated in-

dependence of the IEC.

Any uncertainty regarding the leadership of the IEC, or a perception of non-neutrality, undermines the project's efforts in assisting the organization with effective organizing and conducting electoral operations with broad participation. UNAMA has underscored in different ways the importance of an inclusive decision-making process regarding the appointment of the Commissioners.

IEC leadership (Secretariat)

The uncertainty around the Structures Law and the related appointment of the Commissioners could also affect the position of the IEC CEO in the absence of transitional provisions. It is not clear until the final Law is approved if the CEO should also be reappointed. In addition, the vacant positions of the two deputy-CEOs as well as three Head of Departments affect the project's efforts of structured capacity development. It is still not clear if a new Commission will revisit the timeframe for introducing the Civil Service Review reforms.

On budget modalities

The discussions related to electoral assistance moving on-budget is ongoing among all relevant stakeholders. It is of the utmost importance that the IEC and MoF reach a clear understanding of what is achievable in the immediate-term, while also having a forward-looking view that underscores long-term sustainability. This includes consideration of categories that could go on-budget, and the respective on-budget modality, while also respecting the independence and effectiveness of the IEC. In this context, on-budget/off-budget decisions must be considered from a point of view of the IEC's need to deliver an election process in a compressed

timeframe, and therefore any obstacles to meeting time-bound IEC operations should be avoided. These conversations have started, but need to continue without delay, and should ideally strike a balance between budgetary sustainability and the integrity of the IEC to deliver a credible election process.

It should also be noted that the TMAF and corresponding hard deliverables were not produced in a vacuum, and are relevant to the broader international financing framework for aid effectiveness. This includes principles of: ownership; alignment; harmonization; mutual accountability and managing for results. The Busan Partnership has focused on these principles through the lens of fragile and conflict affected states, with Afghanistan as a party to these discussions. Therefore all issues related to aid effectiveness in Afghanistan should be viewed in the fragile and post-conflict affected context.

Security

Security remains the main issue overshadowing all ELECT II operations. As the voter registration "top-up" campaign proceeds to phase II i.e. district level for two months starting in late July, the security implications could become more immediate. Therefore, UNDP/ELECT II and the IEC closely coordinate with the security forces to assure maximum safety in the field. Security is not only an issue in the field but also at the IEC headquarters which has already received heightened security alerts, and where most of ELECT II staff are based. With the facility of the UNOCA compound adjacent to the IEC, essential work can be done from there in case of increased security levels (office space permitting). The environment of ongoing security threats however still directly affects, and sometimes impedes, the implementation of operations.

VII. Risks

Part of the revised ELECT II Project Document includes a detailed and comprehensive Risk Log for all activities per output. The relevant risks related to this quarter and in the near future are updated and spelled out in detail in Annex 4.

Key risks include:

- Delay in the approval of a revised legal electoral framework;
- Uncertain legal status around the Commissioners' appointment and inclusive selection process;
- The need to safeguard the constitutionally-mandated independence of IEC;
- Insecurity in the field affecting the voter registration exercise;
- Delayed procurement and logistics for VR;
- Insufficient public outreach to increase public awareness on voter and civic rights;
- Gender barriers hinder female VR turnout;
- Unclear on-budget modalities between IEC and MoF risk independence of the IEC and proper processing of operations;
- Delayed donor funding risks proper and timely preparations for the 2014 elections;
- Delay in establishment of ECC and Media Commission due to lack of urgent donor funding constraints, lack of legal framework or unclear implementation modality.

VIII. Future Planning

With the endorsement of the ELECT II Project Document extension, it is now a prerequisite that the commensurate funding follows shortly. Procurement for the 2014 elections needs to commence by the end of the third quarter of 2013 in order to have the procurement process for all materials/services initiated and on-track. Moreover, the establishment of the Electoral Dispute Resolution Body, which is scheduled to be established by August according to the electoral calendar, requires separate funding. Regarding the Electoral Dispute Resolution Body, it is therefore expected that UNDP and donor partners soon will agree on the exact implementation and funding modality.

In terms of electoral operations, the third quarter of 2013 will see the continuation of the voter registration “top-up” exercise, expanding from the provincial capitals to the district capitals. This activity will centralize in the following months much of the capacity development support ELECT II provides to the IEC. All advisors embedded in the IEC departments will continue providing input and guidance on VR planning and implementation to their counterparts, ranging from external relations, to public outreach, gender, logistics, IT, security, procedures, training, procurement, and assets management. ELECT II will deploy in this quarter its recruited 24-person field personnel contingent (Electoral, Logistics, and Security specialists) to the different regional hubs. This will assist the IEC at the local level with the conduct of the VR, the preparation for Candidate Nomination and other electoral operations. Also actual construction of the first batch of offices and/or warehouses at these provincial IEC offices will commence in this quarter.

Further in quarter three, besides voter registration,



IEC leaflet to engage rural men and women to register as voters
Photo by IEC

the project will assist the IEC with the electoral operations of establishing the Media Commission and preparing for Candidate Nomination, as well as overseeing the establishment of the Electoral Dispute Resolution mechanism.

It is noteworthy to mention that the discussions in the Parliament on the legal reform of the electoral framework, both the Electoral Law as well as the Structures Law, might lead to a revised legal context in the immediate period. The IEC currently uses the existing electoral laws and decrees as its base for procedures and regulations. While the project welcomes any improvement of the framework any

change of the electoral framework in late 2013 would require readjustment of the IEC regulations and procedures, and if considerably delayed might hamper the preparations of the conduct of the 2014 elections.

The table below provides an overview of the most significant upcoming activities:

ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE
Resource mobilisation ELECT II extension	Q3-Q4 2014
Specification on/off budget modalities	Q3 2013
Public Outreach campaign for VR	Q2 2013 – Q1 2014
Establishment of Call Centre providing voter information	Q2 2013
Voter Registration Phase I	Q2 2013-Q1 2014
Voter Registration Phase II	Q3 2013
Expected receipt of MOI Security Assessment on polling stations	Q3 2012
Start Candidate Nomination	Q3 2013
Establishment Media Commission	Q3 2013
Establishment Electoral Dispute Resolution Mechanism	Q3 2013
Deployment of ELECT II Field Advisors (Electoral, Logistics, Security)	Q3 2013
Implementation Gender Strategy	Q1-Q4 2013
Implementation Capacity Development Action Plan	Q3-Q4 2013
IEC stakeholders survey	Q3 2013
Finalization SOPS	Q3 2013
Commencement of construction of IEC provincial offices and warehouses	Q3 2013
Completion of construction IEC training centre	Q3 2013
Resumption establishment IEC internal security guard force	Q3 2013