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ENHANCING LEGAL AND ELECTORAL CAPACITY FOR TOMORROW Phase II (ELECT II) 2012 – 2015

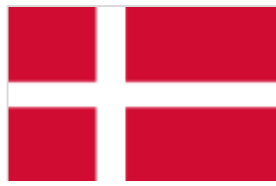
2015 FIRST QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT (1 January to 31 March, 2015)



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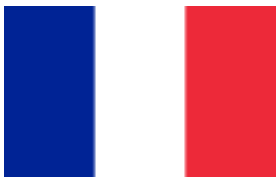
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* Japan signed an agreement with UNDP to support the electoral process and the IEC, contributing to the ELECT II objectives outside the basket fund.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project ID: 00063078

Duration: 1 January 2012 – 31 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)
- Efficient and Effective Governance

CPD Outcome: Outcome 1: Improved legitimate, transparent and inclusive governance at all levels that enables progressive realization of human rights.

UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome: Outcome 2: Citizen Expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance.

Total Project Budget: US\$338,157,793

Annual Budget 2015: US\$15,587,487 (being revised)

Implementing Partner: Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan (IEC)

Chief Technical Advisor: Darren Nance



COVER PAGE PHOTO: A woman votes at a polling station in Kabul during the run-off round of the Presidential Election in 2014. Photo: ELECT II.

ACRONYMS

AGCHO	Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office
ANFREL	Asian Network for Free Elections
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CEO	Chief Electoral Officer (IEC)
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSO	Central Statistics Organisation
DI	Democracy International
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
ELECT II	Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, Phase II
EAD	Electoral Assistance Division
EMB	Elections Management Body
EU EAT	European Union Electoral Assessment Team
FEFA	Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
ID	Identity Document
IEC	Independent Election Commission
IECC	Independent Electoral Complaints Commission
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NTC	National Tally Centre
OSCE/ODIHR	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
PC	Polling Centre
PS	Polling Station
PSA	Public Service Announcement
SMB	Similarly Marked Ballot
SMRF	Similarly Marked Results Form
TEFA	Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Offices for Project Services
VR	Voter Registration
WJ	Wolesi Jirga (lower House of Parliament)

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow, phase II, (ELECT II), is a four-year United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project that provides direct support to Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission (IEC). ELECT II also supports the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC), although in order to avoid any conflict of interest, project support to the IECC is delegated to two subcontracting partners: the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). ELECT II is funded by 14 international donors.

By the end of the reporting period the IEC had not set a date for the *Wolesi Jirga* (lower House of Parliament) elections or the District Council elections. The lack of a definite electoral timetable impacted on the project's planning and operations. Throughout the quarter, however, ELECT II continued to provide advice to the IEC based on different potential dates for when the elections could be held. ELECT II remained poised to provide direct technical and operational support to the IEC in order for the electoral body to organise and execute elections.

No date had been set for the *Wolesi Jirga* or District Council elections

In January, President Ashraf Ghani met with IEC Commissioners and the acting Chief Electoral Officer to discuss electoral reform and the electoral timeline. Following the President's request, ELECT II assisted the IEC to develop a series of follow-up documents that were presented to the Office of the President. At an international contact group in Abu Dhabi, UAE, which took place in the last week of January, the Government of Afghanistan raised questions about ELECT II that led to President Ghani issuing a request to the UN for a description of ELECT II's role and activities.

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative, Nicholas Haysom, presented the requested memorandum to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in early February. UNDP also drafted a second memorandum on electoral issues. The memorandum provided a background and analysis of key electoral issues: voter registration, boundary delineation, the operational support of the Afghan National Security Forces for elections, electoral costs and international staff, and consensus around elections.

It became clear during the reporting period that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) wanted to engage in electoral reform ahead of further elections. At the end of March, the Office for the President announced the formation and composition of a 15-member Electoral Reform Commission.

The Afghan Government established an Electoral Reform Commission

Given the uncertain timeline of electoral reform and consequently a date for the elections, donors requested an initial ELECT II Annual Work Plan (AWP) and budget for three months up until the end of March 2015. The project was in the process of revising the AWP to cover the whole of 2015.

Sustainability came to the fore during the quarter as a key issue that required substantive attention, both in terms of financial sustainability and the long-term operational capacity of the IEC. In the context of diminishing international financial support for Afghanistan, it is crucial that the IEC adapts to and plans for changes in the level of funding it receives from international donors. The IEC, GIRoA, and donors have agreed that efforts require a more sustainable approach by the entire State. ELECT II worked with the IEC to ensure that the 2015 budget took account of sustainability factors.

In line with this focus on sustainability and lessons learnt from 2014, ELECT II held three meetings with donors during the quarter in order to discuss core issues prior to approval of the 2015 Annual Work Plan. The thematic meetings addressed: 1.) Voter registration and boundary delimitation 2.) Electoral sustainability, and 3.) Fraud mitigation. The project worked with the IEC to develop technical electoral reforms, an annual budget, and the AWP. Voter registration is likely to be a key focus during the next quarter.

Sustainability was a key issue. Voter registration will be discussed in more detail in the next quarter

There were two senior management changes at the project. The new ELECT II CTA, Darren Nance, arrived in country at the beginning of January, replacing outgoing CTA Deryck Fritz. The Senior Technical Advisor for Electoral Operations, Daniel Hinchcliff, left ELECT II at the end of March after some eight years of electoral service in Afghanistan. His portfolio will be shared by two other STAs until a replacement is recruited.

During the quarter, an investigation into financial irregularities at the IEC was underway. The investigation was initiated by ELECT II as part of the project's oversight of the electoral body's finances. Preliminary findings are due to be released to UNDP in the next quarter.

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

ELECT II advisors worked closely with their counterparts and other IEC staff throughout the quarter, helping to build knowledge and skills and assisting in the development of key electoral plans. ELECT II continued to develop a '2014 Elections Compendium' that comprises all IEC planning and reporting documents of the 2014 electoral operations and that will serve as a knowledge resource for the IEC as a reference for future elections. The project assisted the IEC with refining the body's electoral regulations and procedures in line with the law. Security infrastructure was

being built at two provincial sites (Baghlan and Badakhshan). Construction of an office and warehouse was ongoing at one provincial site (Balkh).

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

ELECT II liaised with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Ministry of Interior (Mol), during the development stage of *e-tazkira* (electronic national identification cards) to ensure that the cards will be able to generate a voter registry by polling centre. This is the long-term solution to voter registration.

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

ELECT II assisted the IEC to engage with key stakeholders primarily through two departments: Public Outreach and External Relations. The IEC approved the final questionnaire of the Public Outreach Impact Survey. Implementation of the quantitative survey began. Initial feedback is expected at the end of April. The Public Outreach Department developed a sustainability strategy that includes several initiatives. ELECT II supported the External Relations Department to initiate a stakeholder assessment, design a departmental strategy, and draft an institutional communications policy, which is now being developed in a working group.

OUTPUT 4: The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner

The IEC NIM (National Implementation Modality) audit for 2014 was completed and management comments submitted. It was an *unqualified* audit report. ELECT II started the budget preparation process for the supplementary budget to include the operational and elections budget. Training was undertaken in the areas of finance, procurement, assets, and human resources management, in order to ensure application of GIRoA rules and procedures. An international audit company, contracted by ELECT II, completed a payroll verification investigation of the IEC. Based on the report's recommendations, the IEC installed automated employee time clocks. ELECT II held eight meetings with donors during the quarter.

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

ELECT II assisted the IEC to develop an Electoral Operational Plan and electoral timeline based on different potential election date scenarios, as well as an elections budget, including different sustainability options to be discussed with GIRoA and donors in the second quarter. Materials from the 2014 elections will be reused whenever possible. ELECT II completed segregation of the retrieved polling centre, polling station, and training materials and completed a physical inventory check of election support materials and voter registration kits/materials in both IEC headquarters and provincial offices. Disposal of old and broken assets/electoral

materials was ongoing, based on IEC approval. The IEC had several meetings with the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) and Civil Society Organisations.

OUTPUT 6: The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced

The IECC completed the investigation into allegations of fraud and other electoral violations related to the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections. During the process, IFES advisors continued to emphasize to the IECC Investigation Committee (IC) the importance of conducting a thorough, transparent, and objective investigation and the need to respect the right to due process of law for those who were affected by the IC's decisions. The IECC held a Technical Working Group meeting, hosted by UNAMA, when it provided updates on the IC, the regulatory review, the five-year strategic plan, and capacity building activities. The IECC finalized its first annual report. By the end of March, the commission was close to finalizing the five-year Strategic Plan.

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

The Media Commission's mandate was terminated on 12 December 2014, as required by the Electoral Law. A new Media Commission will be formed 90 days before the next Election Day. As of the end of March, the IEC had not announced a date for the *Wolesi Jirga* election.

II. RESULTS

1. OUTPUT 1: The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved

During the quarter, ELECT II helped to build the IEC's sustainability and the development of its institutional and staff capacity through a number of means. Advisors provided personalized and direct capacity building support. The project also worked with the IEC to hold more formal and structured training sessions and workshops. In addition, IEC staff were provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills by attending relevant courses at university, paid for by the project. ELECT II also supported senior IEC staff and Commissioners to participate in a relevant foreign visit.

Activity 1.1: Institutional capacity. Support the IEC in sustainable strengthening of its institutional capacity, via its Strategic Plan and upgrade of knowledge, information, decision-making and data management systems

Indicator 1.1.a: The extent to which the IEC's capacity is enhanced at the Commissioner level

- Regular meetings were established between the IEC Commission, the IEC Secretariat, and ELECT II management in order to discuss institutional and electoral planning, budgeting, and the 2015 ELECT II AWP. The regular discussions improved information-sharing and decision-making.
- The recruitment process for the new senior position of ELECT II Capacity Development Advisor was started during the quarter. The CDA will be responsible for the development of strategic institutional capacity-building of the IEC. This will improve the balance between event-driven operational assistance and institutional development of the IEC. The recruitment is scheduled to be completed in the next quarter.

Indicator 1.1.b: The extent to which institutional and electoral skills have been transferred from international advisors to IEC staff (knowledge and archiving management)

- ELECT II worked with the IEC to develop an elections budget and the 2015 AWP. (In late 2014, donors approved a budget only for the first quarter of 2015. A complete AWP for 2015 had not been approved by the end of the reporting period.)
- The advisors liaised with IEC heads of department and held workshops to discuss issues.

- A meeting was held with the IEC Commission to discuss the current IEC Strategic Plan that runs until the end of 2016. The IEC established an internal committee to revise and update the Strategic Plan. In the next quarter, ELECT II will assist the IEC to hold a consultation workshop in order to review the IEC Strategic Plan with the aim of presenting an updated version to the Commission.
- A key challenge for the project is to ensure long-term institutional sustainability by capturing knowledge-management practices beyond the individual level. In December 2014, ELECT II recruited an international consultant to compile a *2014 Elections Compendium*. This compendium will capture and record procedures and processes across all IEC departments and units and will serve as a crucial operational knowledge resource for the IEC. By the end of March, half of the Elections Compendium booklets had been completed (Electoral Planning and Procedures, Legal, Gender, Candidate Nomination, External Relations, Media Commission.)

Activity 1.2: The electoral legal framework. Support the IEC’s engagement in legal reform and improvement of its regulatory framework

ELECT II helps to ensure that the IEC operates within a robust legal electoral framework and assists the electoral body to refine its electoral regulations and procedures in line with the Laws.

During the quarter, President Ghani tasked Vice-President Danesh to lead the initial co-ordination of the electoral reform process. Vice-President Danesh met with several institutions including the IEC, the IECC, and a number of civil society groups dealing with elections. He submitted the results of the consultative process, held with civil society groups and institutions dealing with elections, to the Office of the President.

In January, the *Wolesi Jirga* approved four amendments to the Election Law that had been rejected by the *Meshrano Jirga* (Upper House of Parliament) in July 2014:

- Article 14 of the Election Law on the requirement of bachelor’s degree or working experience of one legislative session for the candidates of the *Wolesi Jirga*.
- The need for ballot counting in the polling stations (already regulated in the Electoral Law Art. 57.1).
- The right of candidates to submit their complaints within 96 hours.
- The requirement for the *Meshrano Jirga* Member of Parliament to resign from their positions when they run in the election for the *Wolesi Jirga*.

In March, the IEC Legal Department participated in a meeting chaired by the Ministry of Justice’s *Taqnin* Department. Discussions were held referring to the readiness of

the IEC to provide inputs for the possibility of future discussions on amendments to the Election Law if necessary and if requested.

At the end of March, the Office for the President announced the formation and composition of a 15-member Electoral Reform Commission.

Indicator 1.2.a: Number of electoral regulations developed or revised in line with the electoral legal framework

- Provided inputs for legal technical improvements.
- Initiated discussions between the IEC and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) about constituencies and boundary delimitation.
- Provided inputs to discussions on outstanding legal issues for the *Wolesi Jirga*/District Council electoral process.

In the second quarter, ELECT II will:

- Continue to advise the IEC about legal reform of the electoral framework.
- Provide legal and technical advice to the Electoral Reform Commission (if requested).
- Continue discussions and provision of input to the outstanding legal issues surrounding the *Wolesi Jirga* and District Council elections.

Indicator 1.2.b: Number of Codes of Conduct developed/revised in a consultative manner

- Review of regulatory framework (Regulations, Codes of Conduct, and Decisions) in progress.
- Started provision of regulatory drafts for (a) Candidate Nomination (b) allocation of seats (c) delimitation of boundaries.
- Initiated draft Memorandum of Understanding on data-sharing between the IEC and Ministry of Interior (MOI) with regards to *e-tazkira*.

Activity 1.3: IEC infrastructure. Support the upgrade of the IEC's physical infrastructure and security at HQ and in the provinces

The ELECT II Project Document specifies support to enhance the IEC's infrastructure, both at the IEC's headquarters in Kabul and in the provinces. ELECT II has a team of national architects and engineers who assist the IEC with the design and construction of provincial compounds as well as security and other upgrades to the IEC's headquarters.

Equipping the IEC with a national network of secure buildings on its own land helps to secure the body's financial sustainability. Permanent IEC offices help the IEC better control the election process and its assets. Establishing recognizable governmental buildings for electoral operations also increases transparency as well as deepens the integration of the IEC within the community.

Completed compounds provide ample office space for various IEC departments, plus warehouse space for storage for ballot boxes and other electoral materials. The offices buildings all have a meeting room, stock room, toilets, kitchen, and bunker. The buildings have been designed to accommodate people with physical disabilities.

Indicator 1.3.a: number of IEC newly constructed well-functioning and secured provincial offices

- In the first quarter of 2015 no new IEC provincial compounds were completed.
- Construction of an office and warehouse was ongoing at one provincial site (Balkh). By the end of March, works at Balkh were 75% complete. For the security infrastructure (construction of boundary walls and reception building), the design and technical documentation was completed and an Invitation to Bid (ITB) was advertised. (Balkh is an exceptional cases where office and warehouse construction has preceded the building of security infrastructure due to a change of compound location.)
- There are six functioning and secured compounds, all of which were completed last year (Bamyan, Herat, Jowzjan, Laghman, Nangarhar, and Wardak.)

In 2015, ELECT II plans to start the construction of offices and warehouses at four IEC provincial compounds (Ghor, Khost, and Sar-e-Pul, plus Badakhshan once the security infrastructure has been built).

- During the quarter, ELECT II evaluated bids from construction companies for 'full package' (office, warehouse, septic tank, generator room, water tower) construction at the IEC compounds in Badakhshan, Khost and Ghor. Bids closed in January. ELECT II received bids from 18 companies for works in

Badakhshan and from 11 companies for works in Ghor. ELECT II completed preliminary evaluations in February.

- Kandahar: A survey for a new site in Kandahar was completed. Kick-starting construction works for the IEC compound in Kandahar is important in order to avoid losing allocated land.
- In Paktika, the new Governor instructed the IEC to vacate the premises due to alleged poor maintenance of the compound. The former Governor initially raised the complaint, which the new Governor supports. The Provincial IEC requested support from IEC headquarters.

Indicator 1.3.b: the extent to which infrastructure at IEC HQ is finalized

- No infrastructure projects were completed or ongoing during the first quarter.
- Warehouse 3 needs to be replaced. It was damaged during a Taliban rocket attack last year and its roof subsequently collapsed when it snowed. During the quarter, ELECT II completed the design and technical specifications. An Invitation to Bid was issued. Next quarter, a Notice to Proceed will be issued, depending on budget.



Warehouse 3 collapsed and need to be replaced

- ELECT II prepared a preliminary plan was to rebuild the National Tally Centre, incorporating a call centre.

Indicator 1.3.c: the extent to which physical security at IEC is ensured

- During the quarter, security infrastructure was being built at two provincial sites (Baghlan and Badakhshan). By the end of March, construction at Baghlan was 60% complete and construction at Badakhshan was 30% complete.
- There are eight sites where security infrastructure has been completed but where construction of warehouses or offices has not yet begun because of budgetary considerations. These are: Daikundi, Farah, Ghor, Khost, Samangan, Sar-e-Pul, Uruzgan, and Zabul.
- Security construction at the IEC compound in Paktia was suspended in April 2014 due to a dispute with the Provincial Governor. (President Karzai's Office instructed the Municipality to formally grant the land to the IEC. The IEC took possession of the land but three months into construction ELECT II was forced to suspend building work on the orders of the Provincial Governor (whose house is adjacent to the IEC land). This issue had not been resolved by the end of March, with the construction work 30% complete.)
- Quality control and quality assurance surveys were performed jointly by ELECT II and the IEC at several sites during the quarter. Several intermediate issues were identified at Baghlan and Badakhshan. The construction companies are responsible for remedial work. Progress of office and warehouse construction at Balkh was found to be satisfactory. No major issues were identified at Ghor, Khost, or Zabul. A report was commissioned to propose solutions to protect the Wardak compound from flooding.

Activity 1.4: Professional development of IEC staff is enhanced; gender issues are better mainstreamed with the IEC

Indicator 1.4.a: The extent to which the IEC capacity development plan is implemented and enhanced electoral and non-electoral capacity of IEC staff

- 2015 Capacity Development Plan finalized and partially implemented (for the first quarter).
- More than 200 IEC staff trained between January and March. Key trainings: provincial public outreach, training of trainings, electoral systems, gender, plus regular capacity development trainings.

Workshop	Male	Female	Total Participants	Date	Status
Report Writing (HQ-ER, PO, FO & Logistics)	29	6	35	9-11 & 14 Feb	Completed
Electoral Systems (BRIDGE)	22	5	27	22-25 & 28 Feb	Completed
Institutionalizing Gender in the IEC	23	15	38	1-Mar	Completed
Training of Trainers	34	4	38	2-10 Mar	Completed
Computer Literacy	22	7	29	Jan-Mar	In-Progress
English Language Course	25	20	45	Jan-Mar	Completed
English Language (Midstream enrolments)	20	16	36	Mid-Feb to March	In-Progress
Total	175	73	238		

- Liaised with UNOPS to explore possible collaboration in terms of capacity-building programmes.
- ELECT II advised on and drafted an impact assessment tool for capacity-building programmes. Tools provided include an integration plan and survey and evaluation questionnaires pre and post training. The assessment of training impact is critical to provide evidence-based evaluation of workshops conducted.
- ELECT II helped the IEC to organise a 10-day Training of Trainers for provincial Public Outreach Officers plus a 12-day training for the IEC's Procurement Unit staff. The project also assisted the IEC to hold a gender workshop entitled 'Institutionalizing Gender Equality in the IEC'. IEC managers attended a five-day BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections) capacity-building workshop. Finally, the IEC Chairman and the Commission Secretary went to Georgia to attend the 5th Annual Meeting of the Election Management Bodies.

Indicator 1.4.b: The level of female employment and recruitment in the IEC, including for electoral operations.

- IEC Gender Strategy revised to enhance institutional gender mainstreaming in the IEC.
- Vacancy for Head of the Gender Unit was advertised and then re-advertised.
- System established to monitor number of female staff.
- See Gender section for more detailed data about number of women employed at the IEC.

Expenses for the Quarter

Expenditure for Output 1 in Q1, 2015 was \$410,696. In addition, \$ 1,272,220 from Japanese funding (separate budget line 7) contributed to Output 1 achievements. For more details, please see Annex 2.

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 1, Q1 2015

Baseline	2015 ANNUAL TARGETS	2015 Q1 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 1.1.a: no direct ELECT II advisory support in place yet to IEC at Commission level.</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.b. * the IEC 2012-2016 Strategic Plan needs to be updated; * no comprehensive IEC elections compendium ever developed, capturing all past electoral operations to ensure institutional transfer of skills (besides ongoing on-the-job training)</p>	<p>1.1.a. (2015) Enhanced advisory support to the IEC Commissioners through the establishment of regular meetings and structured high-level capacity building.</p> <p>1.1.b: (2015) 1) The IEC's Strategic Plan is revised in an inclusive manner (Commission and the Secretariat), incorporating lessons learnt from past elections and a framework for action plans. Election Budget developed and AWP implemented according to plan 2) '2014 Elections Compendium' documenting all technical operations of past elections completed.</p>	<p>1.1.a. 1) Establishment of regular meetings between the IEC Commission, the IEC Secretariat and ELECT II management to discuss institutional and electoral planning, budgeting and the AWP; in order to enhance information-sharing and decision-making.</p> <p>2) Recruitment process for the Capacity Development Advisor has started.</p> <p>1.1.b. 1) * Development of elections budget and 2015 AWP in structured and consultative way with IEC (Advisors-Dep Heads; workshop, etc.).</p> <p>* ELECT II-IEC Comm. meeting held on Strategic Planning. IEC internal Committee established to revise the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>2) 50 % completion of 2014 Election Compendium. Booklets already completed: electoral Planning and Procedures, Legal, Gender, Candidate Nomination, External Relations, Media Commission.</p>	<p>On track</p>

<p>Baseline 1.2.a: NA Baseline 1.2.b: All existing electoral regulations are applicable for revision in case of a new electoral legal framework. All relevant codes of conduct, regulations and procedures are subject to review and possible revision.</p>	<p>1.2.a: (2015): the IEC provides consultative and qualitative input to other governmental partners on the electoral legal framework (including possible reform matters) - if requested</p> <p>1.2.b: (2015): Electoral regulations, procedures and codes of conduct are under revision in line with the Law and including recommendations from lessons learnt</p>	<p>1.2.a. 1. Inputs provided for the legal technical improvements. 2. Discussions between IEC/IDLG initiated and in progress on constituencies and boundary delimitation 3. Discussions and inputs provided on outstanding legal issued for the WJ/DC electoral process.</p> <p>1.2.b. 1. Review of regulatory framework (Regulations, CoC, and Decisions) in progress. 2. Provisions of regulatory drafts for (a) Candidate Nomination, (b) allocation of seats, and (c) delimitation of boundaries and revision of the others started. 3. Draft MoU on data sharing between IEC and MoI (E-tazkira) provided and discussions initiated</p>	<p>On track</p>
<p>Baseline 1.3.a: Construction in 6 provincial locations ongoing at different levels of completion; 18 design & construction projects in different size and stage of implementation such as IEC HQ north wall, East Wall, south Gate, internal lighting system; Physical security IEC premises (HQ and provinces) remains an issue.</p>	<p>1.3.a: (2015): 10 provincial structures to be in place by end of year; 3 more planned for construction depending on funding; Finalization remaining security/fire safety construction works IEC HQ; (2015) Training and close follow-up internal IEC security guards; close and continuous cooperation with ANSF to ensure external security</p>	<p>1.3.a. (1) • Construction of an office and warehouse was ongoing at one provincial site (Balkh). By the end of March, works at Balkh were 75% complete. (2) Invitation to bid developed for reconstruction warehouse #3 IEC HQ (collapsed this winter after having been severely damaged in attack last year.) (3) • During the quarter, security infrastructure was being built at two provincial sites (Baghlan and Badakhshan). By the end of March, construction at Baghlan was 60% complete and construction at Badakhshan was 30% complete.</p>	<p>On track</p>

<p>Baseline 1.4.a. IEC 2012-2013-2014 training plan</p> <p>Baseline 1.4.b: <u>*Female ratio IEC non electoral staff: Baseline Q1 2014</u> 9% HQ - 6%Prov <i>IEC tashkeel: 12%HQ - 3%prov</i> <i>NTA : 8.52% (HQ)</i> <i>Non NTA: 4.79% (HQ)</i> <i>Employee Belmaqta (contractual support staff): 19.05% (HQ)</i> <i>Ajeer Belmaqta: (cleaning staff) 17.65% (HQ)</i> <u>*Temporary electoral staff: Baseline 2014 elections</u> VR staff: baseline 44% Call centre: baseline 19% Data centre: baseline 20% CVE: baseline 33-28% TOT: baseline 50% DFC: baseline 21% Polling staff: baseline 25%</p>	<p>1.4.a. The IEC 2015 Training and Capacity Development Plan is implemented according to plan. At least 500 IEC staff benefit from trainings in 2015.</p> <p>1.4.b. (2015) improved female staffing (15% regular staff - 30% temporary electoral staff)</p> <p>*Female ratio IEC non electoral staff: 15% HQ - 10%Prov</p> <p>*Temporary electoral staff (depending on electoral timeline) VR staff: minimum target 30% Call center: target 30% Data center: target 30% CVE: target 40% TOT: target 50% DFC: target 30% Polling staff: target 30%</p>	<p>1.4.a. Finalization and Implementation of 2015 capacity development plan: more than 200 IEC staff trained in Q1. (Key trainings: provincial public outreach TOT, electoral systems, gender, regular CD trainings, etc.)</p> <p>1.4.b.*IEC Gender Strategy revised to enhance institutional gender mainstreaming in the IEC</p> <p>*Vacancy for head of gender unit (re)advertised</p> <p>*Monitoring system established re female staffing</p> <p>*Ratio female staff: 9.5% HQ and 6% Provisional (see narratives)</p>	<p>On track</p>
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2. 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

Activity 2.1: Voter registration. Support the IEC in the development and implementation of its voter registration operational plan

ELECT II worked with the IEC to discuss different options. The aim of conducting a 'top-up' of the voter register would be to register first-time voters, returnees, and those who had lost their voter registration cards in order that they would be able to vote in the *Wolesi Jirga* and District Council elections.

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of new eligible voters enfranchised with voter identification cards

- Immediate and long-term voter registration options were developed and presented to key stakeholders (donors, IEC, Office of the President.)

Indicator 2.1.b: Percentage of women registered as new voters

- The IEC Gender Analysis of the 2014 elections (finalized in the first quarter of 2015) included gender challenges and recommendations related to voter registration.

Activity 2.2: Voter register. Support the IEC in synthesizing its work with the Ministry of Interior so that the e-tazkira database becomes the long-term solution for the generation of a voter registration data base

Indicator 2.2.a: The extent to which the IEC engages in on-going dialogue with Mol to ensure that the e-tazkira database can also serve as a long-term solution for the generation of a voter registration database.

- Regular weekly technical working meetings established, attended by Mol, IOM, Members of Parliament, and ELECT II. CSOs will attend in the next quarter.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between the IEC and Mol concerning *e-tazkira* was drafted.
- The initial mandate of the E-NID (Electronic National Identity Card) Electoral Core Working Group is to establish the necessary technical and legal mechanisms for use of the E-NID data (electronic identification or *e-tazkira*) to generate Voter Lists for the upcoming Parliamentary election in Police District 10 in Kabul as a pilot project. The results of this pilot will be used to refine legal

and technical mechanisms and to plan for the national roll-out of voter lists based on E-NID data.

- At a meeting in February, the Terms of Reference for the E-NID Electoral Core Working Group was endorsed.
- Officials from the IEC, Ministry of Interior (Mol), Central Statistics Office (CSO), and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), discussed the best way forward for determining dissemination of information to relevant bodies about official electoral boundaries. It was agreed that the CSO will pass its boundary delimitation data to IDLG in order to have synchronization throughout institutions. IDLG will review and upon confirmation implement the data in its systems. The Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO) will update its maps. Once completed IDLG will share data with the IEC and Mol.
- Systems Information Sharing: It was agreed that through Mol, MoCIT will share information on the data currently able to be inputted into the E-NID system, the structure and technical format of that data, and information about the coding methods used, with the IEC.
- The IEC submitted a preliminary list of data required for the Voter List. A final data list and polling centre list will be submitted to Mol upon approval of the Commission.
- In March, Presidential Advisor Kader Wadan presented a proposal for an electronic voting system to the IEC. IEC Deputy Chairman Hotaki hosted representatives from Parliament, the Ministry of Interior/E-Tazkira and ELECT II, to consider the system, which seeks to reduce costs as well as the occurrence of fraud, while increasing transparency, security, and privacy. Some participants expressed concerns with regard to connectivity, the ability of voters to use the system, and cultural constraints, which may discourage women from participating.
- The IEC, with ELECT II assistance, started to develop a paper to outline the advantages and challenges in implementing electronic voting in Afghanistan.

Expenses for the Quarter

Expenditure for Output 2 in Q1, 2015 was \$ 515.00, for more details, please see Annex 2.

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 2, Q1 2015

BASELINE	2015 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1 2015 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 2.1.a: In 2013/2014 VR top-up exercise; 3.8 million (new) voters registered. During 2009/2010 top-up exercise: 500,000 new voter ID cards were issued - 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: 2013-2014 VR 'top-up': 35%</p>	<p>2.1.a: (2015) TBD (provincial-level top-up or larger scale revalidation exercise)</p> <p>2.1.b. (2015): 35 % of the newly registered voters are women</p>	<p>2.1.a Different concepts of immediate and long-term VR options developed and presented to key stakeholders (Papers IEC and UNDP to Office of Pres.; VR round table with donors; etc).</p> <p>2.1.b. The IEC Gender Analysis of the 2014 elections (finalized in Q1 2015) included gender challenges and recommendations related to VR.</p>	<p>On track</p>
<p>Baseline 2.2: NA</p>	<p>2.2: (2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-tazkira project expansion • MoU between IEC and MoI/MoCIT in place and implementation started • Review of e-tazkira process and continuing development of VR options • Support IEC/MOI and IOM in implementing e-tazkira pilot project 	<p>2.2 Regular weekly technical working meetings established with MoI, IOM, MP, ELECT II – CSOs to be included soon MoU btw. IEC and MOI on E-tazkira has been drafted.</p>	<p>On track</p>

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

Public Outreach Impact Survey: As part of the third-party monitoring of civic/voter educator work, it was planned that an impact survey would be performed to measure the effectiveness of the 2014 public outreach campaign (a baseline survey was conducted in 2013). The impact survey is meant to:

- Measure knowledge levels and understanding of the election process, democratic institutions, and elected officials, comparing the baseline survey with results from after the conclusion of the civic and voter education campaign.
- Measure the level of knowledge about the mandate and role of the IEC.
- Measure the most effective means of communication (i.e., face-to-face, radio, call centre, television, text message) and effective style of messages (i.e., simplification, unconventional, or more educational/informational) used in the civic and voter education campaigns.
- Provide any other analysis based on survey findings that can inform recommendations to directly or indirectly enhance the conduct of future elections.

After several drafts, the final questionnaire was approved by the IEC during the quarter. Implementation of the quantitative survey has begun and initial feedback is expected at the end of April.

Sustainability Strategy: The Public Outreach Department developed a sustainability strategy that includes several initiatives that include greater co-ordination with Afghan Government institutions and local communities, commencement of discussions with private media and legal advocacy in reviewing media laws, a feasibility study on the development of an in-house call center, and a more strategic approach for face-to-face activities of voter educators and the development of printed materials (based on POD's regional lessons learned in 2014) and their distribution. ELECT II shared the strategy with the IEC and donors.

Activity 3.1: IEC public outreach. Support the development and implementation of the IEC's public outreach, campaign, and activities

Indicator 3.1.a: Turnout for Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections

Not applicable.

Indicator 3.1.b: Means of different public outreach methods developed and implemented by the IEC to significantly engage urban and rural population across the country through direct and indirect messaging; including special messages to enhance female participation (voters and candidates) in the electoral process.

- Impact Survey Questionnaire finalized and implementation started in 22 of 34 provinces as of the end of March.
- Developed Public Outreach sustainability concepts.
- Initiated review of all Public Outreach materials.
- Table, wall, and pocket calendars for Afghan New Year printed and distributed.
- All factsheets reviewed and translated into English.
- Call Centre reports from the 2010 parliamentary elections reviewed for FAQs. Started review of the civic education flipchart manual.

Activity 3.2: IEC External Relations. Support the IEC's structured engagement with key stakeholders including political parties and the IEC's strategic media communication

- Departmental Strategy: ELECT II supported the External Relations Department to design a departmental strategy, elaborating the specific ways that the department can contribute to the fulfilment of organizational goals. This plan includes tangible outcomes and indicators and will serve as a reference to coach staff and measure performance and/or areas requiring greater attention.
- Internal Communications Policy: ELECT II helped to host a Working Group on an IEC Internal Communications Policy. The meeting was attended by numerous heads of departments. A core group will revise the draft ICP document, drawn up by the department, at a follow-up meeting before being discussed by all heads of department. The draft policy document emphasizes the necessity to develop and work closely with the IEC M&E Unit.
- Media Policy and Procedures: ELECT II supported the IEC to prepare a draft Media Policy/Procedures. Once the Internal Communications Policy is finalized, the draft Media Policy/Procedures will be amended accordingly (to ensure consistency/complementarity) and shared with relevant departments and the Commission for adoption. This policy is anticipated to serve as a platform for discussion – in particular, between the Secretariat, Commission and ELECT – with regard to the need for strategic (less reactive) media interaction, as well as the nature and consistency of messages conveyed.
- Stakeholder Assessment: The IEC, with ELECT II support, commissioned a third-party stakeholder assessment. It will measure the experiences and attitudes of various stakeholder groups (political parties/candidates, community influencers, CSOs, women's groups, media) and seek their input as to how the

IEC can better accommodate their needs in terms of information and other support. The assessment also engages relevant stakeholder groups to describe their experiences with regards to candidate nomination, accreditation and use of the website and social media as these areas have been identified as 2015 priorities for the department.

- ELECT II assisted the IEC with starting to raise the IEC's profile on social media, oversee improvements to web content and design, and ensure that all social media is maintained and regularly updated. The IEC started to Tweet. The IEC can now be followed on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/IECAfghanistan>

Indicator 3.2.a: The extent to which consultative dialogues with all key stakeholders, inclusive and across the country - including specifically focusing on women, take place on relevant electoral issues and plans.

- Informative meetings on electoral issues held with GIRoA (IEC Commissioners met President Ghani and Vice-President in February.)
- IEC initiated proposal of high-level meeting with GIRoA and donors on election issues and budget.
- In February, the ELECT II CTA briefed the EU delegation.

Indicator 3.2.b: The extent to which the IEC streamlines its External Relations messages systematic and proactive through different mediums (press announcements, press releases, briefings, workshops, website, Facebook)

- Concept of stakeholder survey finalized, including questionnaire and stakeholder groups.
- Developed External Relations Strategy. The strategy details the specific ways that the External Relations Department it will contribute to the fulfillment of IEC objectives (in particular, enhancing participation, building trust and institutionalizing the practice of holding elections). This strategy includes stakeholder engagement. The department is working to improve its social media communication (including the IEC website, Facebook and Twitter) and will collaborate with the Public Outreach Department to establish a formal social media strategy and policy.
- Internal communications policy: ERD is leading a working group (including IEC and ELECT II staff) to design an Internal Communication Policy and Procedure.

Activity 3.3: Candidate nomination. Support the IEC's management of the candidate registration process

- There was no candidate nomination in the first quarter of 2015. By the end of March, the dates for the Parliamentary election and District Council elections were under discussion.
- ELECT II drafted a concept paper that proposes improvements to the Candidate Nomination process. Specifically, the paper proposes an electronic system that gives greater responsibility on the part of candidates, requires fewer IEC staff (and minimizes IEC vulnerability/perceived culpability with regard to fraud), reduced costs, decreases potential for error (i.e. Inclusion of disqualified/withdrawn) candidates on the ballot paper. Ultimately, the system would also be more sustainable than the existing system.

Indicator 3.3.a: Percentage of provincial IEC offices that are ready in a timely manner to roll out the candidate nomination process on the agreed date

- ELECT II worked with the IEC to refine procedures. Different registration options were discussed. ELECT II provided the IEC with a concept paper, proposing a streamlined candidate nomination process. (If implemented, this process will give greater responsibility to candidates, render validation more efficient, decrease costs, enable automated ballot creation and reduce disenfranchisement due to erroneous candidate selection). The concept paper is currently being discussed by a working group (comprising IEC and ELECT II) with a view to identify potential challenges and establish the best way forward.

Activity 3.4: Gender. Support the IEC's Gender Unit and the Public Outreach Department gender focal point in promoting gender mainstreaming in the electoral process, as well as in institutional practices

Indicator 3.4.a: Female turnout percentage

Not applicable.

Indicator 3.4.b: The number of women candidates and elected representatives for the *Wolesi Jirga* and District Council elections

Not applicable.

Indicator 3.4.b: The extent to which the gender mainstreaming strategic plan is developed and implemented, in order to enhance female participation in the electoral process

- IEC Gender Analysis 2014 elections developed: analysis on progress and challenges regarding women's participation during the 2014 elections.
- IEC Gender Strategy workshop held in March: review of IEC partnership strengthening strategy (GIROA, NGOs, mullahs, youth and community leaders).

Expenses for the Quarter

Expenditure for Output 3 in Q1, 2015 was \$ 271,928.00. In addition, 27,208 from USAID funding (separate budget line 9) contributed to output 3 achievements. For more details, please see Annex 2.

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 3, Q1 2015

BASELINE	2015 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1 2015 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 3.1.: (a) POD Strategy and Activities for 2014 elections: Two public outreach operational plans developed and implemented by the IEC: 1) presidential and provincial council elections, and 2) run-off for Presidential Elections (b) 6: TV PSA, radio PSA, PC mat, CVE, Prov. Stakeholder workshops, mobile theatre. (c) Call centre: 1.4 million; CVE: 3.3 million; Prov. stakeholder meetings: 16,700; Mobile theatres: 40,800 (d) 8.4 million TV and 10 million Radio (estimated)</p>	<p>3.1.a (2015) 2015 Public Outreach operational plans developed and implemented by the IEC (Candidate Nomination, VR, pre-election messages, election messages, post-election message, etc.) b/c/d: TBD</p>	<p>3.1.a (1) *Impact Survey Questionnaire Finalized and implementation started in 22 of 34 provinces as of end of March; *PO sustainability concepts developed; *Review of all POD materials underway; *Table, Wall, and Pocket calendars for Afghan New Year printed and distributed. (2) NA (no PO planning yet for CN)</p>	<p>On track</p>
<p>Baseline 3.2: 2014 IEC External Relations strategy and activities</p>	<p>3.2.a/b. Structured External Relations' strategy developed and implemented to engage inclusively all stakeholder in the run-up of the</p>	<p>3.2.a. * Informative meetings on electoral issues held with Gov. (IEC Commissioners meeting in Feb with President Ghani and VP Danish); * IEC initiating</p>	<p>On track</p>

	<p>elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 press conferences and media briefings • 4 candidate coordination meetings • 18 civil society coordination meetings • 18 political party coordination meetings • 50 national observer coordination meetings and briefings • 20 international observer briefings • 6 all-inclusive electoral stakeholder events • 2 special media events • 1 media appreciation event • 2 election observation/study tours • 1 ballot lottery 	<p>proposal of high-level meeting with Gov and Donors on election issues and budget (letter sent).</p> <p>3.2.b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Concept of stakeholder survey finalized, including questionnaire and stakeholder groups (see Carolyn's inception report) * External Relations Strategy developed. * Internal Comms policy: ERD is leading a working group (including IEC and ELECT II staff) to design an Internal Communication Policy and Procedure * CN: Outlining different application options for CN 	
Baseline 3.3.: 2014 elections CN process	3.3 Depending on the electoral timetable, all provinces have rolled out and conducted in a timely and successful manner the candidate nomination if the WJ / DC elections would take place in Q2 2016.	3.3 CN postponed as no elections scheduled for 2015. ELECT II worked together with IEC on refining procedures, while different registration options are under discussion.	Postponed
Baseline 3.4.a: female turnout 2014 elections 36%. (no DC elections held before in Afghanistan) Baseline 3.4.b: in 2010 WJ elections, 69 women (out of 249 candidates) were elected. (no DC elections	3.4.a: NA in 2015 (Female turnout of WJ/DC elections is at least 36%) 3.4.b: In every constituency, at least the minimum number of female candidates are nominated according to the law. (25% female WJ parliamentarians should be women; at least 3 Kuchi representatives for WJ are women)	3.4.a/b. NA 3.4.c. The IEC Gender Analysis of the 2014 elections (finalized in Q1 2015) included gender challenges and recommendations significantly related to CN.	On track

<p>held before in Afghanistan)</p> <p>3.4.c Baseline 2014: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Strategy revised and implemented by the IEC • Gender Inputs on the IEC Policies and Procedures </p>	<p>3.4. • Gender Strategy revised and implemented by the IEC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Inputs on the IEC Policies and Procedures • Gender Analysis of IEC's efforts • Gender and Elections Coordination Meetings in IEC HQ • Gender and Elections Coordination Meeting in 33 Provinces • Recruitment of Gender Officers in 34 Provinces • Training for HQ and Provincial Gender Officers • Consultation on Promoting Women as Candidates in Kabul and Provinces • Meeting with Mullah's on Women's Role in Election in Kabul and Provinces • National-level and Provincial Gender Lessons Learned • National Seminar on Women's Participation in Elections 		
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4. 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 the daily operational support that ELECT II provides to the IEC, as well as the management of the project's own resources. The former is broken down into services that – as per agreement between UNDP and the IEC – ELECT II provides to 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:

- Enhancement of the IEC's operational capacity through advisory support in the areas of finance, procurement, human resources, administration; as well as providing the financial means for the IEC's operations.
- Management of ELECT II project resources.
- Support for electoral operations, in particular with regards to procurement, transportation, air transport, and translation services.

Activity 4.1: IEC operations. Support the operational costs of the IEC as well as the enhancement of the IEC's operational management systems and procedures

Since 2014, the system of payments through the National Implementation Modality (NIM) was initiated, whereby funds are advanced into the IEC's bank account as authorized by the Ministry of Finance.

Indicator 4.1.a: The auditor's opinion on the IEC's operational management

- The IEC NIM (National Implementation Modality) audit for 2014 completed and management comments submitted. It was an *unqualified* audit report.

Indicator 4.1.b: Improvement of the IEC's operational management

- Started budget preparation process for supplementary budget to include the operational and elections budget. The IEC will submit a formal request for supplementary funds to the Ministry of Finance in April.
- Training undertaken in the areas of finance, procurement, assets, and human resources management, in order to ensure application of GIRoA rules and procedures.
- An international audit company, contracted by ELECT II, completed a payroll verification investigation of the IEC in January. The auditors conducted a headcount and compared this to the payroll of staff at the IEC headquarters. The verification also included a review of hiring procedures. ELECT II shared

the audit report with the IEC and worked with the electoral body to take remedial action. Based on the report's recommendations, the IEC installed automated employee time clocks.

- Trained finance staff on Quick Book software.
- Development of IEC Operational Management Strategy.
- Logistics: Completed provincial and headquarters stock take of electoral materials to be reused for next elections.
- The IEC was requested to start the on-budget discussion with the Ministry of Finance. The IEC Chairman sent a formal request with a budget of \$29 million to Ministry of Finance to extend financial support for 2015.
- ELECT II analyzed the election budget with the IEC, with a focus on identifying cost savings.
- ELECT II supported a one-day training session for the IEC finance team on National Implementation Management (NIM) policies and procedures. Specific reference was made to the use of Afghan Government financial rules and procedures.
- The IEC headquarters started to use specialist logistics software for vehicle and generator fuel management. IEC provincial offices started to send weekly reports to the IEC headquarters regarding the status of the suppliers' fuel invoices in order for IEC procurement to track the amount of fuel supplied and quality.
- ELECT II worked with the IEC to create a revised Standard Operating Procedure in order to improve and track fuel management of IEC assets. UNDP procedures were used as the basis for this.

Activity 4.2: Project management. Conduct efficient and effective management of project resources

Indicator 4.2.a: 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 co-ordination meetings with donors; e) quality of payments to the IEC

- a.) DIM (Direct Implementation Modality) audit scheduled to commence in April.
- b.) Delivery rate for Q1, 2015 is 54%.
- c.) Percentage of project Outputs according to M&E work plan (delivery rates): 95%. Voter Registration decisions, Candidate Nomination, and establishment of the Media Commission have been postponed due to the unclear electoral timeline
- d.) ELECT II held eight meetings with donors during the quarter:
 - A Technical Working Group meeting in March.
 - Two Donor Co-ordination Meetings (one in January and one in February).
 - Two Information Sharing Meetings (one in February and one in March).
 - Three thematic discussions (electoral reform, electoral sustainability, and fraud mitigation.)
 - A Project Board Meeting was not held during the quarter – the last one was in December 2014.
- e.) All IEC payments certified by the ELECT II finance team according to UNDP regulations and in line with UNDP-IEC agreement.

Activity 4.3: Direct electoral operational support. Provide direct operational support to electoral activities

ELECT II provides direct operational support to the IEC. This includes support for the procurement of critical, sensitive, and non-sensitive electoral materials, asset management support, and general financial management for elections operations and regular operations of the IEC at both its headquarters and provincial offices.

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

- Procurement: Training of IEC procurement staff started by the MoF Procurement Policy Unit (PPU).
- Market survey and samples (voter screens, polling centre kits, polling station kits, training kits, and security seals) were received for national procurement within Afghanistan for 2015 - 2016 electoral events.
- Helicopter movements: Contract with UNAMA extended for the lease of two helicopters in order to assist the IEC with the movement of electoral materials and personnel. (One helicopter was extended from March 2015 until March 2016. The other helicopter was extended from March 2015 until February 2016). The helicopters were fully utilized in the first quarter. Flying hours: 123. Flying sorties: 93.
- Translation: ELECT II assisted the IEC with translation between English, Dari, and Pashto, for a number of key official documents, including BRIDGE training modules, the ELECT II Action Plan, the ELECT II 2015 Annual Work Plan, and the election Budget.
- ELECT II started an assessment of electoral commodities that will need to be procured for the *Wolesi Jirga* elections and the District Council elections. The IEC, with ELECT II assistance, completed a stock take detailing quantities of ballot boxes, voter screens, and polling kit items. Based on this, the IEC and ELECT II will calculate which additional materials will be required.
- To ensure financial sustainability and cost effectiveness, local procurement for voter screens is being planned and market research in this regard has been completed.

Expenses for the Quarter

Expenditure for Output 4 in Q1, 2015 was \$ 2,372,848. In addition 80,311 from USAID funding (separate budget line 9) contributed to output 4 achievements. For more details, please see Annex 2.

Table 4: Progress Update, Output 4, Q1 2015

BASELINE	2015 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1 2015 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 4.1: a. IEC unqualified audit report in 2014 and b. 2013-2014 IEC micro-capacity assessment report</p>	<p>4.1. (2015) The IEC has an unqualified NIM audit report and improved micro-capacity assessment.</p> <p>IEC has a clear and sustainable staffing plan linked to CSC reform recommendations</p> <p>NIM advances and finances are efficiently managed by the IEC.</p>	<p>4.1.a.* NIM audit completed and management comments submitted, it is an unqualified audit report.</p> <p>4.1.b.* Budget preparation process for supplementary budget to include the operational and elections budget has been started and will be submitted in April</p> <p>*Training undertaken in areas of finance, procurement, assets and HR management to ensure application of Government rules</p> <p>*Payroll Management exercise conducted to identify key issues and challenges and then develop a plan for remedial action</p> <p>*Training of Finance staff on quick book software</p> <p>* Development of IEC Operational Management Strategy</p> <p>* Logistics: Provincial and HQ stock-taking completed of electoral materials to be reused for next elections</p>	<p>On track</p>

<p>Baseline 4.2: a) 2014 unqualified audit report; b) 2014: 80% budget execution c) 2014: 95% d) around 70 structured meetings held in 2014 between project and key stakeholders</p>	<p>4.2. (2015) a) unqualified project DIM audit report rating; b) at least 80% project budget execution; c) at least 90% compliance with monitoring, evaluation and reporting plans; d) on average two structured meetings with donor partners held per month (coordination meeting, TWG, PBM)</p>	<p>4.2.a) DIM audit will start from April; b)x; c) 95%; d) 5 ELECT II Donor coordination meetings in Q1, in addition to TWG held on 24 March.</p>	<p>On track</p>
<p>Baseline 4.3: 2014 electoral support services to IEC (procurement, finance, transport, translation/interpretation)</p>	<p>4.3 (2015) support services for electoral activities is provided in a timely and qualitative manner</p>	<p>4.3. Procurement: Training of IEC procurement staff has been started by the MOF Procurement Policy Unit (PPU) and technical support provided for the developing of LTAs for fuel, spare parts, stationery, IT services etc. Development of the procurement plan for elections. Previous UNDP LTA's have been revisited with CO and budget owner to determine the extension of the LTA's in support of 2015 - 2016 electoral events.</p> <p>Helicopter movements: Contract with UNAMA extended for provision of helicopter services for next elections and full utilization is being undertaken for preparatory activities. Flying hours achieved: 123.4; Flying Sorties: 93</p> <p>Translation: A number of key documents have been translated including BRIDGE training modules, ELECT Action Plan, AWP 2015, Budget for Election etc.</p> <p>Interpretation at key meetings</p>	<p>On track</p>

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

ELECT II provides technical advice and operational support to the IEC in the context of a decreasing role of the international community. ELECT II's core role to assist the IEC with Afghan-led and Afghan managed elections.

Activity 5.1: Electoral operations – support the development and implementation of the IEC's electoral operation plan and procedures, and provide direct implementation support to the 2014 and 2015 elections.

Indicator 5.1: The successfulness of the conduct of the 2014 and *Wolesi Jirga*/District Council elections, measured by qualitative assessment in observer reports; and by statistical reporting and procedural and administrative error reduction.

- Developed an electoral calendar: By the end of March, no date had been set for the *Wolesi Jirga* or District Council elections. ELECT II assisted the IEC to develop an electoral timeline based on different potential election date scenarios.
- Developed a budget for *Wolesi Jirga*/District Council elections: ELECT II assisted the IEC with the development of an elections budget, including different sustainability options to be discussed with GIRoA and donors in the second quarter.
- Developed an Electoral Operations Plan: Concept note initialized; technical electoral reform measures proposed that focused on a) augmented domestic and international observation; c) hotline for reporting Election Day irregularities; c) polling centre re-assessment; d) establishing internal fraud detection and sanctioning mechanism for IEC staff involved in election malpractice.

Election Decision Support System (EDSS)

- During the quarter, ELECT II continued to develop EDSS. The system will provide:
 - Tracking of sensitive materials between the main IEC warehouses, provincial warehouses, district hubs, and polling centres.
 - Identification of transport problems, making it possible for the IEC to react in a timely manner.
- A robust Election Day monitoring system, providing the IEC with accurate estimates of the turnout upon closing of polling stations.

The main characteristics of the system are:

- Data collected from all polling centres/stations from Polling Centre Managers (PCMs) through District Field Co-ordinators (DFCs) periodically on Election Day and the day before and after (almost 10,000 staff involved in reporting.)
- Tracking training and presence of polling staff on Election Day.
- Controlled allocation and tracking of contingency polling stations.
- Tracking and reporting of open/closed polling stations on Election Day.
- Accurate estimates of voter turnout upon closing of polling stations.
- Tracking of Tamper Evident Bags and results forms from polling centres to the National Tally Centre.
- DFC and polling staff monitoring: Increased transparency for the recruitment of DFCs and polling staff. All DFC applications submitted online. Shortlisting done based on structured evaluation of elections experience and education to be completed. Information to be stored on a database.
- Possibility for recording of polling staff.
- More accurate collection of personal data including *Tazkira* numbers.

Logistics:

- Materials from the 2014 elections will be reused whenever possible. ELECT II completed segregation of the retrieved polling centre, polling station, and training materials. The procedure demanded strict control of ballot papers and tracking of polling centre kit serial numbers.
- Completed physical inventory check of election support materials (plastic tables, plastic chairs, and tents), and voter registration kits/materials in both IEC headquarters and provincial offices.
- Disposal of old and broken assets/electoral materials was ongoing, based on IEC approval.
- Cleaning and counting of the blue boxes, which contained electoral materials, was suspended after Warehouse 3 collapsed at the end of February. As of then, approximately 7,000 of the 30,000 boxes (23%) had been cleaned.
- The logistics department held several meetings with IEC management regarding the disposal of used 2014 ballot papers. The ballot papers will need to be disposed of before the approximately 70,000 ballot boxes that they are stored in can be used for the forthcoming elections.
- The relevant IEC Regulation for the disposal of sensitive electoral materials was approved in April 2013. Pursuant to the IEC Regulation on the 'Validity Time, Archiving and Destroying of Sensitive Electoral Materials', the IEC can proceed with the disposal of sensitive electoral materials (ballot papers, results forms, and other sensitive materials) a year after the announcement of the final results. This means that the disposal of the ballot papers and result forms used in the first round of the Presidential election can start on 14 May 2015.

Activity 5.2: Results management - Support the IEC's design and implementation of a robust, secure, and timely results management system that enjoys the confidence of key electoral stakeholders.

- Not applicable.

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

- Not applicable.

Activity 5.3: Support the IEC in completing a credible distribution of polling centres and an accurate boundary delimitation process

Indicator 5.3.a.: The extent of transparent and inclusive polling centre and polling station allocation

- Not applicable.

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

- The IEC had several meetings with IDLG and CSOs: formal letters sent to IDLG.
- Kuchi zones: formal letter received from IDLG.
- Boundary delimitation: no feedback from IDLG as of the end of March.

Expenses for the quarter

In Q1 2015, a total of \$ 2,754,098 was spent for output 5, together with \$ 55 under Japanese funding (7.5) and \$ 477,496 under USAID funding (9.5). For more details, please see Annex 2.

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

Table 5: Progress Update, Output 5, Q1 2015

BASELINE	2015 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1 2015 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 5.1:</p> <p>a) Formulated technical measures to enhance the process, as indicated in lessons learnt recommendations, observer reports and IFES integrity study.</p> <p>b) 2014 Electoral Operation Plan and implementation</p> <p>c) 2014 polling staff vetting, recruiting and training process</p> <p>d) 2014 PS operated by female staff</p>	<p>5.1: (2015) According to the electoral timeline, consultatively established and endorsed, the Electoral Operations plan is developed and initiated in an effective and timely manner</p>	<p>5.1.* Development electoral calendar: At end of Q1, no consensus yet about concrete timeline of WJ/DC elections. ELECT II assisted IEC with development of an electoral timeline with an open date for E-Day.</p> <p>* Development WJ/DC budget: ELECT II assisted IEC with development of elections budget, including different sustainability options to be discussed with Gov and donors in Q2.</p> <p>* Development Electoral Ops Plan: Concept note initialized; technical electoral reform measures proposed.</p>	<p>Unclear electoral timeline (political factors) and lack of clarity regarding DC elections hamper proper preparations.</p>
<p>Baseline 5.2:</p> <p>a) statistical data from 2014 elections</p> <p>b) results management process during 2014 elections</p> <p>c) IEC-IECC results management coordination in 2014 elections</p>	<p>5.2: (2015) implementation of a results management strategy that includes proper results certification and communication mechanisms to release partial, temporary and certified/uncertified results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tally and results management procedures and regulations under revision • Tally database and Results Management System revised (software) as well as Website and Results transmission policies under revision 	

<p>Baseline 5.3.a: PC/PS allocation process for 2014 elections</p> <p>Baseline 5.3.b: No official district boundaries established; 10 Kuchi constituencies still to be established</p>	<p>5.3.b: (2015) establishment of a coordination mechanism with IDLG and AGCHO on electoral boundary delimitation</p>	<p>5.3.a. Revision of PC list and coding</p> <p>5.3.b. IEC had several meetings with IDLG and CSO => formal letters sent to IDLG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regarding Kuchi zones: formal letter received from IDLG - Regarding boundary delimitation: no feedback yet 	<p>On track</p>
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6. OUTPUT 6: The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced

Activity 6.1: Electoral dispute resolution. Provide effective support to the electoral dispute resolution mechanism

Case management system

- The Working Group on the IECC case management database created in November 2014 held its first meeting on January 14, 2015. The Working Group is tasked with improving the case management system and setting up a new database before the next parliamentary elections. The lack of an efficient and timely case management system was a major challenge for the IECC during the 2014 election. The working group prepared a draft plan, which includes the assessment report of the current database, the practical technical steps to design and launch a new web-based database, and the training needs to build the capacity of the staff at the headquarters and provincial levels in order to better maintain and utilize the database. IFES is working with UNOPS and the IECC to develop this database, which is envisioned to generate accurate and timely information on complaints adjudication.
- The IECC Complaints Registration Office completed the data-entry of all complaints and challenges from the 2014 elections in early January: a total of 10,624 complaints including the 3,004 cases initiated from the candidate nomination period. This allowed the IECC Complaints Registration Office to produce reports on complains and objections by type of election, gender, complainants, respondents, and allegations. The report is, however, still missing final decisions on all registered complaints.

Strategic Advice

- IFES continued to provide strategic advice to the IECC on effective ways to conduct the investigation of alleged fraud and electoral violations committed in the 2014 elections, drawing on rights-based standards and principles. IFES and UNOPS continued to conduct regular meetings with the IECC Commissioners and senior Secretariat leadership, providing ongoing technical advice and assistance on a range of legal and Elections Dispute Resolution issues and reform processes.
- UNOPS and IFES participated in all co-ordination meetings with ELECT II to provide updates and co-ordination between the IECC and the IEC on different electoral issues. Updates on IECC were shared also with UNAMA at the Election Information Sharing meeting.

IECC and electoral reform

- On 8 February 2015, the Vice President of Afghanistan, Mohammad Sarwar Danesh, met with all IECC Commissioners and the CEO to discuss the establishment of the electoral reform commission, hear the IECC's suggestions for electoral reform, and receive their reform proposals. The IECC Chairman informed Mr. Danesh in the meeting that the IECC welcomes electoral reforms, which they see as necessary after the 2014 election process.
- IFES and UNOPS prepared a note on recommendations for possible areas for electoral reform of the IECC and shared this with the Secretariat on 12 February 2015. The IECC submitted a document on electoral reform proposals to the Vice President that was shared with IFES for comment on 14 February 2015. The document lays out different irregularities and problems that occurred in the 2014 presidential and provincial council elections with suggestions and solutions for the next elections.
- At a press conference, IECC Chairman confirmed support to the electoral reforms as long as they have a basis in the existing laws. According to the Chairman, the work of the investigation committee is part of the reform process and that a report produced by the committee is a good basis for electoral reforms.

Strategic Planning

- During this quarter, the IECC continued preparing the five-year Strategic Plan. In providing support on the Strategic Planning process, IFES and UNOPS continued advising the IECC of the importance of sustainability and the need to present options for the future, taking into consideration the resources available. Three versions of the draft Strategic Plan were reviewed by IFES and UNOPS teams. Group discussions with the drafting group also took place during this period, covering the various pillars of the draft Strategic Plan including the Adjudication Process, Public Outreach, Human Resources and Capacity Building, Gender, Administration and Finance and Institutional Coordination. The strategic activities, performance indicators, and timelines for these pillars were discussed in depth and most of IFES' and UNOPS' suggestions were incorporated. Additionally, IFES and UNOPS provided feedback on the gender write-up in the strategic plan.

Capacity Building and Lessons Learnt

- UNOPS and IFES continued efforts with the IECC to strengthen the institution for the longer-term, including through internal capacity building and lessons learned exercises to capture experience from the 2014 provincial council and presidential elections.

- From 19 to 22 January, the IECC conducted a Lessons Learned workshop for staff from the Provincial Offices with the support of UNOPS and IFES. The participants shared their experiences and challenges related to issues including the collection of evidence, registration of complaints, and open sessions.
- Also, as part of the IECC Capacity Building Plan, IFES and UNOPS are supporting the IECC to establish a core group of trainers from various departments who will undergo a series of training of trainers (ToT) sessions. At the end of the series of trainings, the new IECC trainers will be commissioned to conduct the necessary trainings for the IECC both at HQ and in the provinces.
- The IECC and IEC held joint lessons learnt workshop to: discuss and share the Electoral Management Bodies' experiences in terms of coordination with each other, with focus elections period, in order to identify where positive lessons can be drawn and where improvements can be made; and to suggest recommendations to improve coordination for the next elections. There were a total of 33 participants broken down as follows: 24 from IECC, 9 from IEC. There were 6 women who participated – 3 from IEC and 3 from IECC.
- UNOPS continued on-the-job training in every department throughout this reporting period.

Public Outreach and External Relations

- IFES continued to provide capacity building and technical support to the IECC Public Outreach Department and continued to advise the IECC to provide stakeholders with appropriate and timely information on all aspects of its activities. IFES is also encouraging the IECC to coordinate with the IEC on their needs and to capitalize on the potential for joint public outreach efforts. Discussions on collaboration between the two institutions for the upcoming elections began during the Joint Lessons Learned Workshop on 18 February 2015, particularly in areas related to the call center, Public Service Announcements, and the websites.
- A comprehensive Public Outreach Plan covering the design and implementation of the IECC public outreach campaign for the next electoral cycle was prepared by the IECC with support from the IFES and UNOPS, and was approved by the IECC CEO in early February 2015. A Public Outreach workshop was conducted on 28 February for the IECC Public Outreach staff and facilitated by IFES. The workshop aimed at presenting, discussing and reviewing the IECC Public Outreach Plan.
- On 15 March 2015, the Public Outreach Department organized a workshop on Article Writing and Editing as well as the Use of Social Media in Public Outreach

with the support of IFES. The workshop was attended by 22 staff from the Public Outreach Department and the heads of each unit.

- The IECC Policy and Planning department has continued work on the Annual Report covering 2014 elections cycle. UNOPS and IFES provided inputs on the content. The report will be printed in three languages.

Gender

- IFES and UNOPS continue supporting the IECC Gender Unit in various activities and encouraging the IECC to promote gender mainstreaming and include a gender based approach in the IECC policies and strategic activities.
- The Gender Section is preparing its gender mainstreaming strategy after conducting a gender SWOT analysis, and taking points from the two round-table sessions attended by the female staff of the IECC (June 2014 and January 2015).
- Ten IECC women staff attended a two-day Gender Awareness Training facilitated by the Civil Service Institute. The seminar, held on 22-23 February, was meant to raise awareness on gender issues among civil servants and to discuss gender issues from an Islamic perspective. The IECC also organized a program to commemorate International Women's Day on 8 March 2015. The event was a joint activity with the Ministry of Women's Affairs. A number of speakers attended this event from governmental, human rights and civil society organizations.
- The IECC Gender Unit organized a workshop on Gender and Political Participation on 14 March 2015, attended by 19 participants representing the different units of the IECC. The workshop was facilitated by the IFES Strengthening Political Entities and Civil Society (SPECS) program, and supported by the IFES-IECC team.
- With the IECC initiation, UNOPS is supporting a proposal for an Internship Programme for Women at the commission. It is under discussion and process and may be launched later this year. The programme is being developed in close consultations with the Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission of Afghanistan which is providing technical assistance.

Procurement, Logistics and Assets

- UNOPS continues to support IECC in being operational in HQ and in Provincial Offices. Lease contracts were extended for one of the buildings of HQ in Kabul and four offices in the provinces; A new ten-month contract is in place to provide transport for all 34 Provincial Offices; Secretariat staff from all provinces

participated in a lessons learned workshop to discuss challenges from 2014 elections cycle and propose recommendations for better management for next elections; Asset verifying and tagging process across Provincial Offices is in process and to date has been completed in 11 of them. Tagging is part of a general visit taking place across the country.

Human Resources

- The IECC has completed all Performance Evaluations Reports for both HQ and Provincial Offices. In total 307 staff, in HQ and Provincial Offices, were eligible to be part of the performance evaluation. The reports have been evaluated by UNOPS SECCA.
- In HQ, all 128 staff members were recommended for contract extension; however 13 of them will not receive a step increment and were recommended for additional training. In Provincial Offices, out of a total of 94, 85 staff had their contracts extended; however 62 of them were not recommended for step increment and will be enrolled in training. The other nine provincial staff received poor evaluation which resulted in contract abolishment.
- As of 30 March, the IECC has abolished three permanent posts in the Provincial Office structure - a total of 97 posts have been affected. These posts will only be filled during the election period on a short term basis, and those are: Legal Assessment Member, Stock Keeper and Cleaner. Currently, IECC has 12 position in HQ and 16 in Provincial Offices vacant.
- The IECC HR is in the process of applying to obtain work permits for all its employees from the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled. Work permit is a legal requirement for every employee in Afghanistan, and this is the first time IECC is applying for the permit.
- IECC and UNOPS have reached an agreement with the Civil Service Institute of Independent Administrative Reform of the Civil Service Commission to coordinate on an internship program. The proposed number of interns is 15 and they will be working with a number of departments.

Information Technology

- UNOPS is working with Logistics and Field Operations to enter all assets information into asset management database. Recently, UNOPS and IECC completed asset registration at HQ and more than 1600 assets are now uploaded in the database. The verification of assets used by Provincial Offices started in February and assets in 11 provinces have been registered to date.

- The IECC and UNOPS are working together to develop a HR Database and will be used as a unified registry by all IECC HR sections.

Security

- In co-ordination with the Directorate for Protection and Security (DPS) of the United Nations, UNOPS has placed 13 security guards at IECC HQ following expiry of contract for the security company. In addition, 12 internal staff have been recruited under the NTA to provide ID checking, body search, etc. at IECC HQ premises.

Indicator 6.1.a. The extent to which electoral complaints are categorized and adjudicated in a transparent and timely manner at the central and subnational level.

Not applicable in Q1 2015.

Indicator 6.1.b. An improved strategy, regulations and operating procedures are developed and implemented in a timely and qualitative manner, addressing electoral fraud and complaints based on lessons learnt and recommendations from the 2014 elections.

The Investigation Committee

- The Investigation Committee submitted a preliminary report to the Board of Commissioners on 15 February 2015 recommending that they blacklist 10,007 Polling Officers who were involved in the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections, invite 21 IEC permanent staff for hearings, blacklist six IECC Provincial Commissioners, and dismiss two IECC Provincial staff. The Investigation Committee offered the 10,007 Polling Officers the opportunity to appear at the IECC within one week to defend themselves against the fraud and malpractice allegations related to the 2014 elections. Only 144 of the Polling Officers appeared before the IECC to defend themselves against the allegations of fraud leveled against them. The Investigation Committee decided to remove 120 out of the 144 defendants from the blacklist after examining their statements. The IECC also held closed door hearings on 2-3 March 2015 for 16 IEC Heads of provincial offices, one IEC Deputy Head of a Provincial Office and four IEC Heads of Central Departments (IT, HR, Logistics and Field Operations), who were accused of committing fraud and malpractice during the 2014 elections.
- On 11 March 2015, the IECC held a press conference to announce the findings of the investigation and the completion of a 300-page report detailing the Investigation Committee's findings on the various problems encountered during the elections, the types of fraud and irregularities found, and the people

involved in these allegations (<http://iecc.org.af/images/docs/CR.pdf>). Based on the findings of the Investigation Committee, the IECC Board of Commissioners decided to blacklist 9,887 IEC temporary staff for the next 10 years, to dismiss three IEC permanent staff from their positions and bar them from working with the election commissions for 10 years (PEOs from Faryab and Khost and the Acting PEO from Paktika), and sanction eight IECC staff (four PIECC Commissioners and four PIECC Heads of Secretariat).

- Throughout the investigation, IFES insisted and advised the IECC on the importance of transparency, impartiality, and respecting the right to due process of law in the investigation process. IFES also advised the Investigation Committee on the importance of addressing allegations based on existing complaints that were filed during the elections, and to clarify that this investigation would not affect the final results of the 2014 presidential and provincial council elections. The IECC was strongly advised to adopt an Investigation Plan, based on existing IECC procedure, and to publish it on its website. IFES shared a draft plan with the IECC legal department for this purpose in early December. Despite IFES advice, two essential elements of the Investigation Plan were not agreed upon by the IECC: the right to defend allegations, and conducting public hearings. The plan was also approved late by the Investigation Committee, and only published on 19 January 2015 after two months into the ongoing investigation. The Board of Commissioners did not formally approve the plan and thus did not settle on a clear framework for the Investigation Committee.
- IFES also advised the Investigation Committee to extend investigations to complaints covering other categories of actors (e.g. police officers, public officials, candidate agents, IECC staff), and not to limit its sanctions to blacklisting of temporary polling officials. The Investigation Committee was also advised to impose appropriate sanctions that are proportional to the electoral violation committed – and the law offers the IECC a variety of sanctions such as warnings, fines, suspension or recommendations for dismissal.

Review of the legal and regulatory framework

- A Legal Drafting Group was created in November 2015 in order to draft the missing regulations and procedures and review the existing ones in light of the 2014 elections experience, international standards and best practices. The Legal Drafting Group began discussions on the draft regulation on the adjudication of electoral complaints and challenges at the end of January. They decided to use the draft prepared in January 2014, which had not been adopted by the Board of Commissioners due to a lack of consensus among the Commissioners. IFES encouraged the Legal Drafting Group to cooperate with the IEC legal team and hold joint meetings to discuss their respective

regulations and procedures that might require harmonization. IFES also recommended regular briefing sessions with commissioners on the work of the Legal Drafting Group to encourage information channels.

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

- During the work of the Investigation Committee, coordination between the IECC and IEC progressed smoothly. First, the IEC provided the Investigation Committee with a list of 8,000 Polling Officers to be considered for investigation and blacklisting. The IEC also appointed a coordinator from the Legal Department to respond to the Investigation Committee's requests and provide any necessary documents. During the closed-door hearings on 2-3 March 2015, the IEC acting CEO was allowed to attend the hearings and defend the IEC permanent staff when needed.
- A joint IECC-IEC Lessons Learned Workshop also took place on 18 February and was attended by the heads of the Secretariat and departments from both institutions. A total of 33 participants discussed and shared their experiences with coordination between the institutions, focusing on the elections period. Participants also made recommendations to improve coordination for the next elections.

Indicator 6.1.d. the extent of the IECC's institutional capacity development and proper facility, operations and assets management is enhanced

- The IECC has an assets management system in place which has been supported and advised by UNOPS. UNOPS has been stringent in what has been released to the IECC and what has been kept in stock at UNOPS Support to the Electoral Complaints Commission of Afghanistan (SECCA) on their behalf.
- All IECC HQ assets – just over 1,600 assets, are now registered and tagged. The data has been uploaded on the online asset management database which is securely hosted by UNOPS.
- The asset tagging, verifying and registration has continued across the Provincial Offices, part of routine visits conducted by UNOPS and independent from IECC HQ. At the end of this reporting period, UNOPS has completed the process in 11 Provincial Offices.
- There is a rolling capacity building programme to include IECC staff in all inventory checks and tagging processes. Last year, UNOPS developed an online asset database including a bar code system.

Expenses for the quarter

Expenditure for Output 6 in Q1 of 2015 was total: \$200,000 from which \$0 (UNOPS) and \$ 200,000 (IFES).

During 2014, also a total of \$ 295,320 from USAID funding (separate budget line 9) contributed to output 6 achievements. For more details, please see Annex 2. For more details, please see Annex 2.

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 6, Q1 2015

BASELINE	2015 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1 2015 Actual	Comments
Baseline 6.1.a: 2014 adjudication reports (IECC, observers)	6.1.a. NA in 2015.	NA	NA
Baseline 6.1.b: IECC strategy regulations and procedures for 2014 elections and recommendations from LL reports and observer statements	6.1.b. (2015) Systems, procedures and processes revised and implemented for filing, hearing and resolving complaints and appeals during and after elections, incorporating lessons learnt and observer recommendations. Improvement of the triage system for dispute handling	Following the final adjudication of complaints and appeals, the IECC showed commitment to revise the entire regulatory framework in light of the 2014 experience. The Legal Drafting Group is working on the amendment of the regulations, procedures and guidelines and the development of additional rules to complete the framework. The IECC is effectively fully established at both HQ and Provincial level. There remain a small number of posts that are still not filled (recruitment is put on hold by a Presidential Decree) but not of a significant nature to negatively affect the work and operation of the IECC. Colocation at provincial level continued to have challenges and difficulties but remained manageable.	On track
Baseline 6.1.c: IEC IECC MoU	6.1.c. (2015) Enhanced coordination IEC and IECC to address electoral complaints and sharpen processes and mutual communication..	The IECC and IEC have held a joint lessons learned event, focusing on 2014 elections cycle. In addition, during this quarter both commissions have shown readiness to cooperate in joint capacity building and public outreach activities in preparation for upcoming elections.	On track

<p>Baseline 6.1.d: 2014 IECC Audit Report and Capacity Development status</p>	<p>6.1.d. (2015) IECC has an unqualified audit report and full implementation of CB plan.</p>	<p>UNOPS commenced physical verification of all assets delivered and in use at IECC Provincial Offices. To date, verification is completed in 11 provinces. This process started immediately after verifying more than 1,600 assets in IECC HQ and registering them on the online asset management database.</p>	<p>On track</p>
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7. OUTPUT 7: The integrity of the electoral process is enhanced through a fully-supported media regulatory body

Activity 7.1: Media regulatory body. Provide effective support to the Media Commission so that it can implement its terms of reference

The mandate of the IEC Media Commission was terminated on 12 December 2014, as required by the Electoral Law that stipulates termination within 45 days after the publication of the final election results by the IEC. The Media Commission submitted a final report to the IEC in December 2014, which was published on the IEC website. A new Media Commission will be formed 90 days before the next Election Day. As of the end of March, the IEC had not announced a date for the *Wolesi Jirga* election.

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

Not applicable.

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

Not applicable.

Indicator 7.1.c: Timeliness of the release of the post-election Media Commission report

Not applicable.

Expenses for the quarter

Expenditure for Output 7 in Q1, 2015 was \$ 1,283,110.00 for more details, please see Annex 2.

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 7, Q1 2015

BASELINE	2015 ANNUAL TARGETS	Q1 2015 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline a.: legal deadline of MC establishment: 90 days before election day. Professionally based selection process for 2014 elections</p> <p>Baseline b: national and subnational workshops held in 2014</p> <p>Baseline c: Conclusions of MC intermediate and final reports, as well as Third Party Monitoring reports.</p>	<p>7.1.a (2015) Professionally based selection process established to appoint Media Commissioners at least 90 days before elections</p> <p>7.1.b. (2015) NA (depending on electoral timeline)</p> <p>7.1.c. (2015) NA (depending on electoral timeline)</p>	<p>7.1. Establishment of the MC has been postponed until clarity on the electoral calendar for WJ/DC elections</p>	<p>Postponed</p>

III. GENDER SPECIFIC RESULTS

Gender strategy: The IEC Gender Unit shared the key elements of the draft Gender Strategy with the IEC Acting CEO. The key recommendation was that the minimum target for the number of female staff should be a formal policy goal. The draft will be shared with the Commission at the beginning of the next quarter.

IEC female staff: The IEC aims to employ 30% women. In order to more accurately record female staffing levels, ELECT II advised the IEC to collect female staffing data at the end of every quarter, beginning with this quarter. The IEC Gender Unit, with guidance from the ELECT II Gender Advisor, developed a standard format for data collation which was shared with the IEC Human Resources department.

At the end of the first quarter of 2015, women comprised 10% of the overall IEC workforce at its headquarters. At a departmental level, as shown in the table, the majority of IEC departments fall below the minimum target for female staff; the exceptions are the smaller departments. Overall, five departments had 30% or more women. Out 15 departments/units at the IEC headquarters only two are headed by women, namely the Capacity Development Department and the Plan and Policy Department.

There were in total 470 *tashkeel* positions (permanent civil servants) within the IEC at the end of the reporting period, of which only 235 (54%) were filled. The IEC needs to encourage female staff recruitment for many of these vacant positions. The ELECT II Gender Advisor, in co-operation with IEC senior management, will support the IEC Gender Unit to work towards the target for female staff.

The ELECT II Gender Advisor advised the IEC that the percentage of female staff was considerably low. The IEC needs to prioritise recruitment of qualified women. Although considerable progress was made in 2014 regarding the number of temporary female staff during electoral operations, the recruitment of regular female staff at the IEC headquarters and in the provinces remains a challenge. This is a key priority of the ELECT II Gender Advisor and the IEC Gender Unit.

In order to address low female recruitment, the draft IEC strategy includes a policy to announce vacancies exclusively for women for some positions in addition to taking other gender responsive measures. It is important that the strategy is implemented as part of a mandatory policy to see some progress in this regard. The IEC Chairman, speaking at an International Women's Day event in March, reiterated the IEC's commitment to employing women and stated that the IEC will do more to ensure that its target is met.

Number and percentage of female employees across IEC departments:

IEC Staff Gender Data					
	Department/Unit	Male	Female	Total	Female %
1	Commission Office	88	6	94	6
2	Secretariat	14	2	16	13
3	Human Resources	24	7	31	23
4	Policy and Plan	5	5	10	50
5	Legal	11	1	12	8
6	Admin & Finance	28	5	33	15
7	Training & Capacity Building	15	5	20	25
8	Field Operations	31	0	31	0
9	Public Outreach	30	6	36	17
10	External Relations	9	4	13	31
11	Information Technology	22	0	22	0
12	Logistic	291	14	305	5
13	Gender Unit	1	4	5	80
14	Monitoring & Evaluation Unit	7	3	10	30
15	Planning & Policy Support Unit	3	2	5	40
Grand Total		579	64	643	10

Gender Unit Position: ELECT II supported the IEC to initiate recruitment for a head of the Gender Unit (the post has remained unfilled for more than three years). The position was first advertised in February and the recruitment panel selected a man as its preferred candidate. The IEC Commission decided afterwards that a female should fill the position and as such the post was re-advertised exclusively for women in March. At the end of the quarter the shortlisting process was ongoing.

IV. PARTNERSHIPS

A. Implementation partner

The IEC is UNDP's only implementing partner for ELECT II. The ELECT II Project Document also specifies UNDP support to the IECC but within the overall remit of ELECT II and not as a separate implementing partner. To avoid a conflict of interest, assistance to the IECC is subcontracted by UNDP to UNOPS (administrative support) and to IFES (advisory/technical support), with funding channeled through ELECT II.

B. International donor partners

ELECT II is funded by 14 international donors¹. Through the various forums, such as the Project Board Meeting, the Technical Working Group, and the ELECT II Donor Group, ELECT II keeps donors up-to-date and discusses issues and developments.

C. UNAMA

ELECT II liaises closely with UNAMA which plays a convening role with political stakeholders. UN Security Council Resolution 2210/2015 extended the mandate of UNAMA until 17 March 2016. The statement referring to elections reads: "Recalling the Government of Afghanistan's commitments at the Kabul, Tokyo and London Conferences to strengthen and improve Afghanistan's electoral process, including long-term electoral reform, in order to ensure that future elections will be transparent, credible, inclusive and democratic, and looking forward to preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections."

D. International Observer Organizations

ELECT II liaises with international election and audit observation organisations, including the EU EAT, the OSCE/ODIHR, Creative Associates, Democracy International, and the National Democratic Institute.

E. Key political stakeholders

ELECT II management, in partnership with UNAMA, co-ordinates with the President of Afghanistan and the Chief Executive Officer, as well as other political stakeholders which include GIRoA ministries and departments.

E. Afghan National Security Forces and Resolute Support Mission

ELECT II co-ordinates with ANSF and Resolute Support Mission (the successor to the International Security Assistance Force).

¹ From a technical-administrative perspective, the Government of Japan supports the IEC through two separate project contributions, which are implemented by ELECT II and directly serve ELECT II outputs.

V. ISSUES

1. Election timeline

- The ongoing uncertainty at the political level regarding electoral reform made it impossible to conduct the *Wolesi Jirga* elections within the constitutional timeline, while the window for proper preparations and conduct in late 2015 is also becoming very slim.

The national audit of the run-off round of the Presidential election and the subsequent political stalemate last year undermined the possibility of conducting the *Wolesi Jirga* (and District Council) elections in spring 2015 in adherence to the Constitution.

“Art 83: The work period of the House of the People shall terminate, after the disclosure of the results of the elections, on June 22nd of the fifth year [2015] and the new parliament shall commence work.”

During the quarter the Afghan Government made clear that it wanted to embark upon electoral reform before new elections are organized. By the end of March, no date had been set for either the *Wolesi Jirga* (or District Council) elections. After the conclusion of the 2014 elections, President Ghani and CEO Abdullah agreed on the need of electoral reform before new elections are to be conducted. A high-level Electoral Reform Committee is to outline recommendations for electoral reform. By the end of March 2015, there was still confusion about its establishment and composition.

Response: There is an unspoken consensus amongst GIRoA and partners (UN, IEC, donors) that passing the constitutional deadline for the *Wolesi Jirga* elections would not become a political issue if sound electoral preparations, including a possible revision of the legal framework, may require more time. UNDP/ELECT II, together with the IEC, informs stakeholders about the time needed for preparation of electoral operations and to implement lessons learnt. ELECT II further assists the IEC with the development of a detailed electoral operations plan and a timeframe that identifies timeline window needed for different electoral operations ahead of Election Day.

2. Electoral reform

- IEC Commissioners have publicly raised comments about the legality of electoral reform.

Constitution Article 109 stipulates that ‘proposals for amending the election law shall not be included in the work agenda of the National Assembly during the last year of the legislative term’. The nature of the IEC Commissioners’ public statements (including frequent reiteration of their objection to certain types of reform) might demonstrate limitations and could be perceived as a political stance, affecting the impartiality of the institution. IEC Commissioners have reacted strongly and publicly to criticism of IEC leadership and calls for electoral reform relating to personnel change, even making accusations of undue foreign intervention.

Response: The issue of electoral reform is an Afghan-led process. ELECT II coordinates closely with international stakeholders on updates. ELECT II continues to advise the IEC on the need for public trust-building measures, and to implement integrity enhancement measures as outlined in the project’s 2015 Action Plan.

In anticipation of recommendations by the Electoral Reform Committee, the IEC already commenced with strategizing technical improvements to the process of which the IEC is in direct charge. The Secretariat, with ELECT II support, developed a strategy concept note on technical improvements that was presented to the Commission during the quarter.

3. Resource mobilization for *Wolesi Jirga* (and District Council) elections

- Lack of clarity about electoral reform affects resource mobilization plans.

Given the uncertainties at the political level regarding electoral reform steps to be taken, donors have expressed that funding for new elections will depend on developments. If, however, elections take place later than 2015, crucial decisions have to be taken soon with regards to the operational timeline (e.g. voter registration, polling centre assessment). An unclear election timeline may not provide enough lead time to mobilize resources. At the same time, political and economic issues could lead to donor fatigue and unwillingness to provide required funding for both *Wolesi Jirga* and District Council elections. Donors have already indicated that funding might be more limited compared to 2014.

Response: UNDP is working closely together with the IEC and donor partners on this issue. Linked to sustainability, the IEC has called for a high-level meeting with GIRoA to establish an elections budget.

4. *Kuchi* Constituencies *Wolesi Jirga* elections

- The current legal framework for *Wolesi Jirga* elections needs legal elaboration on the provision in the Electoral Law of 10 *Kuchi* representatives in seven constituencies, as well as how to implement the (nation-wide) quota of minimum three female *Kuchi* representatives

The revised Electoral Law (2013) adjusted the *Kuchi* constituency provision from one nationwide constituency to seven regional constituencies. Besides the fact that the boundaries of these seven constituencies are still undefined, a major concern relates to *Kuchi* seasonal migration – and subsequent proper polling station allocation planning. In addition, legal consideration needs to be given to how to implement the (nationwide) quota of a minimum of three female *Kuchi* representatives.

Response: ELECT II assists the IEC in its discussions with different government entities to address this issue well ahead of the *Wolesi Jirga* elections. The IEC and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) have been officially communicating with each other on this topic.

5. Voter registration

- The *e-tazkira* process is unable to produce in a timely and effective manner a civil register for the *Wolesi Jirga*/District Council elections, from which a sound voter register can be derived.

The lack of a clear voter register remains an issue for the *Wolesi Jirga* and District Council elections as voter lists cannot be cross-checked, proper allocation of polling stations is impaired, and correct voter turnout cannot be soundly verified. Given that voters have never been assigned to polling centres, it is hard to envisage maximum potential turnout per polling centre/station. To counter this, the IEC fell back in 2014 on ad-hoc contingency polling stations, a measure subjected to criticism².

Given that the ‘Law on Registration of Population Records’, which provides the legal framework for *e-tazkira*, was signed only in late 2014 and that implementation still has to be set up, the likelihood is real that the *e-tazkira* system will not yet be operational or not have sufficient people registered for the next

² Prior to the 2014 elections, the IEC’s proposals of a nationwide voter registration as well as a ‘revalidation’ exercise was rejected, and in lieu, priority was given to the concept of a national ID card (*e-tazkira*). In the meantime, a temporary ‘top-up’ voter registration drive facilitated the presidential and provincial council election.

Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections, hence not providing any relevant voter registration data.

Response: The IEC, with ELECT II support, has been assessing and proposing different VR options (letter to the President's Office with four scenarios), taking into account the issues of disenfranchisement due to insecurity in affected areas. In March, ELECT II organized a round table with donors to discuss different VR options. Improvements to the voter register will be dependent on available resources.

As a long-term solution, the IEC, with ELECT II support, is working closely with the MoI – supported by IOM – to achieve the best integration of civic and voter registration data during the *e-tazkira* project. An *e-tazkira* Electoral Core Working Group has been established by IEC, MOI, IOM and ELECT II.

6. IEC Capacity

- Substantial discussions on electoral reform could affect ongoing uncertainty at the IEC's leadership level (including open vacancies IEC CEO / Dep. CEO and calls for resignations), and in this respect ELECT II's capacity development efforts as well as the IEC's electoral operation capacity.

Ongoing vacant high-level managerial positions at the IEC hampers ELECT II's counterpart work at the managerial level. At the current stage, it seems that the position of the CEO and the Deputy CEO are part of the political government nomination process. The IEC Commissioners were appointed in 2013 for a term of six years (art. 8 Structure Law). The positions of Chair, Deputy Chair, and Secretary are elected internally amongst the Commissioners themselves for a term of three years (open for another three-year extension) (art. 5 Structure Law). (Commissioners can lose their membership pursuant Art. 10 of the Structure Law.) As part of electoral reform measures, there is lack of clarity at the political level regarding calls for replacement. The uncertainties at the IEC's leadership has an effect on the IEC's functioning and the project institutional capacity development efforts. Furthermore, appointing new leaders for the IEC very short before elections might undermine their capacity by lack of electoral understanding and knowledge.

Response: ELECT II remains committed to work closely with IEC senior management and Commissioners to plan for the next elections and to enhance the institution's capacity. It remains important to advise partners on the effect of uncertainties at the IEC's leadership-level regarding the institution's functioning and the project's capacity enhancement efforts.

- Vacant positions at the IEC's top Secretariat level, (political) uncertainty about senior IEC positions, demotivation or loss of IEC key staff members, as well as an improperly planned implementation of the Civil Service reform could affect institutional capacity development efforts and improper conduct of elections.

In the past two and a half years, the IEC has witnessed five different people holding the position of CEO (including three as officer-in-charge). Likewise, there has been a significant rotation and open vacancies for both deputy CEO positions. Other key positions at the Secretariat have been vacant for a long time. Ongoing vacant high-level managerial positions in the IEC hampers ELECT II's counterpart work at managerial level. At the current stage, it seems that the position of CEO and the Deputy CEOs are part of the political government nomination process. In addition, with the civil service reform recommendations in mind, a large number of provincial electoral officers (PEOs) have been moved and replaced in the last year.

Response / mitigation steps:

- Advising partners, GIRoA, of the risks of delayed appointments of IEC CEO and deputy CEO, as well as the need for clarity for the organization about the position of the Commission.
- ELECT II to recruit an international Capacity Development Advisor who will work closely with the IEC on the CSC reform, while providing oversight of other HR issues.
- Advising partners, including GIRoA, of the importance to restructure the IEC after the WJ/DC elections if those are to be scheduled soon.

7. Scope and role of international assistance in elections

- On 29 January, Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Karzai raised questions about ELECT II at the International Contact Group meeting in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. This led to President Ghani issuing a request to the UN for a description of ELECT II's role.
- Current outstanding questions regarding resources and conditional funding by donor partners affects ELECT II Annual Work Plan (see below)

Response: ELECT II drafted two papers, addressing the issues raised. UNDP works together with UNAMA and donor partners to inform the government on ELECT II's role.

8. Financial transparency

- ELECT II raised questions about irregularities and mismanagement of financial resources from the NIM advances released in 2014.

Response: In line with GIRoA and UN procedures, UNDP/ELECT II applies tight control mechanisms for approval of IEC financial expenditures. ELECT II continues to sharpen internal oversight mechanisms on operational-management issues, including the option of enabling more ELECT II advisors a supervisory role, in particular in IEC finance, HR, procurement, etc. Third-party monitoring control on large-scale transport contracts and field-level training programs are to be established.

Financial irregularities were investigated and evidence handed over by ELECT II to UNDP and UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigation (OAI) during the quarter. The OAI provided a letter to the IEC to address irregularities regarding NIM advances. A full report by the OAI is expected in the second quarter.

9. Security

- In the first quarter, two international ELECT II staff were referred to in local media. In addition, the same staff received anonymous threats. National ELECT II staff were also received threatening insinuations.

These security issues are thought to be a directly linked to the above-mentioned investigation by the OAI.

Response: ELECT II is putting different mitigation measures in place to protect its staff, while the situation is monitored closely.

10. Programmatic Issues (AWP, Project Document, staffing)

- Annual Work Plan: Donors have not yet approved a full Annual Work Plan for the entire year; depending on progress made related to electoral reform.

Only an Annual Work Plan until March 2015 is in place. At the end of March, there was still a lack of clarity regarding the Electoral Reform Commission and subsequently the election timeline. In this respect, donors have not yet approved an AWP for the entire year.

Response: UNDP/ELECT II is working closely together with the IEC and donors on this topic, as resource mobilization for the AWP is also linked to the question of electoral reform and timeline.

- Project Document timeline: The current ELECT II project document runs until December 2015.

Delayed WJ/DC elections close to the end of 2015 or beyond require an amendment of the ELECT II project duration (current scope: 2012-2015)

Response: Linked with AWP approval, UNDP is discussing with donor partners how to proceed the project.

- ELECT II staffing: vacancy of three senior positions

Response: UNDP maintains close co-ordination with donors regarding the Annual Work Plan and resource mobilization, while ELECT II proceeds with targeted search for suitable candidates for its vacant positions – also in light of the internal restructuring.

VI. RISKS

1. Timeline

- Prolonged uncertainty about the electoral timeline poses a severe risk to timely planning, proper preparations, as well as successful conduct of the *Wolesi Jirga* and the District Council elections.

An unclear timeline currently undermines timely planning of a whole range of electoral operations prior to the conduct of the actual elections, such as candidate nomination, public outreach, procurement, logistics, procedures, and voter registration, etc. Electoral preparations, starting with the candidate nomination process, need to commence almost half a year prior any election. Voter registration options that are currently for discussion on the table for discussion require up to one year preparations.

Response: UNDP/ELECT II, together with the IEC, informs stakeholders about the time window needed for preparation of electoral operations and implement lessons learnt as well as electoral reform recommendations. ELECT II further assists the IEC with the development of a detailed electoral operations plan, in which afterwards an election date can be inserted that automatically calculates the time necessary for all preceding steps (critical path method).

2. Electoral reform

- Discussions on electoral reform might open up the possibility of substantial reform of the Electoral Law and Structures Law, risking to push the electoral timeline possibly to a much later window.”

Some proposals for electoral reform include significant amendments to the Electoral Law that considers an extensive revision of the electoral system. These proposals will likely open up profound discussions. Based on legal reform discussions in the past, significant changes in the Electoral Law might require much time to pass through the different stages of the legislative process before endorsement. Likewise, changes to the Structures Law could push the electoral timeline as legal provisions foresee that no elections can be taken place within the year of any change.

Response: The issue of electoral reform is an Afghan-led process. The ‘primacy of politics’ will eventually determine the timeline. The Presidential Decree regarding the Electoral Reform Commission foresees recommendation for the immediate future (WJ elections), as well as those for the longer term (next electoral cycle). ELECT II coordinates closely with international stakeholders regarding electoral reform and the electoral timeline. ELECT II to assist the IEC to make sure that any aspects of legal reform regarding to the *Wolesi Jirga*/District Council elections are timely and properly implemented.

3. District Council Elections: technical preparations and operations

- The conduct of District Council elections, which have never been held before and by nature are much more complex than any other election in Afghanistan, could fail if not planned properly in time and in detail.

It is expected that around 22,000 candidates will contest some 3,000 seats, something that would directly affect the way the candidate nomination and the candidates’ adjudication process is handled. Consideration has to be given to the likelihood, for example, of the unique printing and distribution of more than 400 different ballot papers for each different district. Other more complex issues relate to local public outreach, polling centre allocation, security, logistics, IEC polling staff recruitment, election observation, and complaints adjudication. No decision has been taken yet regarding the timeline of the District Council elections.

Response: Detailed and sound planning, including development of regulations and procedures, for District Council elections in an electoral timeline that provides sufficient time for preparations.

4. Electoral integrity and IEC credibility

- Electoral integrity issues during the 2014 elections, including the lack of accountability, affect the credibility of the IEC, risking to impair the upcoming *Wolesi Jirga* and District Council.

Response: Based on the mid-term review recommendations, IEC and ELECT II lessons learned, and inputs by stakeholders, ELECT II developed a 2015 Action Plan which includes significant measures to enhance electoral integrity. ELECT II currently advises the IEC on the proposed technical measures. Electoral reform considerations, including accountability measures, is an Afghan-led process. Recommendations put forward by the Electoral Reform Commission aim to enhance the credibility of the electoral process.

VII. LESSONS LEARNT

Following the elections in 2014, the IEC completed the most comprehensive lessons learnt program ever conducted by an electoral body in Afghanistan. ELECT II conducted two of its own internal lessons learnt workshops. Between January and March of 2015, worked to incorporate the recommendations from last year's lessons learnt into its operations, planning, and advice to the IEC with a focus on the most immediate and ongoing issues, namely sustainability, electoral fraud, financial fraud, capacity development, and gender issues.

A key lesson for ELECT II that emerged last year concerned the transition to a genuinely Afghan-led process: the project cannot guarantee outcomes and insulate the IEC from the environment in which it must operate. ELECT II therefore made increased effort in this quarter to deepen communication of risks with donors in order to maximize the efficacy of its engagement with the IEC, and in doing so, assist the IEC to maximize the efficacy of its engagement with its many and varied stakeholders.

In order to address key lesson learnt, ELECT II:

- Held three discussions with donors on the topics of 1.) Voter registration and boundary delimitation, 2.) Electoral sustainability, and 3.) Fraud mitigation.
- Assisted the IEC to develop a more strategic institutional plan.
- Encouraged the IEC Commission and Secretariat to take improve their oversight and institutional ownership of operational tasks and challenges.
- Worked with the IEC to develop a new Fraud Mitigation Plan.
- Encouraged the IEC to follow their own procedures
- Elevated the importance of capacity development. Recruitment for a Capacity Development Advisor was initiated.

- Assisted the IEC to begin the recruitment process for a new head of the Gender Unit.
- Supported the IEC to refine accountability mechanisms.
- In response to the identified need to strengthen payroll verification, an international audit company, contracted by ELECT II, performed a payroll verification investigation. The exercise included a review of hiring procedures. As a result of the audit, the IEC installed automated check-in and check-out clocks for staff.

The goal of all of these measures is to leave the IEC as an institution with sustainable infrastructure, knowledge and practices; staffed by confident, professional employees.

VIII. FUTURE PLANS

ELECT II 2015 Action Plan: After the 2014 elections, ELECT II developed an Action Plan for 2015 that addressed specific stakeholder concerns regarding assistance in the context of upcoming electoral reform. The Plan took account of recommendations made in the Mid-Term Project Review, feedback from the IEC, and lessons learnt. The key concrete action points are presented here.

Electoral reform

- Electoral reform will shape the project's activities in 2015. By the end of March 2015 there was, however, no clear decision or policy on what the election reform will entail, including what scope or timeline it will encompass. ELECT II is ready to assist upon request, and would be able to provide technical advice on maximizing the success of the electoral process in the short term. ELECT II is also considering modalities to recruit technical consultants in order to support the electoral reform process.

Capacity development

- Revised ELECT II capacity development staffing
ELECT II is revising its structure to elevate capacity development into a cross-cutting priority, led by a Senior Technical Adviser (STA) who will stand outside direct electoral support and will provide strategic advice to the IEC Commission on all institutional capacity development matters, and will provide strategic direction for the development of the consolidation of institutional capacity of the IEC. Key responsibilities of the STA will include IEC capacity development for institutional reform and sustainability. The revision will ensure that the project maintains oversight of capacity development at all times and ensures that programmes achieve the continuity required to be successful and eliminate the *ad hoc* approach that had been present under the pressure of operational periods.

- Institutional capacity – knowledge, data management
ELECT II has initiated work with the IEC to develop institutional knowledge products that will be accessible to the IEC and which will provide them with an institutionalized knowledge base. Products in development include a comprehensive 2014 election compendium, an operational manual and an Election Decision Support system (EDSS) which is a repository for all election data across many sub-operations and will be capable of producing standardized reports on which to gauge progress and develop improvements.

Electoral Integrity

- Revision of technical improvements to enhance electoral integrity
In this first quarter ELECT II assisted the IEC's Secretariat to develop a strategy document that addresses technical improvements in order to enhance electoral integrity. The strategy was presented to the Commission. The IFES Fraud Mitigation strategy feeds into these improvements.
- Co-ordinate with IEC for recruitment of senior positions
Although the currently vacant senior Secretariat positions are directly appointed by the President, ELECT II will advise the IEC to advocate for transparent recruitment of these key IEC positions including canvassing for suitable applicants.
- Greater INGO engagement by ELECT II and international observer groups
ELECT II intends to develop greater linkages with international organizations working with CSOs and observer groups in subsequent elections, such as NDI and DI. The purpose of this is to ensure a more structured and co-ordinated approach with domestic observers and CSOs and the IEC. Observer coverage was still limited in 2014 and the project would like to ensure maximum observer coverage while being cognizant of the limitations of its mandate.
- Better co-ordination with Mol to mitigate E-Day fraud
While the support from ANSF has been considerable and largely positive during the Presidential Election, it is also noted that more can be done in sensitizing the security force of their roles and responsibilities on Election Day. In this regard, the project intends to support the IEC engage more actively with the Mol to explore possibilities of inserting a brief module in the training curriculum on this issue.

Sustainability

- Financial management and oversight
Development of an IEC Operations Management Strategy and its implementation will ensure effective and efficient working of finance, administration, procurement, logistics, human resources, and assets department. Punitive actions against IEC staff and recovery of funds will be proposed where investigation by UNDP leads to clear identification of accountability. In the areas of financial management more robust

systems will be developed to track the utilization of funds for sub-district activities during elections. The OAI is expected to release its findings in an official report in the following quarter. UNDP senior management will determine the next steps.

- Government funding/utilization of state assets

It is important that GIRoA starts to contribute more towards the cost of elections including large costs associated with polling staff and transportation. Also more allocation is needed from GIRoA to support the conduct of elections. In line with this, ELECT II has started sensitizing the IEC to lower funding basis for all activities. The project will work on governmental stakeholder discussions to determine areas where state (and private by decree) assets could be utilized to reduce the direct cost of the process.

Gender

- ELECT II internal restructuring of Gender Advisor

The Gender Advisor, while still maintaining the Gender Unit as a counterpart, will work directly in conjunction with the STA for capacity development and the CTA across both the Commission and all departments, and will reinforce technical advisor support in all facets of election operations.

- Head of Gender Unit vacancy

ELECTII has advocated for but been unable to get the IEC to fill the head of the Gender Unit position for three years. This is symbolic of the lack of genuine interest that the Secretariat has displayed in genuine gender engagement. ELECT II will insist that this be done in 2015 and that the position is filled by the most qualified individual possible.

- Gender unit on the *Tashkeel* structure

The Gender Unit does not have any governmental staff and exists only on the basis of continued donor funding. ELECT II will work to promote revision of the *tashkeel* structure to incorporate this unit, both to the IEC and any ministerial level engagements.

ANNEX 1: FINANCIAL TABLE

The Interim Donor Report for the Period Jan -Mar 2015 for (Atlas Award ID: 00063078 - (ELECT II)

Annex 1. Financial Table

Donor Name	COMMITMENT/ PREVIOUS YEARS RECORD				CURRENT YEAR (2015)						FUTURE EXPENSES		TOTAL RECEIVABLE		
	Commitment (a)	Revenue Collected as of 31 Dec 2013 (b)	Cumulative Expenses as of 31/12/2013 (c)	IPSAS Adjustment (d)	Opening Balance e=(b-c+d)	Contribution Revenue 2015 (f)	Other Revenue (g)	Prior Period Adjustment Expenses of (PPE) (h)	Expenses (i)	Closing Balance l=(e+f+g+h-i)	UNDP Commitments (Unliquidated Obligations) (j)	Undepreciated of fixed Assets and Inventory (l)	(Future Due) M=(a-b-f)	(Past Due) (k)	Available Resources O=(i-j-k-m)
AusAid	10,472,610	10,472,610	10,428,521	22,531	66,621				911	65,709		(911)	-	-	66,620
Denmark	6,651,291	6,651,291	6,625,572	1,537	27,256				(34,733)	61,989		(9,736)	(0)	-	71,725
DFID	31,638,205	31,638,205	29,450,110	14,579	2,262,675				1,384,636	877,978	30,081	(142,673)	-	-	330,570
EC	26,786,483	25,300,060	23,526,527	12,667	2,386,200	194,604			(74,308)	2,655,712	386,056	(515)	631,819	-	2,270,171
France	2,680,220	2,680,220	2,673,812		6,408					6,408			-	-	6,408
Germany	15,120,012	15,120,012	11,755,485	(114,342)	3,249,585				1,178,124	2,071,461	115,863		-	-	1,955,598
Italy	1,440,000	1,440,000	1,191,795	-	248,205				34,310	213,295		(824)	-	-	214,119
Japan	24,378,313	24,378,313	21,147,574	-	3,830,739				1,283,110	2,547,629	252,254	(11,271)	-	-	2,306,647
Korea	357	357			357					357			-	-	357
Netherland	10,000,000	8,000,000	7,767,894	7	232,113	2,000,000			1,197,746	1,034,367	24,419	(47)	-	-	1,009,395
Norway	16,306,682	11,379,141	10,643,244	-	1,335,898				1,726,865	(390,967)	3,269	25,560	4,327,541	-	(419,797)
SDC	1,077,308	679,502	680,190			398,406			190,687	207,719			-	-	207,719
SIDA	9,002,587	7,613,768	5,272,288		2,341,480				563,052	1,778,428	72,736		1,388,819	-	1,705,692
Turkey	1,000,000	1,000,000	985,860		14,140					14,140			-	-	14,140
UNDP	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000												
USAID	65,720,825	65,321,782	65,321,782		-	399,043			977,244	(578,202)	80,219	(159,493)	-	-	(498,928)
Total	224,535,492	214,535,261	198,470,653	(63,621.09)	16,001,675	2,392,053	-	-	8,427,705	10,566,023	1,024,897	(299,911)	7,008,178	-	9,841,037

Note:

- The figures provided in the above statement are provisional; the final figures will be known once the 2014 1st quarter closure exercise has been completed.
- Income received in currency other than USD is approximated to USD based on UN- Operational Rate of Exchange applied.

ANNEX 2: EXPENSES BY OUTPUT

The Interim Donor Report for the Period Jan -Mar 2015 for (Atlas Award ID: 00063078 - (ELECT II)

Annex 3. Expenses by Output ELECT II

Project Output ID and Description	2014 Budget (AWP)	Expenses (Jan-Mar 2015)	Delivery Rate
Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	1,574,754	410,696	26%
Output 2 (00080394): 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.	64,200	515	1%
Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	524,079	271,928	52%
Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	5,547,822	2,372,848	43%
Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	4,239,236	2,754,098	65%
Output 6 (00087513): The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced	3,554,464	200,000	6%
Output 7 (00083558): Human resource and infrastructural capacity of the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan developed (Japanese support): Linked / contributing to Output 1		1,283,110	0%
Output 8 (00087514): The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced (Output 7 according to Prodoc)	82,933	109,584	132%
Output 9 (00087872) Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow - Phase II (ELECT-II) USAID Support Linked to All/ contributing to Output 1		977,244	0%
Grand Total	15,587,487	8,380,023	54%

ANNEX 3: EXPENSES BY DONOR

The Interim Donor Report for the Period Jan -Mar 2015 for (Atlas Award ID: 00063078 - (ELECT II)

Annex 3. Expenses by Donor-ELECT II

Donor Name	Project Output ID and Description	2014 Budget (Revised AWP)***	Expenses (Jan-Mar-2014)	Delivery Rates
AusAid	Output 3 (ID 00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	-	0	0%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner		911	*
Sub-Total		-	911	0%
Denmark	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved		208	*
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner		377	*
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved		(35,318)	*
Sub-Total		-	(34,733)	0%
DFID	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	567,100	10,372	2%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	157,999	98,742	62%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	214,423	223,752	104%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	1,539,817	1,051,830	68%
	Output 8 (00087514): The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced			
Sub-Total		2,479,339	1,384,696	56%

EC	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved		31,060	****
	Output 2 (00080394): 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.		515	****
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved		(106,484)	*
Sub-Total		-	(74,908)	
Germany	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	982,260	653,772	67%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	204,174	324,352	159%
	Output 6 (00087513): The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced	812,913	200,000	25%
Sub-Total		1,999,347	1,178,124	59%
Italy	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved		1,656	****
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.		32,485	****
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner		769	****
Sub-Total**		-	34,910	
Japan	Output 7 (00083558): Human resource and infrastructural capacity of the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan developed (Japanese support): Linked / contributing to Output 1		1,283,110	**
Sub-Total		-	1,283,110	

Netherland	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	107,000	41,739	39%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	104,333	117,907	113%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	1,170,260	753,678	64%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	355,907	284,422	80%
	Output 6 (00087513): The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced	262,500		0%
	Sub-Total	2,000,000	1,197,746	60%
Norway	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	362,433	162,876	45%
	Output 2 (00080394): 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.	64,200		
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	207,746	21,217	10%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	2,448,022	359,156	15%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	1,762,207	1,048,643	60%
	Output 8 (00087514): The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced	82,933	134,974	163%
Sub-Total	4,927,541	1,726,865	35%	

SDC	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	322,222	162,784	51%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	125,661	27,903	22%
Sub-Total		447,883	190,687	43%
SIDA	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	216,000		0%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	54,000	1,578	3%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	607,195	352,530	58%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	377,132	208,944	55%
	Output 6 (00087513): The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced	2,479,051		0%
Sub-Total		3,733,378	563,052	15%
USAid	Output 9 (00087872) under Atlas Award ID: 00063078 - Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow - Phase II (ELECT-II) USAID Support Linked to All/ contributing to Output 1		977,244	***
Sub-Total		-	977,244	
Grand Total	Grand total	15,587,487	8,427,705	54%

Note:

* The above negative expenses in Denmark and EC is the amount credited back to the project resources due the expenditure adjustment

**Over expenditures are due to the last year commitments (outstanding Pos) and are due to delay on donor fund releasing, which will be addressed in next AWP revision-

***The above recorded expenses without approved budget is the carry over amount of 2014 open obligations that have been liquidated(paid to vendors) in current year- and the expenses are adjusted in Q2 2015.

****Expenditure under the donors with no approved budget are due non-availability of cash and delay in release of Cash from Norway NOK 30M and SIDA SEK20M, therefore,

ANNEX 4: RISK LOG

ID	Type	Date Identified	Description	Status/ Priority	Mitigation	Author
1	Political / institutional	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undue political interference in the electoral process (through electoral staff or from outside), perceived or actual, affects the credibility of the IEC and the electoral, and could lead to wide-scale rejection of the election results. 	Medium	ELECT II 2015 Action Plan on Electoral Integrity. Establishment of Electoral Reform Committee	ELECT II CTA
2	Electoral - operational	Q3 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complexity of district council elections could risk timely and successful preparations and conduct: issue of boundary delimitation, candidate nomination, women's participation, customized public outreach, PC/PS allocation, logistics, local security, counting, observation, etc. 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electoral boundary delimitation (AGCHO-CSO data integration) Comprehensive and credible electoral timeline and subsequent planning 	ELECT II CTA
3	Electoral - legal	Q3 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female representation could be severely hampered at district council elections due to lack of quota and educational criteria rather detrimental for women. 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in case of renewed discussion on legal reform, proposals to amend the electoral law including review of quorum and educational criteria ELECT II and IEC to develop specific measures and (district-level) public outreach activities to engage potential female candidates 	ELECT II CTA/ gender + legal advisor
4	Political / Legal	Q3 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuchi constituencies are not defined for the WJ elections while it is unclear how the 30% female seats will be allocated, undermining the Kuchi representation process in the WJ. 	Medium	Raising the issue of Kuchi constituencies and female representation as an important agenda topic of electoral reform discussions	ELECT II CTA / UNAMA

5	Electoral operations	Q1 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The e-Tazkira system is not yet fully operational for the WJ/DC elections to compensate for a uniform voter registry, risking to affect the credibility and acceptance of the results. 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - close coordination with e-tazkira implementers - exploration of temporary provincial level VR top-up 	ELECT II CTA
6	Organizational	Q3 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing vacant high-level managerial positions in IEC lead to loss of electoral knowledge and capacity. 	High	Advising partners, including the government of the risk of protracted recruitment process for IEC CEO/D-CEO	ELECT II CTA / UNDP CO / UNAMA
7	Organizational	Q2 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demotivated or resigning IEC staff undermine ongoing capacity building efforts 	Medium	Continued capacity development efforts, including at system-level beyond individual capacity	ELECT II CTA / Pillar I - II
8	Organizational	Q2 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radical civil service reforms introduced before WJ/DC elections undermine the IEC's organizational capacity developed 	Medium	ELECT II HR to assist IEC with restructuring and oversight	ELECT II CTA / Pillar II
9	Organizational	Q3 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competing (project) priorities given total focus of ELECT II on the conduct of the full audit, negatively affecting other activities and tasks part of the project's objectives. 	Medium	Recruitment of ELECT II Sr Capacity Development Advisor.	UNDP CO – ELECT II CTA
10	Institutional	Q2 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IEC long-term sustainability is at risk beyond 2015 (end of ELECT II project). 	High	ELECT II continues to look into to reduce electoral costs / Intern partners and government to define L-T fin. sustainability.	UNDP CO / ELECT II CTA
11	Security	Q1 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security threats remain a risk to the project, the IEC and electoral operations. 	High	Ongoing security coordination IEC, UNDP, UNDSS, ANSF	ELECT II CTA / UN DSS
12	Programmatic	Q4 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed Parliamentary/District Council elections close to the end of 2015 or beyond require an amendment of the ELECT II project duration (current scope: 2012-2015). Unclear electoral timeline, as well as political and economic issues, could lead to donor fatigue and unwillingness to provide required funding for both Parliamentary/District Council elections and DC. Issue of operational control by UNDP on IEC financial expenditures under the National Implementation Modality. 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close donor coordination ELECT II establishing enhanced internal oversight mechanisms on operational issues 	UNDP CO / ELECT CTA - STA

ANNEX 5: ISSUE LOG

ID	Type	Date Identified	Description	Status/ Priority	Mitigation	Author
1.	Security	2012	Security threats are not only a risk but also an ongoing issue, as it requires constant mitigation planning and flexibility of staff moral to deal with it – including difficulties for the project regarding recruitment and staff retention in this environment. Some international ELECT II staff received specific threats.	High	ELECT II security and UNDP CO security work closely together with UN DSS as well as IEC security, and nation security (ANSF) partners. Mitigation in place to protect certain staff.	ELECT II CTA
2.	Electoral Operational	Q3 2014	Uncertainty about the electoral timeline for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council Elections, affecting all upcoming electoral planning.	High	Development of different timeline possibilities/options	ELECT II CTA
3.	Organizational	Q3 2013	Ongoing vacant high-level managerial positions in IEC hampers ELECT II's counterpart work at managerial level.	High	Advising partners, including the government of the risk of protracted recruitment process for IEC CEO/D-CEO	ELECT II CTA / UNDP CO / UNAMA
4.	Regulatory / Operational	Q4 2012	Issue of operational control by UNDP on IEC financial expenditures under NIM.	Medium	More oversight functions for ELECT II advisors; third party monitoring; Exploring different DIM/NIM options	ELECT II CTA / Operations Manager
5.	Operational	Q2 2014	ELECT II resource mobilization for 2015 vice versa unclear timeline for electoral planning for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections.	High	ELECT II submits a provisional 2015 AWP to donors; with a revised version including electoral operations once the electoral timeline provides more clarity.	ELECT II CTA / UNDP CO
6.	Organizational	Q3 2014	Three senior ELECT II managers to be replaced	High	Intensified recruitment process to find and recruit suitable candidates	UNDP CO