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ENHANCING LEGAL AND ELECTORAL CAPACITY FOR TOMORROW Phase II

(ELECT II) 2012 – 2015

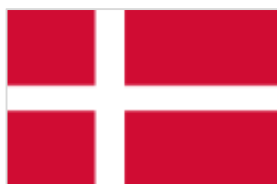
2014 ANNUAL PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT



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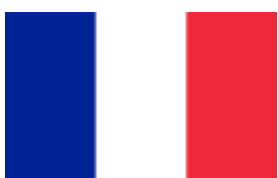
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** Japan signed an agreement with UNDP to support the electoral process and the IEC, contributing to the ELECT II objectives outside the basket fund.

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

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

UNDP Strategic Plan Component: Democratic Governance

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

Annual Work Plan 2014: US\$164,458,022 million (funded budget as of 31 December, 2014)

Implementing Partner: Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan (IEC)

Chief Technical Advisor: Deryck Fritz (until August 2014)
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COVER PAGE PHOTO: A female IEC worker registers voters at a polling station in Kunduz province for the run-off round of the Presidential Election. Photo: AEP/ELECT II.

ACRONYMS

AGCHO	Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office
ANFREL	Asian Network for Free Elections
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
BB	Ballot Box
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
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
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

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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.

In 2014, ELECT II contributed towards the peaceful transition of power from President Hamid Karzai to a National Unity Government, with Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai as President and Abdullah Abdullah as Chief Executive Officer. ELECT II provided support to the IEC which conducted the two rounds of the Presidential Election (a first round on 5 April and a run-off round on 14 June), plus 34 Provincial Council Elections (held on the same day as the first round of the Presidential Election).

Additionally, ELECT II supported the IEC to organise and execute a national audit of all votes cast in the run-off round of the Presidential Election. The audit and recount, unprecedented globally in its scale and scope, was an intensive two-month operation. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), assisted in the retrieval of all 22,828 ballot boxes from the IEC's provincial offices to Kabul. UNDP mobilized 128 electoral experts from UN missions around the world to assist with the audit. ELECT II and other UN international staff provided robust and intentionally highly-visible supervision at the explicit request of the Afghan authorities.

More than 6.6 million Afghans, of whom 36% were women, cast their votes in the first round of the Presidential Election on 5 April.

Election Day on 5 April was widely seen as a success, with a high voter turnout. Some 6.6 million Afghans, of whom 36% were women, cast valid votes. The two candidates with the highest number of votes (Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai) went through to the run-off round. Following Election Day on 14 June, both sides accused each other of large-scale fraud. The impasse was overcome when the United States, together with the UN, brokered an agreement between the candidates for a full audit to be conducted by the IEC under the supervision of the UN and in the presence of national and international observers. Political negotiations continued in parallel with the audit. The audit took place from 17 July until 4 September. On 14 September, the IEC made its last audit-decision making session. On 18 September, the IECC announced its final adjudication decision. On 21 September, both candidates signed an agreement to create a National Unity Government, while the IEC announced Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai as the elected President. By the end of the year, the IEC had not yet provided details about the

During the Presidential run-off election on 14 June, 7.1 million valid votes were cast, of which 37% were by women.

number of votes that each candidate had received, based on a political agreement that prioritised the formation of a Cabinet of Ministers. A total of 7.1 million valid votes were cast in the run-off round, of which 37% were

made by women. The results of the Provincial Council Elections were announced on 25 October: voter turnout was 6.2 million. Of the 458 newly-elected Provincial Council members inaugurated, 97 were women (21%).



A voter in Kabul shows his ballot paper before he votes in the run-off round for the Presidential Election. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah is above and Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai is below. (14 June 2014). Photo: ELECT II

The political factors noted above highlight the fact that events and decisions beyond the control of ELECT II affected the project's achievements. The credibility of the IEC was also damaged by accusations that the electoral body itself was implicated in organised fraud. Most notably, the IEC's Chief Electoral Officer, Ziaulhaq Amarkhil, resigned during the audit following allegations of

orchestrated ballot box irregularities. Furthermore, opportunities to commit electoral fraud throughout the country can be attributed in large part to deep-seated structural issues with the voter registration system: the Afghan Government previously rejected IEC/ELECT II proposals for a new voter registration system. Despite the many challenges, from a technical point of view the elections in 2014 were widely recognized as the most operationally successful to ever be held in Afghanistan.

Of the 458 Provincial Councils members elected on 5 April, 97 were women (21%).

ELECT II encouraged women's participation in the electoral process and at the IEC itself. Female turnout was 36% in the first round 37% in the run-off round. Around four in ten polling stations were dedicated to women voters. More than a quarter of polling staff were female. For the Provincial Council Elections, 13% (323) of registered candidates were women (a higher percentage than both the 2005 and 2009 Provincial Council Elections). Female registration was, however, a bigger challenge in the more culturally conservative and insecure provinces. Eighteen out of 97 women won seats without the help of the quota system.

By the end of 2014, the IEC had not taken a decision as to when to hold the Parliamentary Elections (specifically, elections for the Lower House or *Wolesi Jirga*) or the District Council Elections (District Council Elections have never been held before). The intention before the 2014 elections was that these would be held in spring 2015. ELECT II continued to advise the IEC on operational and technical considerations for different electoral timetable scenarios. The decision as to when to hold these elections will shape the future plans of ELECT II going into 2015.

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 year, helping to build knowledge and skills and assisting in the development of key electoral plans. A key achievement related to assisting the IEC with training almost 100,000 polling staff. Senior IEC members made numerous foreign electoral-related work visits. ELECT II initiated a '2014 Elections Compendium' that will comprise all IEC planning and reporting documents of the 2014 electoral operations and that will serve as a knowledge resource for the IEC as reference for future elections. The project assisted the IEC with refining the body's electoral regulations and procedures in line with the law. ELECT II assisted the IEC with the design and construction of six new provincial compounds as well as building security infrastructure at 13 provincial offices. ELECT II completed 26 security upgrades to the IEC's headquarters.

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 provided substantial technical support to enable the IEC to successfully accomplish a voter registration 'top-up' of 3,842,504 eligible voters of whom 1,334,847 were female (34.74%). Following the 2014 elections, ELECT II resumed liaison with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Ministry of Interior (MoI), during the development stage of *e-tazkira* (electronic national identification cards that generate a voter registry by polling centre) as a long-term solution.

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

ELECT II assisted the IEC to develop an integrated public outreach campaign. In total, 47 radio and 59 Public Service Announcements (PSAs) were broadcast in 2014, reaching an estimated 10 million radio listeners and 8.4m television viewers.

10 million Afghan radio listeners and 8.4 million television viewers received information about electoral matters through 47 radio and 59 different TV public service announcements developed by the IEC.

The IEC Call Centre received 1.4m calls in 2014 (11.9% from women.) The IEC, with ELECT II support, recruited and trained 1,450 Civic and Voter Educators (CVEs), of whom 33% were women, and staged 68 mobile theatre performances. In the run-up to Election Day on 5 April, CVEs had reached out to

more than two million people, of whom 42% were women. In the period between the first and the second round, CVE activities reached more than 1.2 million people. ELECT II helped to improve the IEC's strategic communication – an area of previous weakness that fuelled accusations of poor transparency. Some 363,000 accreditation cards were issued to observers, political agents, media and other stakeholders (22.53% to women).

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

The system of payments through the National Implementation Modality (NIM) was initiated, whereby ELECT II advanced funds to the IEC, following approval by the Ministry of Finance. A NIM audit was performed in 2014, covering 2013. The audit was *unqualified*. ELECT II engaged an international audit company to perform a verification of the IEC's payroll. ELECT II procured \$4.7m of electoral commodities (ballots, screens, boxes, etc.) Domestic procurement in 2014 for both election rounds totaled \$19m: predominantly transport services (\$15m), and television and radio PSAs (\$4m). There were more than 50 UNAMA-led donor and/or stakeholders meetings in 2014 in which ELECT II participated and provided updates.

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

ELECT II helped to improve the IEC's polling, counting, and result management operations. Several prominent electoral observation reports noted an improvement of the administrative capacity of the IEC, while the conduct of both rounds were characterized as Afghan-led and Afghan-managed. For the first round, the IEC opened 5,976 polling centres (18,866 polling stations), and 6,172 polling centres for the second round (22,828 pre-audited polling stations). In both rounds, almost 40% of the polling stations were for female voters. Compared to past elections, there was improved statistical reporting with fewer administrative errors, a decreased reliance on international staff, substantial reductions in cost measured per voter, a marked reduction in detection of fraudulent ballots, increased reliance on Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) support, and a greater participation of women as electoral staff and candidates. The IEC did, however, come under criticism during the run-off round.

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

Following its establishment as a permanent institution in September 2013, the IECC had been focused on institutional start-up, review of candidate eligibility, recruitment and training of staff, developing its regulatory and procedural framework, and conducting public outreach on the complaints process. Despite an extremely tight timeframe, all this was completed ahead of elections.

The IECC reached almost full staffing prior to the 5 April elections. Key staff from the staffing structure in HQ and the provincial offices were in place to keep the Commission running normally throughout the elections cycle and beyond. UNOPS implemented an

agreed housing allowance for Commissioners who were deployed for a period of six months in a province outside their own. IECC offices in HQ and the provinces continue to receive operational support. Five provincial offices are still operating from separate facilities, while the rest of offices share the same premises with provincial IEC offices. The Kabul provincial office is co-located at the IECC HQ.

Following the April 5 and June elections, more than 10,000 complaints and appeals were adjudicated by the IECC, mostly within the deadlines set by law. Open sessions took place for the first time in Afghanistan, with the presence of candidates, agents, media and observers. The IECC also contributed observers to the nationwide audit process. Quarters three and four were focused on strengthening institutional capacities of the IECC through lessons learnt workshops, developing a training needs assessment and a capacity building plan, and also to produce an annual report on the Commission's activities as well as commence work in revising its Strategic Plan. The latter was one of key results of the IECC Post-Election Review Seminar held in October in attendance of all HQ Commissioners and Heads of Secretariat. The IECC also created an investigation committee to investigate allegations of electoral fraud and violations during the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections.

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

ELECT II provided the IEC with all the necessary support to enable the Media Commission to be fully operational well ahead of the start of the campaign period. ELECT II liaised with the IEC to expedite the recruitment of qualified support staff and to encourage the selection of female candidates. ELECT II supported the IEC with the development of a comprehensive regulatory framework for media activities during the electoral campaign period. The project also supported the Media Commission with respect to internal procedures, including procedures for adjudication of electoral media violations. The Media Commission's mandate was terminated on 12 December 2014, as required by the Electoral Law.

Chronology of 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections

- 2 February:** Commencement of the campaign period for the 2014 Presidential Election.
- 18 February:** 102 IECC Provincial Commissioners take oath before six-month service.
- 4 March:** Commencement of the campaign period for the Provincial Council Elections.
- 2 April:** End of the voter registration top-up period, which ran from 26 May 2013 until 1 April 2014.
- 5 April: Election Day.** First round of the Presidential Election in parallel with the Provincial Council Elections.
- 26 April:** The IEC announced the full preliminary results of the Presidential Elections, indicating Dr. Abdullah Abdullah's had secured 44.94% of the votes.
- 31 April:** The IECC held its first of five open complaints adjudication sessions.
- 13 May:** The IECC announced its final complaints adjudication decisions.
- 15 May:** The IEC announced the final results of the 5 April 2014 Presidential Election; stating that no candidate obtained the required minimum number of votes required for election (50%+1 vote) and that a run-off election between the two leading candidates, Abdullah Abdullah (45%) and Ashraf Ghani (31.56%) had been scheduled for 14 June 2014.
- 20 May:** The IEC announced the preliminary results of the Provincial Council Elections.
- 22 May:** The campaign period for the run-off round of the Presidential Election commenced.
- 31 May-5 June:** The IECC held 6 days of open sessions on complaints related to the Provincial Councils elections
- 14 June: Election Day.** Run-off round of the Presidential Election.
- 18 June:** Abdullah Abdullah withdrew from the electoral process, demanding the resignation of the IEC Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), as well as the application of a number of wide-ranging audit measures and invalidation criteria to the tallied results.
- 23 June:** IEC CEO and Head of the Secretariat Ziaulhaq Amarkhil announced his resignation at an IEC press conference after accusations of fraud.
- 2 July:** On top of the regular audit criteria, the IEC conducted an audit exercise of 1,930 polling stations with 599 or 600 votes cast per polling station.
- 7 July:** The IEC announced the preliminary results. Out of (preliminary) voter turnout of 7,947,527 votes (38 % female), Ashraf Ghani was placed in the lead with 56.44% of the votes, ahead of Abdullah Abdullah with 43.56%.
- 12 July:** Through direct mediation efforts by US Secretary of State John Kerry, both candidates agreed to a 100% audit of all ballots to take in the presence of international observers and supervised by the UN.
- 17 July:** The IEC commenced with the audit of the first boxes from Kabul.
- 30 July:** The IEC formally adopted the procedures for 'Audit and Recount of the 2014 presidential run-off elections' as well as the regulatory decision of 'recount and invalidation criteria for the audit of all polling station'; based on a proposal of the UN and finalized after extensive consultations with the campaign teams of both presidential candidates.
- 1 August:** The UN initiated the deployment of 128 extra electoral experts to supervise the audit. In addition, the IEC accredited some 2,239 observers, including 1,165 candidate agents, 338 domestic observers, and 736 international observers – notably from the European Union and its Election Assessment Team (EAT), National Democratic Institute (NDI), Democracy International

(DI) and Creative Associates as well as Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL). Also, the IECC sent personnel from HQ and Provincial Offices to observe the audit, and this personnel remained present until the end of the process.

5 August: The retrieval of all 22,828 ballot boxes from the provinces to the IEC HQ was completed with the arrival of the last remaining ballot boxes from Badakhshan.

7 August: At a follow-up visit, US Secretary of State John Kerry met both presidential candidates, as well as President Hamid Karzai. He encouraged both candidates to help accelerate the audit process, and to make progress on the details of the political framework that they agreed to during the Secretary's previous visit.

13 August: The Abdullah and Ghani campaign teams agreed with a proposal to pay 'special scrutiny' to 6,000 ballot boxes.

14 August: Data entry of audit checklists and new results forms from recounted ballot boxes began at the National Tally Centre.

19 August: Rising tensions at the audit erupted into a brawl that was condemned by the UN.

25 August: The IEC made in an open session its first decisions on the audited ballot boxes in an open session. The publication of decisions by the IEC triggered a 24 hour complaints filing period at the IECC, and started the adjudication period for complaints related to the audit process.

26 August: Abdullah Abdullah announced the withdrawal of his campaign team from the electoral process. The UN requested the team of Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai to also review its participation in the interest of protecting the integrity. The IECC registered the first complaints against IEC decisions on the audit.

31 August: the IECC started its open sessions to adjudicate the complaints related to audit. These open session continued until 16 September.

4 September: The IEC completed the regular audit process, while it agreed to initiate a mechanism to review the claims of suspicious similarly signed results forms, submitted by both candidate teams.

8 September: Abdullah Abdullah reconfirmed his dissatisfaction with the audit process and his withdrawal from it. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai expressed his wish to see a swift conclusion of the electoral process and a release of the final results by the IEC.

14 September: The IEC held its ninth and final audit decision-making session, formally concluding the audit.

18 September: The IECC held a press conference to announce its final decisions.

19 September: The IEC formally filed an objection against IECC decisions invalidating 118 polling stations from Election Day complaints. On the same day, the IECC rejected this objection.

21 September: Both candidates signed a power-sharing agreement to create a National Unity Government. The IEC declared Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai as the elected President.

29 September: Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and Abdullah Abdullah were respectively sworn in as Afghanistan's new President and the country's Chief Executive Officer.

9 October: The IECC publicly announced its final decisions on Provincial Council Elections complaints.

25 October: The IEC announced the final results of the Provincial Council Elections.

II. RESULTS

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

A major objective of ELECT II is to enhance the technical sustainability of the IEC to conduct elections by improving the electoral body's institutional and staff capacity. The aim is that the IEC will be able to execute credible elections with ever-decreasing and ultimately no technical support from ELECT II or other external sources. Institutional capacity refers to the capacity of the IEC as an *organization* whilst staff capacity refers to the capability and technical skills of *individual* staff members to fulfill their responsibilities and tasks. The concept of sustainable institutional capacity relates to the capacity of the IEC to develop and retain its ability to successfully conduct elections *independently* of internal staff turnover and external support. In turn, the degree of institutional capacity depends on the sum of the capacity of its staff. The 2014 elections were a critical test and an opportunity to demonstrate improvements made since previous elections.

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: Perception of IEC staff towards working in the IEC

ELECT II assisted the IEC in January 2014 with drafting a survey to measure IEC staff members' evaluation of personal capacity development. The IEC started to survey its staff in February but soon after suspended the survey indefinitely due to a lack of responses and a shifting focus to electoral operations. No results could be extracted.

Indicator 1.1.b: The extent to which the IEC uses data management systems and trend analysis to inform its planning and communication

ELECT II assisted with the establishment of data management tools, including: 1.) An Election Day reporting system. 2.) A data processing system at the National Tally Centre (NTC). 3.) An electoral material tracking system to organise and monitor the retrieval of all 22,828 ballot boxes from the IEC provincial offices to its headquarters in Kabul.

Indicator 1.1.c: The extent to which institutional plans are developed and implemented

ELECT II assisted the IEC with drafting its 2014 Annual Work Plan, Electoral Operations Plan, Audit Operational Plan, Public Outreach Plan, Media Commission Operational Plan, Security Plan, and Fraud Mitigation Plan.

Indicator 1.1.d: Percentage of trained IEC staff who feel they are more effective in their jobs because of training and capacity development opportunities

See response to Indicator 1.1.a.

Capacity building

ELECT II helped to build the IEC's sustainability and the development of its institutional and staff capacity through a number of means. ELECT II advisors provided personalized and direct capacity building. ELECT II 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 ELECT II. The project also supported senior IEC staff and Commissioners to participate in relevant foreign visits.

ELECT II supported the IEC to develop and hold a number of workshops during 2014. These included a two-day logistics workshop attended by 50 staff, a three-day lessons learnt workshop attended by 120 staff, a two-day security workshop attended by 60 staff, and a five-day planning workshop attended by 35 staff.

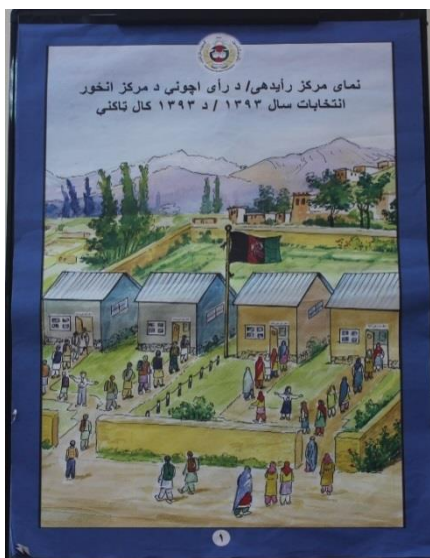
A key challenge for the project is to ensure long-term institutional sustainability by capturing knowledge management practices beyond the individual level. Before the start of the elections, ELECT II recruited a Knowledge Management and Archiving Specialist to review the IEC's knowledge management systems. In December, 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.

2014 was an exceptional year marked by three elections and an unprecedented audit of all votes cast in the Presidential run-off round. ELECT II was focused on assisting the IEC to execute these objectives, which were resource-intensive as well as technically and logistically demanding. In the third quarter, the ELECT II Training and Capacity Development Advisor assisted the IEC with the development of the audit criteria, audit training manuals, procedures, and guidelines for the identification of similarly marked ballots. ELECT II advisors also assisted the IEC with training staff to identify similarly signed results forms. The project acknowledges, however, that the pressures of the audit, combined with assisting the IEC to execute three elections, took precedence over capacity building during parts of 2014.

In an effort to improve the balance between event-driven operational assistance and institutional development of the IEC, in 2015 ELECT II will create a new senior position – a Capacity Development Advisor – who will be responsible for strategic and integrated capacity building of the IEC.

Training of electoral operational staff

ELECT II assisted the IEC with training polling staff for the 2014 elections. The training of tens of thousands of polling staff was achieved through a cascade training model in which training is provided to individuals who in turn provide the same training to others. In this case, 12 master trainers trained 188 provincial IEC trainers. The provincial trainers then trained some 3,200 District Field Co-ordinators (DFCs). The DFCs then trained 7,000 polling centre managers and other key polling staff, as well as approximately 91,500 other polling station staff, including ballot paper issuing officers, ballot box and queue controllers. Training courses for the master trainers and provincial trainers were designed to last for six days while the course for DFCs, plus key polling staff, was designed to last for four days. Training for junior polling station staff lasted one day. The training courses started in mid-February and were completed by the beginning of April.



Election training poster

ELECT II assisted the IEC with the overall design and implementation of the cascade training programme, the recruitment of the master trainers, the development of the course content, plus the design and specification of course materials.

ELECT II assisted the IEC with a programme of two-day refresher training courses in May for some 100,000 operational polling staff. This refresher training captured lessons learnt from the 5 April Election Day. The refresher courses were held in each provincial capital. ELECT II also assisted the IEC with a two-day refresher training course in May for all 34 Provincial Electoral Officers (PEOs).

In addition to the training programmes, ELECT II assisted the IEC to train 260 IEC operators and other staff at the National Tally Centre. A total of 115 IEC staff attended English language classes (65 male and 50 women) and 94 completed computer courses. ELECT II paid for educational grants for IEC staff who qualified to attend relevant courses at university. The applications were approved by the head of the IEC's Training and Capacity Development Department. ELECT II paid the money direct to the IEC. In 2014, a total of 35 IEC employees attended courses. Of these, five were women. The length of the courses ranged from one to four years. Courses included business administration, business management, law, economics, and political science. Senior IEC officials and staff attended several foreign fact-finding and capacity building trips, including South Korea, Australia, Nepal, Armenia, Bosnia, India, and Sri Lanka.

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

A robust legal electoral framework, covering the structure, authority, and duties of the electoral bodies, was in place for the elections in 2014. ELECT II further assisted the IEC with refining its electoral regulations and procedures in line with the Laws. (In 2013, the President and Parliament approved a revised Electoral Law as well as a new Structures Law of the IEC/IECC). The IEC made 57 Decisions (official approvals) in 2014. Of these, 18 related to electoral regulations and seven related to codes of conducts.

The majority of electoral regulations were developed or revised in the first quarter. In the third quarter, the focus was on the audit; all regulatory decisions and procedures were approved in line with the Election Law for that purpose. During the fourth quarter, the IEC approved regulatory decisions and procedures to elect representatives from the Provincial Councils to the *Meshrano Jirga* (Upper House of Parliament). Overall, in 2014 the ELECT II Legal Advisor made inputs to all of the IEC's 57 Decisions (which included 18 electoral regulations, seven Codes of Conduct, plus several procedures and memorandums of understanding).

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

In 2014, 18 electoral regulations were developed or revised in line with the electoral legal framework. The ELECT II Legal Advisor provided inputs into all of them.

Electoral Regulations:

- Recruitment
- Issuance of accreditation
- Special guests
- Voter registration
- Candidate nomination
- Introduction of Vice President of Commission
- Political campaign
- Political campaign finance
- Establishment of Media Commission
- Media activities
- IEC terms of reference
- Polling
- Counting
- Archiving and destruction of sensitive materials
- Invalidation of votes as a result of the audit and investigation

- Introducing new Vice Presidential Candidates in case of his/her death, resignation or refractory disease
- Participation of agents and observers of national and international organizations in open meetings of the IEC
- Regulation on tallying, certification, and announcement of results

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

In 2014, seven Codes of Conduct were developed or revised by the IEC. The ELECT II Legal Advisor assisted the IEC with developing each of them.

Codes of Conduct:

- Candidates
- Electoral Staff
- Government officials
- Observers
- Political Parties
- Security forces
- Candidates' agents in the audit process of run-off election ballot boxes

Based on these Codes of Conduct, the President endorsed four decrees:

Presidential Decrees:

- GIRoA on Code of Conduct of Security Forces in Election Process
- Code of Conduct for the government officials and staff in 2014 elections
- Presidential decree on non-interference of government officials in 2014 run-off Presidential Election process
- Presidential Decree on Code of Conduct for Security Forces in 2014 run-off

Audit – regulatory decisions:

The audit was an exceptional event for which there were 19 IEC Decisions. The audit was conducted pursuant to articles contained in Afghanistan’s 2013 Electoral Law and the 2013 Law on ‘Structure, Duties and Authorities of the IEC and IECC.’ Whilst audits are not specifically regulated in the 2013 Electoral Law, provisions exist that address the quarantining of ballot boxes in response to either a complaint or presence of visible fraud¹. The law on the IEC and IECC, however, gives the IEC responsibility for

¹Article 58: “(1) The Commission is obliged to quarantine the relevant ballot boxes containing ballot papers in case of justifiable complaints or presence of visible signs of fraud on the ballot boxes. (2) The Commission is obliged to investigate the quarantined boxes in the presence of agents, observers, media and representatives of candidates. Following the completion of the investigations, the quarantined boxes shall be included into the vote count process or shall be excluded from the counting process based on the justifiable reasons. (3) An agent and candidate may file his/her complaint within 24 hours following the communication of the Commission’s decision on the box quarantined. The Complaint Commission is obliged to address the complaint within 48 hours and shall make a final decision based on justifiable reasons. (4) The Commission is obliged to explain in a procedure, the manner of investigation of the quarantined box, counting and or not counting votes and other affairs related to the quarantine.”

approving executive regulations required to implement elections, and tasks both bodies with addressing complaints arising from the electoral violations and fraud (Art.2). Accordingly, the IEC issued Decision No. 33 on 31 July outlining criteria for excluding ballot boxes, recounting ballot boxes, and excluding votes. ELECT II assisted the IEC with the development of audit criteria, procedures, regulatory decisions, and clarification notes to enhance the legal framework of the audit

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 will help secure the body's financial sustainability. The buildings are designed to last many years and to keep maintenance costs to a minimum. They provide a spacious, clean, functional, and secure workspace. Permanent IEC offices help the IEC better control the election process and its assets. Establishing recognizable governmental buildings for electoral operations also increases transparency and deepens the integration of the IEC within the community.

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

Upon completion of security infrastructure, ELECT II designs and directly constructs offices and warehouses for the IEC provincial compounds (construction also includes a generator house, elevated water tank, and full site utilities.) 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.

In 2014, ELECT II completed six new IEC compounds: Bamyan, Herat, Jowzjan, Laghman, Nangarhar, and Wardak. By the end of 2014, construction of an office and warehouse in Balkh was 50% complete. In 2015, ELECT II plans to start the construction of offices and warehouses at four IEC provincial compounds (Badakhshan, Ghor, Khost, and Saripul). ELECT II completed the construction of security infrastructure at these sites in 2014.

Indicator 1.3.b: Number of additional permanent infrastructure construction works at HQ level

26

ELECT II assisted the IEC with a number of non-security and security upgrades at the IEC headquarters, including providing joint quality control with the IEC: e.g. renovation of Warehouse Three; construction of the Training Centre; construction of T-walls (60 meters) at the north side of the IEC; construction of an internal security guard room; construction of a kindergarten; construction of a cafeteria; installation of a fuel tank; construction of internal and external IEC car parks, etc. ELECT II also prepared the designs, specifications, and bill of quantities, as well as joint quality control with the IEC for the installation of 98 solar-powered street lights; the installation of two water tanks (6,000 liter and 10,000 liter); construction of seven guard towers; the construction of computer server room; and the construction of around 850 meters of ditches.

Indicator 1.3.c: The extent to which security at IEC premises (HQ/provinces) is established

Security infrastructure includes the construction of a boundary wall, reception building, vehicle search area, and Afghan National Police (ANP) area. Security infrastructure is the first phase of construction and is completed before the offices or warehouses are constructed (the second phase). ELECT II is responsible for design, specifications, bill of quantities (amounts of construction materials required), plus joint quality control with the IEC. The IEC is responsible for bid evaluation and selection of contractor(s), procurement, and project management.

In 2014, security construction was completed for 13 IEC provincial offices: Bamyan, Daikundi, Farah, Ghor, Jowzjan, Khost, Nangarhar, Laghman, Samangan, Saripul, Uruzgan, Wardak, and Zabul. Final inspection quality control reports were completed for 12 of the construction sites (the report for Khost had yet to be completed by the end of 2014). None of the inspections revealed any major construction defects. They all reported that the construction met agreed building specifications.



IEC provincial office in Herat. Photo: IEC



IEC warehouse in Herat. Photo: ELECT II.

By the end of 2014, security construction for a further two IEC provincial compounds were at least 90% complete: Badakhshan and Baghlan. 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 2014, with the construction work 30% complete.) In 2015, ELECT II plans to start and complete a security construction for the IEC's compound in Balkh.

In 2014, ELECT II completed a number of security upgrades to the IEC headquarters in Kabul, which included south gate upgrades, north and east wall reinforcements, and bunkers.

Expenses for the year

Expenditure for Output 1 in 2014 was \$ 6,756,431

In addition, 3,642,962 from Japanese funding (separate budget line 7) contributed to Output 1 achievements. For more details, please see Annex 2.

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

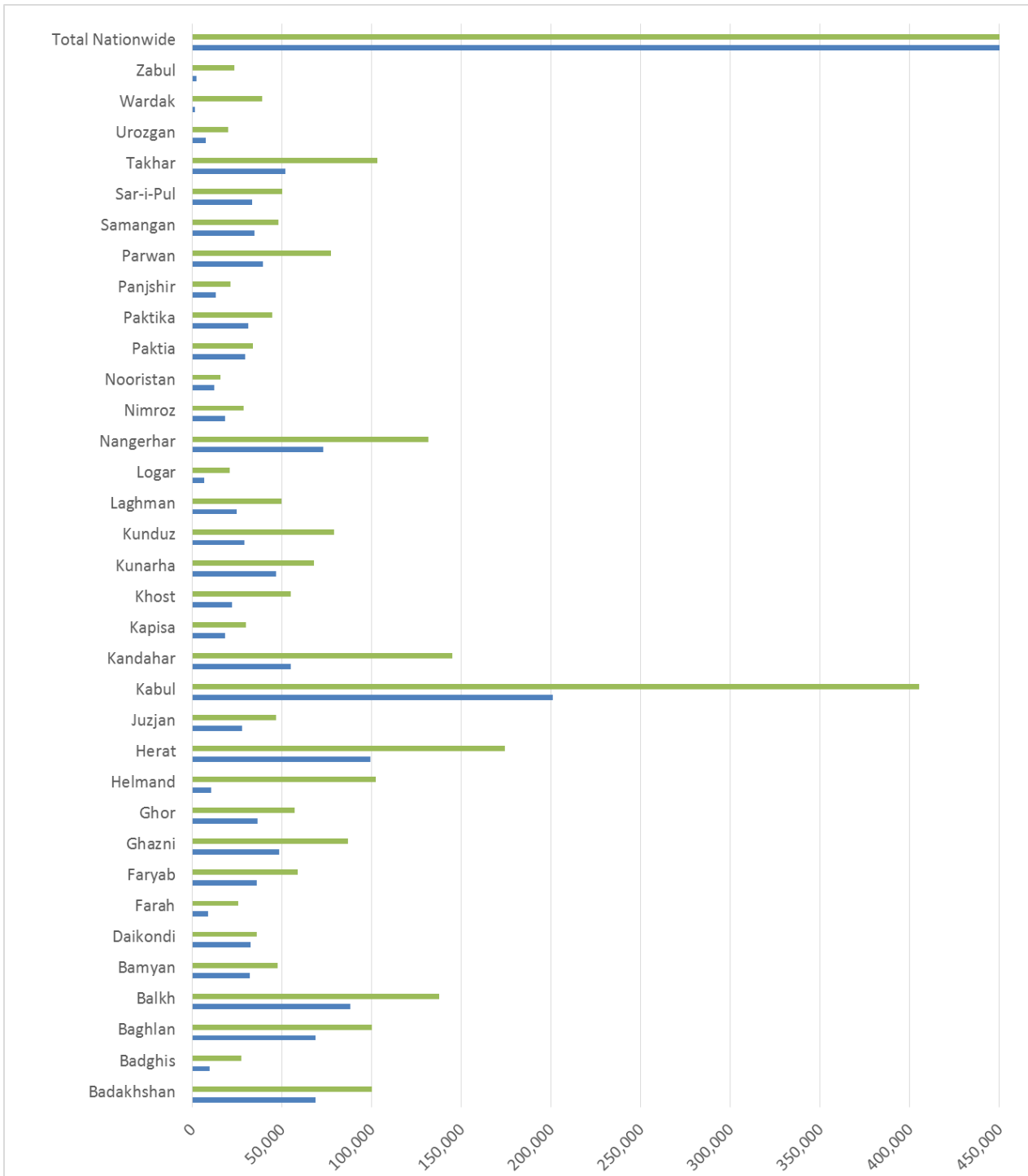
Table 1: Progress Update, Output 1, 2014

	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	2014 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 1.1.a: No baseline</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.b. no structural database system established in the past to institutionalize a systematic way electoral data</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.c: lack of SOPs</p> <p>Baseline 1.1.d: 2012 post-training survey</p>	<p>1.1.a: (2014) Conduct of staff survey to gauge perception towards the IEC on the specified dimensions increased on business process efficiency and staff engagement</p> <p>1.1.b: (2014) An Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) database system and a Knowledge and Archiving System are developed and in place.</p> <p>1.1.c: (2014) implementation and review of all SOPs</p> <p>1.1.d.: (2014): 70 % of the staff trained in 2013 feel that that they are more effective in their job because of the offered training and capacity building opportunities</p>	<p>1.1.a. IEC staff perception survey developed but not conducted due to continuous electoral operations.</p> <p>1.1.b. ELECT II assisted the IEC with the establishment of data management tools, including: 1.) An Election Day reporting system. 2.) A data processing system at the National Tally Centre. 3.) An electoral material tracking system</p> <p>1.1.c. Institutional Plan (AWP) developed and SOPs reviewed. Electoral operational plans developed</p> <p>1.1.d. IEC staff perception survey developed but not conducted</p>	<p>The project's capacity development efforts to the IEC are on target, however, the IEC staff perception survey could not be conducted due to priority on electoral operations</p>
<p>Baseline 1.2.a: all existing electoral regulations are applicable for revision in case of a new electoral legal framework</p> <p>Baseline 1.2.b: All relevant codes of</p>	<p>1.2.a: (2014): the extent to which review electoral regulations and procedures for the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections are effectively implemented and review has taken place to identify lessons learned for the 2015 elections. With regard to the voter registration process, candidate nomination, campaign and campaign finance,</p>	<p>1.2.a) 18 electoral regulations developed and implemented</p> <p>1.2.a.) 7 Codes of Conduct were developed / revised</p>	<p>On target</p>

<p>conduct, regulations and procedures need revision. "</p>	<p>polling counting, results tabulation.</p> <p>1.2.b: (2014): the extent to which codes of conduct for ethical/electoral Codes of Conduct (CoC) for Electoral Officers, Observers, Media, Political Parties, Security Forces, and Government Officials have been successfully implemented during the 2014 elections and are reviewed for the 2015 elections</p>		
<p>Baseline 1.3.a: The IEC owns 5 provincial offices and warehouses in the provinces Indicator 1.3.b: at HQ, existing space for training and data centre is not useable anymore 1.3.c Physical security IEC premises is weak."</p>	<p>1.3.a: (2014): Construction of IEC offices and warehouses completed in 7 provinces</p> <p>1.3.b: (2014) 100% Finalization construction works IEC HQ regarding: North Wall, East Wall, West Wall, South Gate, watch towers, K span warehouse refurbishment, security offices and facilities.</p> <p>1.3.c. Internal IEC guard force (unarmed) fully trained and operational – enhanced outer security by Mol.</p>	<p>a. IEC provincial compounds completed: Bamyan, Herat, Jowzjan, Laghman, Nangarhar, and Wardak. + Balkh 50% complete.</p> <p>b. IEC HQ walls strengthened, South Gate reinforced. 26 Infrastructure works at IEC HQ completed</p> <p>c. IEC HQ unarmed guards, Tight security in place during audit, including police and ISAF 24/7. In Provincial security construction was completed for 13 IEC provincial offices</p>	<p>On target</p>

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



IEC 2013-2014 Voter Registration figures by province (male/female)

For the 2014 Presidential Election and Provincial Council Elections, the IEC was requested to conduct a voter registration ‘top-up’. The top-up operation ran for one year, from 26 May 2013 to 1 April 2014. The aim of the top-up was 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 time. A total of 3,842,504 eligible voters received new/replacement voter registration cards, of whom 1,334,847 were female (34.74%).

ELECT II provided substantial technical support, enabling the IEC to successfully accomplish voter registration (the last voter registration exercise took place in 2010). ELECT II assisted the IEC with conceptual and technical planning, procurement, packing of electoral materials, and logistics. The project also assisted the IEC to ensure that gender-orientated measures were incorporated (for example, that there were separate registration centres for women.) ELECT II advisors further supported the IEC by the way of public outreach initiatives that informed voters about their rights and which encouraged them to register to vote. The focus was on women and youth.

For the forthcoming Parliamentary and District Council Elections, ELECT II worked with the IEC to discuss different options.

Indicator 2.1.a: Number of new eligible voters enfranchised with voter ID cards
3,842,504

Indicator 2.1.b: Percentage of women registered as new voters
34.74%

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

During 2014, ELECT II was largely engaged with electoral operational support. Starting in 2015, more co-ordination will begin in the area.

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 VR database.

Part of the scope of ELECT II is to find synergies between the establishment of a sound voter registry and the future establishment of a civil registry. In this respect, in May 2014 the National Assembly sanctioned the ‘Law on Registration of Population Records’, which indicates a first step towards the establishment of a civil registry through the distribution of electronic national ID cards (*e-tazkira*). The Law on the Registration of Population Records – the legal framework for the *e-tazkira* – was ratified by the President in late 2014. In preparation for its implementation, ELECT II and the IEC continued to liaise with the Ministry of Interior (Mol). The IEC confirmed

that it will co-operate to ensure that proper voter registration could be derived from the civil register in the future.

Following the completion of the Presidential Election and Provincial Council Elections, ELECT II resumed discussions with the MoI, IOM, and IEC, to ensure that the pilot scheme incorporated processes in the registration system that will enable a polling centre-specific voter registry to be extracted from it. During the exercise it was agreed that the IEC will assign a staff member to each registration team.

Following the 2014 elections, ELECT II conducted two Technical Working Group meetings in which *e-tazkira* was discussed, plus several separate bilateral meetings with IOM. The Technical Working Group identified the following steps, items, and requirements for further discussion and action:

- Development of procedures/mechanisms for Afghans to (a) choose, and (b) change polling stations.
- Develop a Standard Operating Procedure or appropriate plan detailing how Afghans will be able to use their *e-tazkira* as a voter card.
- Data sharing mechanisms and procedures should be developed, documented, and implemented between the MoI and IEC.
- MoI and IEC to develop a Memorandum of Understanding.
- A geographical area for an *e-tazkira* pilot in the Parliamentary elections
- Need to identify who will be responsible for updating the system, cleaning, and sharing the common data (polling centres, registration lists, etc.).
- IEC staff should be trained on *e-tazkira* core processes and procedures, linkages to voter registration, and electoral functions. The option of placing/embedding two IEC staff in each registration centre should be considered.
- The following commitments were made to the group:
 - MoI will share their operational plan for the 90-day plan (starting with civilian enrolment and registration of all civil servants and their families).
 - MoI will share the draft of the Data Protection regulation.

Expenses for the year

Expenditure for Output 2 in 2014 was \$ 1,195,216. For more details, please see Annex 2.

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

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 2, 2014

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	2014 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 2.1.a: 500,000 new voter ID cards were issued during the 2009/10 top-up exercise; only conducted at provincial capital level and following a wide-scale registration campaign in 2008 that issued 4.5 million VR cards.</p> <p>Baseline 2.1.b: previous voter registration campaigns appeared to have unreliable percentages of women</p>	<p>2.1.a: (2014) all 3 million+ voter cards distributed in 2013-2014 'top-up' prior to the Presidential and Provincial Council Elections are properly verified and registered in the IEC database</p> <p>2.1.b. : 30 % of the newly registered voters are women</p>	<p>3,842,504 voter ID cards distributed in 2013-2014</p> <p>2.1.b. 34.74% women</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Baseline 2.2: to be defined once the <i>e-tazkira</i> project is established and implemented</p>	<p>2.2: (2014) MoU between IEC and MoI/MoCIT in place and implementation started once <i>e-tazkira</i> legal framework approved."</p>	<p>ELECT II resumed discussions with the MoI, IOM, and IEC to prepare <i>e-tazkira</i> implementation and incorporating voter data in civic register</p>	<p>Delayed – the legal framework enabling the <i>e-tazkira</i> process is not operational yet.</p>

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

ELECT II assisted the IEC to develop an integrated public outreach campaign designed to inform the electorate about their rights and responsibilities as voters. Voter information and civic education are necessary to ensure voters are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities. Outreach initiatives can also ensure that voters have at least a basic understanding of the overall political process.

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

Indicator 3.1.a: Means of different public outreach methods developed and implemented by the IEC

The IEC public outreach campaign, supported by ELECT II, employed a variety of different communication methods, including indirect communication (television and radio public service announcements (PSAs), public information materials,) as well as direct communication (call centre, civic and voter educators (CVEs), provincial stakeholder meetings, and mobile theatre groups). ELECT II contracted a third-party organisation to monitor the placement of PSAs on radio and television. A separate third-party organisation monitored activities of CVEs.

Radio PSAs: With input from and procured by ELECT II, 47 radio PSAs were broadcast in 2014 (23 in Dari and 24 in Pashto). Two PSAs were produced specifically for the run-off round and one was produced specifically for Kuchis (nomads). Whilst all PSAs considered women voters, ELECT II assisted the IEC to produce four radio PSAs specifically aimed at promoting female participation in the elections. A total of 50 radio stations (three national and 47 regional/local) were contracted to air the PSAs. Total PSA airtime on all radio stations was 3,119 hours. These 50 radio stations reached an estimated 10 million listeners².

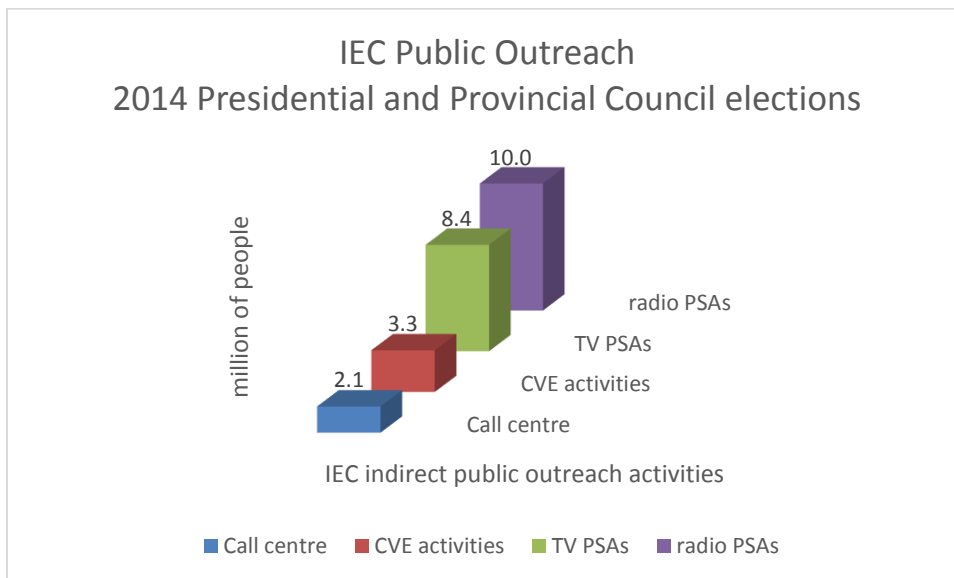
Television PSAs: With input from and procured by ELECT II, 59 television PSAs were broadcast in 2014 (29 Dari and 30 in Pashto). Two PSAs were produced specifically for the run-off round and two were developed specifically for the audit. One PSA was developed specifically to target Kuchis. Whilst all PSAs considered women voters, ELECT II assisted the IEC to produce four PSAs aimed specifically at promoting female participation in the elections. A total of 30 television stations (23 national and seven regional/local) were contracted to air the PSAs. Total PSA airtime was 220 hours. The PSAs reached an estimated 8.4 million viewers³, with a peak of audience of 400,000 viewers in the days leading up the run-off round. The IEC uploaded the PSAs to YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ElectionAfghanistan>

² Estimated audience figure based on standard international measurement of Gross Rating Points.

³ Estimated audience figure based on standard international measurement of Gross Rating Points.

Call Centre: During its operation from August 2013 until the end of December 2014, the IEC call centre received 2,070,049 calls, of which 1,406,917 were received in 2014. Of the calls in 2014, 11.9% came from women. The IEC employed 90 operators who responded to election-related queries seven days a week, including national holidays, from 7.00am until 8.00 pm. Besides operational support, ELECT II assisted the IEC with developing guidelines, instructions, and fact sheets.



Civic and voter educators (CVEs)⁴: Between January and March, the IEC recruited and trained 1,450 CVEs, of whom 33% were women. They were deployed to some 400 districts. The CVEs raised awareness through face-to-face meetings, mobile loudspeaker broadcasts, and distribution of leaflets and other printed materials. In the run-up to Election Day in April, the CVEs reached a total of 2,092,991 voters of whom 878,383 (approximately 42%) were women. They conducted 80,460 face-to-face sessions nationwide. Between the Election Day in April and the run-off round of the Presidential Election in June, the CVEs reached a total of 1,254,206 voters of whom 527,896 (approximately 42%) were women. They conducted 55,444 face-to-face sessions nationwide.

Provincial stakeholder meetings: From January to March, the IEC organised stakeholder meetings with religious and community leaders, government officials, civil society, and women networks, in all provincial capitals. The meetings were about the importance of public participation in the elections and aimed to encourage voter turnout. The average attendance per stakeholder meeting varied between 150 and 300 participants. There were two meetings in each province. In addition, the IEC, with ELECT II assistance, organised eight regional seminars (approximately 500 attendees at each) plus a national conference in Kabul.

⁴ All figures relating to CVEs based on IEC data.

Mobile theatre groups: Between February and March, a total of 68 shows with electoral messages were performed across Afghanistan (two per provincial capital). Half of these were specifically for women. Each show attracted an average of 600 spectators. ELECT II facilitated the procurement of the performance company and provided input to develop the script, which included a gender focus. The shows proved to be a success. ELECT II recommends that for future elections they are also performed at venues in other cities and towns.



Provincial mobile theatre groups and voter education workshops targeting illiterate groups with electoral information. Photo: ELECT II.

Public outreach materials: ELECT II provided input and design for the development of a wide range of public outreach materials. ELECT II facilitated most of the international and domestic procurement for the following materials needed for the first round of the Presidential Election and the Provincial Council Elections: 400,000 stickers; 406,000 mock ballots; 1.3m sample ballots; 851 billboards; 10,000 poll signs; 1.6m brochures (800,000 for the IEC and 800,000 for civil society organisations - CSOs); 600,00 posters; 4.8m leaflets (2.4m for the IEC and 2.4m for CSOs); 2m fact sheets (1m for the IEC and 1m for CSOs); and 200,000 pocket calendars.

For the run-off round of the Presidential Election, ELECT II provided design, development, and procurement assistance for the following materials: 400,000 brochures; 402,000 posters; 1,050,000 leaflets; and 600,000 fact sheets.

Indicator 3.1.b: Number of public outreach activities that specifically target women

Six. These were: television PSAs, radio PSAs, polling centre materials, CVEs, provincial stakeholder meetings, mobile theatre.

Indicator 3.1.c: Number of participants reached through direct public outreach activities

Call centre: 1.4m

Civic and voter educators: 3.3m (approximate).

Provincial stakeholder meetings: 16,700 (approximate).

Mobile theatre groups: 40,800 (approximate).

Indicator 3.1.d: Number of participants reached through indirect public outreach activities

Television PSAs: 8.4 million (estimated)

Radio PSAs: 10 million (estimated).

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

Indicator 3.2.a: Number of consultative dialogues, including and across the country, which take place with all key stakeholders on relevant electoral issues and plans

ELECT II held 25 stakeholder meetings with civil society organisations, candidate agents, and observers.

Indicator 3.2.b: Number of consultative dialogues that include a gender element
All consultative dialogues incorporated gender elements.

Indicator 3.2.c: Number of consultative dialogues with women groups on a wide range of electoral issues and processes

ELECT II held more than 100 consultative dialogues with women's groups at the national and international level (including eight gender co-ordination meetings at the IEC headquarters, 68 provincial meetings with female students, as well as 68 local gender co-ordination meetings).

Strategic communication

To ensure consistent and effective delivery of information, ELECT II assisted the IEC to devise a set of strategic messages, to be used by IEC Commissioners and the IEC spokesperson, as a basis for all public information and communication materials. These messages were preceded by a background document and presented to Commissioners to ensure their support and to secure their commitment to adhere to the same messages that would be used by all official IEC spokespersons and throughout all IEC advocacy and information materials. The ELECT II External Relations Advisor assisted the department to draft Frequently-Asked Questions (FAQs) sheets for sharing among IEC staff, posting on the IEC website, and distribution to media and stakeholders at news conferences and meetings. The FAQ sheets were shared with UNAMA to ensure that information and messages were consistent.

Stakeholder engagement

Direct stakeholder engagement commenced well in advance of elections. IEC Liaison Officers organised separate meetings for political parties, candidates, and their agents, national and international observers, and civil society organisations. Each of these stakeholder groups met bi-weekly. They were provided with the most recent

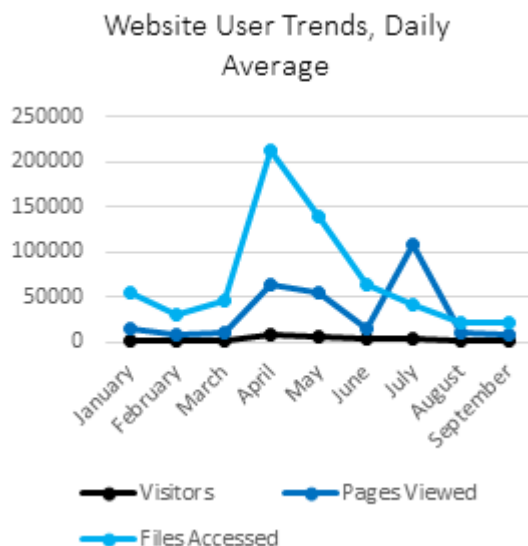
information related to their particular interests and concerns and were able to ask questions. Prior to the peak electoral period, relatively few observers were present in Kabul and meetings had been hosted, on a rotational basis, by Kabul-based organizations such as the Free and Fair Election Forum (FEFA), the Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA), and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

News conferences and briefings

Throughout peak election periods, news conferences were enhanced by daily mid-day briefings, conducted by the IEC spokesperson, who provided the latest information and election figures and addressed media enquiries. While there were initially some discrepancies between the figures issued by the External Relations Department and those stated by the spokesman, the ELECT II External Relations Advisor assisted the department to develop a plan for information-sharing to ensure that all official information sources would share the same set of figures. The updates were appreciated by the media during the audit. Regular updates for the number of audited ballot boxes reinforced the impression that the election process was moving towards a conclusion.

IEC website

Whilst internet use in Afghanistan is relatively low, the number of users continues to climb steadily, particularly in the main urban areas. The IEC website served as the primary source for sharing fact sheets, news releases, election-related national laws, official procedures, regulations, and IEC Decisions. In addition to national users, it was often the first point of exposure for international stakeholders.



The number of visitors to the IEC website was relatively consistent, with a slight increase in April when the Presidential and Provincial Council Elections were being held. In the same period, the number of files accessed soared dramatically.

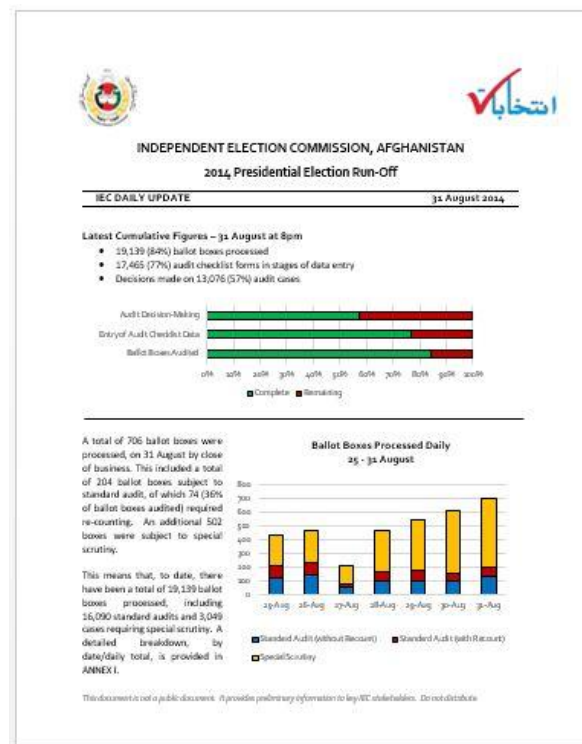
During the audit, the website served as a critical medium for communicating the results of Commission Decisions on audit results. Notice of Commission decision-making was published 24 hours in advance of every session held throughout the audit. Upon conclusion of each session, users were able to view the decisions made that day. This was particularly important to candidates, who retained the right to lodge official complaints to the IECC within 24 hours of the publication of decisions. The publication of audit decisions, as well as campaign finance reports, contributed to enhanced transparency.

From 1 July – 12 September, the IEC received an average of 37,342 hits from 1,765 visitors per day; and 27,894 files opened – an average of 21 hits and 16 files opened by every visitor to the site.

International observer and donor liaison

ELECT II assisted the IEC to co-ordinate Technical Working Group (donor) meetings. In 2014, these meetings were held less frequently than usual because of the two election rounds as well as the audit. Nonetheless, donor meetings were productive and generally well-received, providing transparency and reinforcing the working relationship between the IEC and its international supporters.

Throughout the first and second election rounds, international stakeholders (donors) received information updates from UNDP/ELECT II. During the first round of the Presidential Election, ELECT II produced daily updates for stakeholders. During the run-off round, however, the IEC adopted this responsibility, assisted by ELECT II (pictured above). The department sent the daily updates to candidates, national and international observers, and donors. They were also used by the IEC spokesman to provide a daily briefing to the media. In 2015, a key focus area is to establish monitoring and evaluation criteria and to engage all departmental staff in developing an information database, for improved reporting and institutional knowledge.



An IEC daily update produced during the Presidential run-off



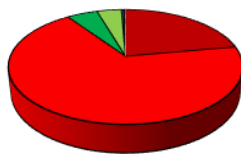
A blank accreditation card

Accreditation: Accreditation was carried out prior to the first round of elections. In total, almost 400,000 accreditation cards were issued. Less than one quarter were issued to women. For both electoral rounds, the IEC reported accreditation of 362,780 observers (22.53% female), including 1,256 international observers (15.84% female). For the audit process, the IEC accredited 2,239 observers, including 1,165 candidate agents, 736 international observers and 338 domestic observers. The vast majority of accreditation cards were issued to Provincial Council candidate agents (68%), among whom 22% were female agents; followed by presidential candidate agents (22%), among whom 24% were female agents; and political party agents (5%), among whom 18% were female agents.

Accreditation cards remained valid throughout the run-off as well as the eventual nationwide audit. However, in order to ensure adequate, consistent, and balanced representation at every stage of the audit, the IEC organised the accreditation of an additional 1,165 candidate agents (665 candidates of Abdullah Abdullah and 500 agents of Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai); 338 national observers; and 736 international observers. In addition, existing cards – although still valid – were replaced by new cards with a new design, with a view to improve security of the compound.

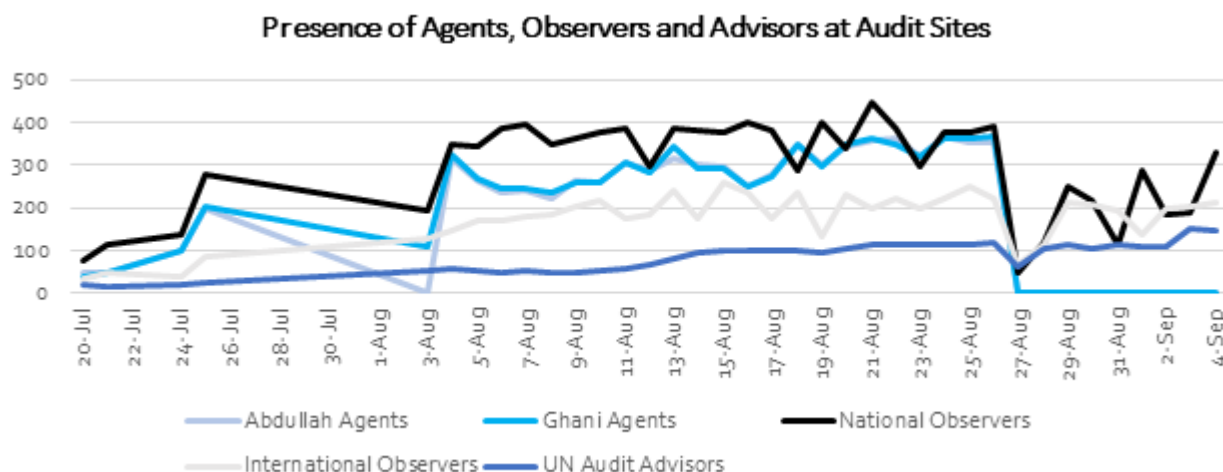
Accreditation figures, preceding first election round

Accreditation:
Prior to First Round of
Elections



- Presidential Candidates
- Provincial Council Candidates
- Political Parties
- National Observers
- International Observers
- National Media
- International Media

Multiple accreditation periods, the change in cards and inconsistent recording of entities (i.e. counting security personnel as observers, for example), and the sudden influx in international observers who expected to commence observation with immediate effect, led to errors in data entry. Thus, final accreditation figures do not accurately reflect the number of accredited persons engaging in election and observation activities. It has since been suggested that accreditation procedures be revised and that a computerized system be implemented. This would address discrepancies in both the issuance and recording of accreditation badges. In the meantime, a more meaningful indicator could be the presence of stakeholders in audit warehouses, recorded daily throughout the audit process. On average, presidential candidates were equally represented at audit sites; and observers consistently outnumbered agents of either candidate.



Type	Number of entities	Male	Female	Total
Presidential Candidates	7	61187	19458	80645
Provincial Council Candidates	2086	192725	54015	246740
Political Parties	30	15106	3224	18330
National Observers	67	9916	4669	14585
International Observers	17	1057	199	1256
National Media	71	610	87	697
International Media	45	403	91	494
Special Guests	2	22	11	33
Total	2325	281026	81754	362780

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

Candidate registration for the 2014 elections took place in 2013. There was no candidate registration in 2014. By the end of the year, the dates for the Parliamentary Election and District Council Elections were under discussion.

Indicator 3.3.a: Establishment of vetting mechanism and procedures in advance of the launch of the candidate nomination process

The candidate nomination process for the 2014 elections took place in 2013.

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

The candidate nomination process for the 2014 elections took place in 2013.

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

ELECT II engaged with the IEC to promote gender mainstreaming in all its activities. Gender achievements and challenges are detailed in Section IV: gender specific results.

Indicator 3.4.a: Ratio of female/male temporary and permanent IEC staff members for the following categories: a. permanent and long-term temporary staff, b. VR /elections trainers, c. civic educators, d. district field co-ordinators (DFC), e. voter registration centre staff, f. polling day staff

(a) Permanent and long-term temporary IEC staff

Female staff at IEC HQ			
Staff Category	Total	Female	%
Tashkeel	106	17	13.82%
NTA	307	31	9.17%
Grand Total	413	48	11.6%

Female staff at IEC Provincial Offices			
Staff Category	Total	Female	%
Tashkeel	129	4	3.1%
NTA	42	0	-
Grand Total	171	4	2.3%

(b) **Elections trainers:** Out of the 188 trainers recruited, approximately half were women.

(c) **Civic and voter educators (CVEs):** In the first round there were 1,428 CVEs, of whom 473 (33%) were women. For the run-off round, there were 1,453 CVEs, of whom 412 were women (28%).

(d) **District Field Co-ordinators (DFCs):** In the first round there were 3,196 DFCs, of whom 681 (21%) were women. For the run-off round, there were 2,691 DFCs, of whom 519 were women (19%).

(e) **Voter registration staff:** Out of the 369 provincial level voter registration staff, 164 were women (44%).

(f) **Polling staff:** Out of the approximately 100,000 temporary polling staff the IEC recruited to assist the voting process on E-Day, 23,813 (first round) and 21,804 (run-off round) were female.

In addition:

(g) **Female body searchers:** The Ministry of Interior hired approximately 13,000 female searchers for more than 8,000 female polling stations.

(h) **National Tally Centre staff:** Eleven out of 62 staff were women (18%).

(i) **Call centre operators:** Seventeen out of 90 operators were women (19%).

Indicator 3.4.b: The extent to which gender mainstreaming is implemented in line with the strategic plan and the gender strategy

Gender achievements are detailed in Section IV: gender specific results.

Indicator 3.4.c: The number of IEC thematic working groups that engage in a meaningful way gender issues and sensitivities

- 17 gender awareness consultations with mullahs in Kabul
- 8 gender co-ordination meetings at the IEC headquarters
- National Conference on Women and Elections
- 68 provincial meetings with youth separately for men and women
- 68 provincial gender co-ordination meetings (two in each province)
- 34 provincial lessons learnt meetings (one in each province)
- On the occasion of International Women's Day, the IEC organised a special event for stakeholders related to women's participation in elections.

Expenses for the year

Expenditure for Output 3 in 2014 was \$ 6,836,748.

In addition \$ 7,596,614 from USAID funding (separate budget line 9) contributed to output 3 achievements. For more details, please see Annex 2.

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

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 3, 2014

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	2014 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline 3.1.a-d: Survey and Stakeholder Assessment along with secondary data obtained from external stakeholder data (i.e., Asia Foundation Survey, Democracy International Survey, and Altai's Media Landscape Study); Previous POD mechanisms; and quality of targeted messages and materials</p>	<p>3.1.a: (2014) the following public outreach approaches developed and implemented by the IEC: A. indirect: radio/TV PSA messages, radio drama, SMS, billboards & polesigns; B. deployment civic/voter educators (documentary/printed materials); mobile theatres, provincial and districts consultations, Call Centre.</p> <p>3.1.b: (2014) at least 1 radio/TV PSA for women, at least 1 group of billboards/polesigns targeting women; at least 1 round of provincial consultations; mobile theatres include women participation component.</p> <p>3.1.c: (2014) Call Centre: 1 million calls (starting from 2013); Civic educators: approx. 2.3 million people; Provincial</p>	<p>3.1.a: The public outreach campaign employed a variety of different communication methods, including indirect communication (television and radio public service announcements (PSAs), public information materials), as well as direct communication (call centre, civic and voter educators (CVEs), provincial stakeholder meetings, and mobile theatre groups).</p> <p>3.1.b: Six. These were: television PSAs, radio PSAs, polling centre materials, CVEs, provincial stakeholder meetings, mobile theatre.</p> <p>3.1.c: Call centre: 1.4m Civic and voter educators: 3.3m (approximate). Provincial stakeholder meetings: 16,700 (approximate). Mobile theatre groups: 40,800 (approximate).</p>	<p>On target</p>

	<p>consultations: 10,000 people (2 per province, average of at least 300 per meeting);. Mobile theatres: 15,000 people.</p> <p>3.1.d. (2014) at least 2.5 million people reached out to by TV and 10 million by radio PSA.</p>	<p>3.1.d: Television PSAs: 8.4 million (estimated) Radio PSAs: 10 million (estimated).</p>	
<p>Baseline 3.2: zero – stakeholder interactions were in the past neither always systematically structured not consultative.</p>	<p>3.2.a: (2014) At least 10 consultative stakeholder meetings a year with all relevant partners, take place in Kabul and at all the regional centres (depending on the security).</p> <p>3.2.b. (2014) At least half of all the consultative stakeholder meetings include a gender component</p> <p>3.2.c. (2014) At least 4 stakeholder meetings on annual basis with women groups</p>	<p>3.2.a: The IEC External Relations Department held 25 stakeholder meetings with civil society organisations, candidate agents, and observers.</p> <p>3.2.b: All consultative dialogues incorporated gender elements.</p> <p>3.2.c: The IEC Gender Unit and the IEC Public Outreach Department held more than 100 consultative dialogues with women’s groups at the national and international level (including eight gender co-ordination meetings at the IEC headquarters, 68 provincial meetings with female students, as well as 68 local gender co-ordination meetings).</p>	<p>On target</p>
<p>Baseline 3.3.a: NA Baseline 3.3.b: NA</p>	<p>3.3.: (2014) All provincial IEC offices (100%) are ready to roll out the candidate nomination process according to the timeline for the 2015 elections</p>	<p>3.3 The candidate nomination process for the 2014 elections took place in 2013. The candidate nomination process for the Wolesi Jirga elections (and District Council elections) did not take place in 2014.</p>	<p>Delayed: Electoral timeline for the WJ elections is not yet defined</p>
<p>Baseline 3.4.a: April 2013: a. fixed term staff+ long-term temporary staff: a-b) 57 women over 423 men (11%);</p>	<p>3.4.a: No new significant openings fixed staff/long-term temporary staff -> Civil Service reform in 2015. - recruitment of all temporary elections staff:</p>	<p>3.4.a. ratio female staff a) IEC: 13%HQ-3%prov b) Female election trainers: 50% c) Female CVE: 33%1st round – 28% 2nd round</p>	<p>On target, m/f ratio improvements</p>

<p>2010 elections: c) no baseline data found; d) civic educators 31% women (besides 7% Kuchis); DFC 19% (besides 6% Kuchis); g, h, i) no baseline data found. Baseline 3.4.b.: no gender strategy in place Baseline 3.4.c:</p>	<p>at least 35% gender balance</p> <p>3.4.b - Implementation of Gender Strategy for 2014 elections; - comprehensive gender components in Training of Trainers for IEC elections staff ; - Develop and distribution VR gender leaflets</p> <p>3.4.c - establishment Gender Elections Co-ordination group that meets at least 10 times a year; - women elections engagement consultations (34) with community leaders, mullahs, women networks and other groups and individuals in all provinces, - VR + elections lessons learned seminars regarding gender issues during VR and elections (2*34 provinces + 1 national seminar in Kabul)</p>	<p>d) DFC: 21% 1st round – 19% 2nd round e) VR staff: 44% f) Polling staff: 24% 1st round - 22% 2nd round</p> <p>b. Gender achievements (see in detail in gender section)</p> <p>c. • 17 gender awareness consultations with Mullahs in Kabul • 8 gender co-ordination meetings at the IEC headquarters • National Conference on Women and Elections • 68 provincial meetings with youth separately for men and women • 68 provincial gender co-ordination meetings (two in each province) • 34 provincial lessons learnt meetings (one in each province) • On the occasion of International Women’s Day, the IEC organised a special event for stakeholders related to women’s participation in elections.</p>	<p>partially on target</p>
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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:

- Enhancing the operational capacity of the IEC 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

From the beginning of the year, 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. Before any new advance request is dispersed, 80% reconciliation is mandatory for the previous advances. Furthermore, audits are regularly conducted. The UNDP Country Office also carried out due diligence: all payments more than \$30,000 were reviewed and approved by the Country Office.

In 2014, ELECT II sharpened internal oversight mechanisms on operational-management issues, including enhanced supervision of funds handled by the IEC.

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

The annual NIM audit for 2013 was conducted from March to April 2014. The audit was *unqualified*.

- ELECT II started to release quarterly advances to the IEC in January 2014. The advances were sent to a separate bank account, approved by the Ministry of Finance, to exclusively manage UNDP funds.
- NTA implementation: In order to comply with GIRoA guidelines, IEC staff were converted onto the National Technical Assistance scales, effective 1 January 2014.
- ELECT II developed six standard operating procedures (SOPs), which were implemented by the IEC, in accordance with NIM guidelines. The SOPs

covered six areas: polling staff payments, DSA for polling staff, animal transportation payments, female searcher payments, workshops/trainings, and daily wage labourers.

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

Indicator 4.2.a: The extent to which the project itself is efficiently and effectively managed

- a.) ELECT II audit report: unqualified opinion. In August 2014, the annual DIM audit for 2013 was conducted. The auditors was *unqualified* regarding financial management.
- b.) Delivery rate 2014: final figures 23 Feb (\$150-152 million)
- c.) Percentage of project Outputs according to M&E work plan (delivery rates): 97% - the IEC staff survey did not take place due to extensive electoral priorities in 2014.
- d.) 50+ UNAMA-lead donor meetings during elections/audit. Seven Technical Working Group meetings (26 Feb; 23 April; 11 May; 21 May; 15 Oct; 18 Nov; 7 Dec). Two Project Board Meetings (24 March; 13 Dec).
- e.) Quality of payments to the IEC: 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 provided considerable field operations technical support to the IEC. This included support for the procurement of critical, sensitive, and non-sensitive electoral materials, asset management support during the election operations, general financial management provided by ELECT II for the elections operations and regular operations of the IEC headquarters and provincial offices.

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

- 1.) **Procurement:** ELECT II was directly involved in procurement of electoral commodities and other services for the IEC, out-of-country and domestic. For both electoral rounds, ELECT II procured out-of-country electoral commodities (ballots, screens, boxes, etc.) for \$23,828,758 (\$4,712,834 in 2014 in addition to \$19,115,925 procured by the end of 2013.) Domestic procurement in 2014 for both election rounds totaled \$18,953,350: predominantly transport services (\$14,915,083), and television and radio PSAs (\$4,038,267).
- 2.) **Air transportation:** ELECT II leased two UN helicopters in order to assist the IEC with the movement of electoral materials and personnel. In 2014, ELECT II helicopters completed 537 hours flying time. They carried 1,320 passengers and 37 tons of cargo. These figures include 83 flight sorties to assist the IEC with the audit (retrieving ballot boxes from the provincial offices to the IEC headquarters).

3.) **Translation and interpretation services:** ELECT II assisted the IEC with translation between English, Dari, and Pashto, for official documents, electoral plans, advisory notes, presentations, and fact sheets. The ELECT II translation unit translated more than 2,000 electoral documents. ELECT II also provided simultaneous interpretation services.

Expenses for the year

Expenditure for Output 4 in 2014 was \$ 10,404,964.

In addition, 103,345 from Japanese funding (separate budget line 7) and 9,841,400 from USAID funding (separate budget line 9) contributed to output 4 achievements. For more details, please see Annex 2.

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

Table 4: Progress Update, Output 4, 2014

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	2014Actual	Comments
Baseline 4.1: IEC Unqualified auditor report	4.1. The IEC has an unqualified audit report	4.1: Unqualified	On target
Baseline 4.2: a) qualified project audit report b) 2013: 90% budget execution c) 80% M&E compliance d) 1 PBM/quarter e) NA d)	4.2. a) unqualified project audit report rating; b) at least 80% project budget execution; c) full compliance with monitoring, evaluation and reporting plans; d) minimum of quarterly documented project board meetings (including virtual PBs); e) certification of payments to the IEC.	4.2 a.) ELECT II audit report: unqualified opinion. b.) Delivery rate 2014 c.) 97% d.) Two Project Board Meetings. Seven Technical Working Group meetings; 50+ UNAMA-lead donor meetings during elections/audit e.) Quality of payments to the IEC: All IEC payments certified by the ELECT II finance team according to UNDP regulations and in line with UNDP-IEC agreement.	On target
NA	4.3 support services for electoral activities (2014 elections; preparations 2015 elections) is provided in a timely and qualitative manner	4.3 ELECT II direct operations support 1.) Procurement: out-of-country electoral commodities: \$23,828,758; domestic \$18,953,350. 2.) Air transportation: 537 hours of flying time, 1,320 passengers and 37 tons of cargo. 3.) 2,000 electoral documents translated	On target

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

In 2014, ELECT II provided technical advice and operational support to the IEC in the context of a decreasing role of the international community in this electoral cycle⁵. The UN was, however, requested to play a prominent role in the audit at the explicit request of the candidates and the Afghan authorities. ELECT II's core role to 'assist the IEC with Afghan-led and Afghan managed elections' was extended to supervision of the audit, while the IEC remained ultimately responsible for regulating all aspects of the electoral process.

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 2015 elections, measured by qualitative assessment in observer reports; and by statistical reporting and procedural and administrative error reduction.

a. Observer statements

Electoral observation reports noted an improvement of the administrative capacity of the IEC to organise the 2014 elections, while the conduct of both rounds have been characterized as Afghan-led and Afghan-managed.



A woman dips her finger before voting. (14 June 2014)
Photo: ELECT II

The EU's Election Assessment Team (EAT) noted in its final report on the 2014 Presidential Election that *“on the operational front, the IEC demonstrated consistent technical improvement and increased capacity in comparison with previous elections. More specifically, the election administration long-term vision as well as the regular identification and application of remedial actions throughout the electoral process allowed the IEC to complete organizational and*

*logistical preparations on time for both rounds, despite a necessary delay in the run-off preparations.”*⁶

⁵ The 2004 elections, conducted by the Joint Electoral Management Body, relied on more than 500 international advisors. The 2009 Presidential election and Provincial Council elections relied on 160+ advisors. For the 2010 Parliamentary elections there were 85 international advisors. ELECT II the current project had a maximum of 60 international staff to assist the IEC during the peak moments of the preparation for the first and second round.

⁶ EU EAT, Final Report “Presidential Election 5 April and 14 June 2014”, page 13

Similarly, the 2014 Afghanistan Election Support Team (EST) of the OSCE's 'Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' (ODIHR) noted in its report that *"the role of the international community in Afghan elections has decreased significantly over the years, and the 2014 elections were widely characterized as Afghan-led, managed, and owned."*⁷ *"The continuous support from the international community, the timely preparation of these [electoral planning] documents, as well as the attention paid by the IEC to the lessons learned from the previous elections, contributed significantly to the preparedness of the electoral administration for the 2014 elections."*⁸

Democracy International (DI) stated that *"the first round of voting on April 5 was widely considered a success. At the vast majority of the polling stations DI observers visited, they observed that the election administration procedures for opening, voting, closing, and counting were properly adhered to"*.⁹ Also for the second round, *"with a few exceptions, DI observers saw the [run-off] election being administered according to the prescribed procedures, including the opening and closing of the polling stations and the counting of ballots"*.¹⁰ In its preliminary statement, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) mentioned that *"assisted by the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT II) project, the IEC showed an increased ability to prepare for the elections. Early operational planning enabled the IEC to generally complete its tasks in a timely and professional manner. Its main pre-election activities included: the procurement and delivery of election materials; public outreach and civic education activities; recruitment and training of poll workers; coordination with election stakeholders; voter registration; the establishment of polling centers; and the monitoring of candidates' campaign expenditures"*¹¹. NDI welcomed *"several improvements over past elections – such as enhanced indelible ink, the use of unique serial numbers for individual ballots and ballot packs, and the use of tamper-evident tape applied to results sheets"*.¹²

The EU EAT concluded in its final report: *"Despite general shortcomings in transparency, the IEC showed significant improvements in the communication of the policy-making procedures through the regular publication of the IEC decisions and procedures, as well as consistent information on the activities of the institution."* The EU EAT report also reported the issue of *"the late publication of detailed results of the first round of the presidential election, the absence of communication on the full-scale audit conclusions, the announcement of Final Results providing only the outcome of the election but not the results. It also criticized "that the right to information of the voters about the election results in their respective polling stations (PSs) was not*

⁷ OSCE/ODIHR EST, Final Report "Afghanistan Presidential and Provincial Council elections 2014", page 7

⁸ OSCE/ODIHR EST, Final Report "Afghanistan Presidential and Provincial Council elections 2014", page 7

⁹ DI, Final Report "Afghanistan Election Observation mission 2014", page 2

¹⁰ DI, Final Report "Afghanistan Election Observation mission 2014", page 3

¹¹ NDI, Preliminary Statement on 5 April Presidential and Provincial Council Elections", page 9.

¹² NDI, Preliminary Statement on 5 April Presidential and Provincial Council Elections", page 2.

respected, due to a late decision to provide the only two copies of the results available at each PS to the two respective candidate representatives.”¹³

During the run-off round the IEC was heavily criticised: controversy surrounded the opening of contingency polling stations and initial turnout figures. The electoral process and the IEC’s role became politicised after presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah withdrew from the electoral process, followed by the resignation of the IEC’s Chief Electoral Officer after accusations of fraud. In response to the charges of widespread fraud, both presidential contenders and the Afghan authorities agreed to conduct a full audit of all ballots cast for the second round, supervised by the UN. During the audit, electoral observer groups, international assessment teams, candidate representatives, and international partners, provided continuous feedback and comments that improved the process.



UN Audit Supervisors supervising the IEC ballot audit process of the second round of Afghanistan’s 2014 Presidential Elections, in the presence of candidate agents and international and national observers. August 2014. Photo by ELECT II

DI stated: *“The internationally supervised audit of the June 14 election was unprecedented in scale and scope. [...] Given the lack of preparation and the exigent nature of the exercise, the audit was planned and managed in an ad hoc and mostly extra-legal manner. The IEC in effect ceded its jurisdiction to international actors, principally the UN. Policies affecting how ballots would be reviewed and the manner and criteria for their rejection changed almost daily for the first several weeks of the process and remained in flux until the end. Conflict between the candidates’ representatives plagued the process.”¹⁴*

In this context, the OSCE/ODIHR report noted that *“as the political crisis unfolded and the international community intervened to broker a compromise between the two presidential candidates, the IEC became increasingly side-lined. However, as the comprehensive audit commenced, the IEC gradually rose to the task and began addressing the issues at hand.”¹⁵*

After the conclusion of the audit and the formation of the National Unity Government, the observer group National Democratic Institute (NDI) stated in a press release in

¹³ EU EAT, Final Report, page 11

¹⁴ DI EOM, Preliminary Statement, 28 September, page 1

¹⁵ OSCE/ODIHR EST, Final Report “Afghanistan Presidential and Provincial Council elections 2014”, page 7

September that *“while electoral fraud as well as certain problems in the audit process make it impossible for any official results to precisely reflect the votes cast, evidence was not unveiled that would cause the outcome to be reversed”*.¹⁶ NDI also underscored *“the need for a thorough inquiry into the vulnerabilities that allowed high levels of fraud to take place, and the identification and prosecution of those responsible for it.”*¹⁷

The EU EAT welcomed the political outcome but regretted that no precise results figures were published and qualified the audit process as unsatisfactory. The EU EAT concluded: *“Even after the full audit, questions remained on the electoral process and on the final outcome, in particular as the audit failed to bring full clarity on final results”*¹⁸. The EU/EAT stated in its final report that *“the full-scale audit of all 8.1 million votes of the run-off brought to light that large scale fraud had been committed. The audit started without proper procedures having been defined.”*¹⁹

DI stated that *“the audit was imperfect, but the process revealed that it was much harder to find evidence of fraud in this election compared to previous elections. The serious allegations of widespread fraud from both candidates remain unsubstantiated.”*²⁰

Free & Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA) concluded: *“Despite having noticed considerable improvements in the electoral system and structure, it has also observed breach of the laws and rules, violations of procedures [and] negligence of electoral officials that could lead to destruction of the process and could be considered a big blow to democracy in the country.”*²¹

DI concluded: *“The agreement between the two candidates to conduct the audit and to form a National Unity Government may have salvaged Afghanistan’s chances for a peaceful transfer of power, but it also abandoned the chance for a democratic one. This marked the third consecutive national election to be decided outside of the parameters of Afghanistan’s democratic legal framework. The audit began without the necessary procedures in place and represented the preference for an ad-hoc dispute resolution mechanism as opposed to relying on Afghanistan’s established institutions and election-dispute-resolution processes. This is a dangerous precedent and should be avoided during future election processes in Afghanistan.”*²²

All observer reports strongly elaborated on a wide range of short-term and long-term recommendations to further improve the electoral process. Recommendations

¹⁶ NDI, press release, 24 September

¹⁷ NDI, press release, 24 September

¹⁸ EU EAT, press release, 21 September 2014

¹⁹ EU EAT, Final Report, page 4

²⁰ Democracy International, Final Report, page 41

²¹ <http://www.fefa.org.af/index.php/press-release/227-2014-09-21-13-26-56>

²² Democracy International, Final Report, page 4

focused on the need to strengthen the overall legal framework, the reinforcement of anti-fraud measures, the establishment of a comprehensive voter register system, the role and participation of domestic observers, female participation while ensuring the integrity of women votes, freedom of expression, transparency of the process, and reinforcement of the neutrality and impartiality of the election administration.

b. Statistical reporting and procedural and administrative error reduction.

The following electoral progress, including positive long-term trends in a number of areas, suggest movement towards more sustainable electoral management bodies:

• **An improved technical process**

In 2014, the elections showcased several key advances in operations that included an improved quality of the voter registration (VR) card, which addressed the problem of forged cards; the production, packing and tracking, of sensitive electoral material using unique serial numbers on all materials, enhanced training program, the introduction of a robust election day monitoring system, increased transparency for District Field Coordinators (DFC) recruitment and an improved Results Management System with significantly increased transparency for stakeholders.

Significant technical improvements during the 2014 elections implemented by the IEC with ELECT II support include:

1. Improved security features of the VR card: even though this improvement didn't resolve the much bigger issue of the absence of a comprehensive voter registry, it anyhow addressed the problem of forging as was case in the 2009 and 2010 elections. In this respect, each VR card was printed with the following additional features :
 - a. UV dull paper
 - b. IEC branded hologram
 - c. Ultraviolet ink
2. Production and packing of sensitive electoral material: ballot papers, results forms, voter logs and envelopes were given the same single serial unique number, which reduced significantly the mixing of sensitive material and allowed tracking of the same.
 - a. Ballot papers printed with unique serial number per pack of 600 (1 PS)-
Pack number
 - b. Results forms printed with unique serial number
 - c. Voter log printed with unique serial number
 - d. Envelope used for storing of results forms printed with unique serial number
3. Robust tracking system of sensitive materials: the movement of all sensitive materials were bar-coded and tracked from the IEC's headquarters to the respective provincial offices, district hubs and finally the Polling Centres, and then back again. This process allowed the IEC to react in timely manner to any

problem that occurred during the transport of material, and to identify and investigate possible problems.

4. Robust Election Day monitoring system. This system allowed the IEC to monitor in timely manner events during E-day and to take appropriate actions and come up with very accurate estimates of the turnout upon closing of PS. Main characteristics of the systems are:
 - a. Data collected from all Polling Centres/Stations from Polling Centres Managers (PCM) through District Field Coordinators (DFC) periodically throughout E-day and day before and after in total - almost 10000 people involved in reporting.
 - b. Controlled allocation and tracking of contingency PS, and consecutive investigations if this stations were used for fraudulent purposes.
 - c. Tracking and reporting of open/closed PS on E-day and consecutive investigations if this stations were reported closed on E-day and then results forms appeared in Tally Centre.
 - d. Accurate estimates of the voters' turnout upon closing of PS for both Election rounds.
 - e. Tracking of the TEBs and results forms from PC to the National Tally Centre.
5. Increased transparency for the recruitment of the DFCs:
 - a. All applications submitted online
 - b. More accurate collection of personal data including tazkira numbers.
 - c. Shortlisting done based on elections experience and education on more structural form through database.
6. Improved and increased transparency of Results Management System (in particular for second round)
 - a. Data linked between E-day monitoring, tracking and tally systems
 - b. All original results forms published online
 - c. Increased access to NTC by observers for second round

Although there was still a high number of fraudulent votes, ELECT II is confident that the technical measures introduced in 2014 resulted in much better technically organised elections than ever before in Afghanistan. A key concern remains the absence of a comprehensive and integrated voter registry. An improved electoral process also requires electoral integrity from the political side. Without a socio-cultural change so that electoral fraud is considered socially unacceptable by the vast majority of Afghans and Afghan institutions, it remains difficult to ensure the conduct of all-inclusive and credible elections in the country.

- **Marked reduction of fraudulent ballots**

Between 2009 and 2014, the proportion of fraudulent ballots decreased by 62.2% (from invalidation of 28.32% of ballots in 2009 to 10.7% in 2014). A remarkable difference is noted in the total percentage of disqualified votes compared to the 2009 and 2010 elections; this despite the fact that *all* ballots in the run-off round were subject

to audit. The national audit led to a disqualification of 10.7% of the votes, while the

Disqualified votes in Afghanistan in Past elections							
2009 Elections		2010 Elections		2014 First Round		2014 Second Round	
Prelim Results	Final Votes	Prelim Results	Final Votes	Prelim Results	Final Votes	Prelim Results	Final Votes
5,662,758	4,059,069	5,630,587	4,030,227	6,978,011	6,604,546	7,972,727	7,120,585
1,603,689	28.32%	1,600,360	28.42%	373,465	5.40%	852,142	10.70%

2009 and 2010 elections saw a disqualification of up to 28% of the votes.

Role of ELECT II during electoral operations

- *Planning*

ELECT II assisted the IEC with the conduct of the Presidential and Provincial Council Elections by providing technical and operational support during the entire planning process. ELECT II was intensely involved in the development and implementation of the Elections Operation Plan, and several other plans that include the Security Plan, and the Fraud Mitigation Plan. ELECT II was also closely involved with the IEC’s planning of polling centre and polling station locations as well as movement and retrieval planning for the materials, in close co-ordination with the Mol and ISAF. Once it became clear that a run-off election was inevitable, ELECT II accelerated the pace to assist the IEC with planning towards the new election date in June. Within a challenging timeframe of merely a month, the success of developing and implementing new electoral plans, procedures, and operations for the run-off round can be regarded as a major achievement.

- *Procurement and movement of electoral commodities and materials*

ELECT II directly supported the IEC with international and domestic procurement of electoral materials, customs handling, packing and bar-code scanning of electoral materials per polling station, air transport of materials, software development for Election Day reporting, as well as results tallying. For both electoral rounds, ELECT II procured electoral election commodities (ballots, screens, boxes, ink, etc.) for \$24 million out-of-country; while domestic procurement (transport services, radio and TV PSAs) conducted by ELECT II in 2014 totalled \$19 million for both election rounds.

In close co-ordination with the Mol and ISAF, ELECT II assisted the IEC with logistical planning and the movement of electoral materials. A total of 3,900 lorries and 4,500 donkeys were used to move and retrieve 15 million ballots to some 6,200 polling centres across Afghanistan, for each election. The project supported the IEC with the transportation contract modalities. ELECT II leased two UN helicopters to assist the IEC with delivery and retrieval of electoral materials, as well as personnel movement. These helicopters proved to be extremely useful as they enabled the timely retrieval of the results forms which in turn made it possible for the IEC to swiftly commence the tally process for electoral rounds. Furthermore, together with ISAF and UNAMA air

support, the ELECT II helicopters were also crucial in July for the retrieval of all 22,828 ballot boxes to Kabul during the audit process. While ISAF took responsibility for road movements and large-scale air transport, ELECT II and UNAMA aircraft undertook 85 flights in order to retrieve ballot boxes from the provinces to Kabul. IEC staff retained custody of the materials at all times.

- *Electoral technical advice and supervision of the audit process*

ELECT II provided the IEC with electoral advice based on global good practice throughout all phases, from conceptual planning to implementation and lessons learnt reviews. After the first round, ELECT II formulated electoral recommendations to the IEC. After the second round, ELECT II's role in the electoral process expanded by providing technical input to the SRSG's mediation efforts between the two run-off candidates; in particular in exploring different criteria for ballot auditing. At the explicit request of the candidates and the Afghan authorities, the UN accepted responsibility to supervise the audit of all ballots at the IEC, which took place from 17 July until 17 September and in which ELECT II undertook a key role. All ELECT II international staff members were heavily involved in one or another aspect of the audit: from actual audit supervision to mediation with the candidates' electoral teams; and from logistical support to the IEC to legal assistance, training, security, etc. ELECT II's national staff members helped to provide impartial translation and interpretation to UN supervisors during the audit

The UN-led audit supervision was largely carried out by ELECT II advisors, assisted by UNDP electoral experts from other country offices and other UN missions, and by sourcing independent electoral specialists. A total of 128 electoral experts were mobilized by UNDP, augmented by 25 UNAMA advisors. At the height of the process, 150 IEC audit stations were continuously supervised by the UN from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. Under the guidance of the SRSG and in close co-ordination with UNAMA, ELECT II advisors and UN electoral experts constantly mediated with the candidates' electoral teams to ensure their consent and co-operation.

ELECT II sought to ensure that all IEC audit processes and procedures were consistent with key international principles of electoral management. In this respect, ELECT II assisted the IEC with devising the audit procedures and to refining them as the audit progressed. The audit served to detect fraud and manipulation where it occurred, and sought to quantify it in order to achieve an alignment of the final result with the actual will of the voters as closely as possible. ELECT II advisors, together with other UN electoral experts, assisted the IEC with fine-tuning criteria to evaluate similarly marked ballots and similarly marked results sheets. UN electoral experts, including ELECT II senior advisors, participated together with senior representatives of the IEC and both campaigns in the Audit Management Committee, which held daily meetings from 17 August to 4 September.

Security

Furthermore, ELECT II took up a lead role in co-ordinating the tight security enhancement measures at the IEC premises. The audit process was given a high threat assessment due to its importance, visibility, and the more than 1,000 national and international observers visiting on a daily basis for almost two months. ELECT II



IEC provincial staff unloading ballot boxes – Kandahar. June 2014. Photo ELECT II

security experts, together with colleagues from UNDP, UNAMA and the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) worked closely together with the IEC Security Unit, the ANSF and ISAF, to enhance the IEC's internal and external security. ISAF maintained a 24/7 presence at the compound, while IEC security guards and police forces were also deployed.

2014 Lessons Learnt

ELECT II constantly sought to incorporate past good practice and lessons learnt to improve the process. After the first round, the project conducted an internal lessons learnt workshop to identify challenges and issues. The concept was replicated in May through a lessons learnt workshop with IEC staff from the Secretariat and the provincial offices. In September, after the conduct of the ballot audit, ELECT II facilitated a lessons learnt exercise with UN electoral experts on the entire audit process. In November, ELECT II held an internal lessons learnt workshop on the entire process of the 2014 elections: first round, second round and the ballot audit. From 16 to 26 November, ELECT II participated in different IEC workshops at headquarters and regional level. These lessons learnt were incorporated in the project's 2015 action plan.

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.

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

After the 5 April elections, the IEC was criticised for insufficient transparency of results decision making by the Commissioners, as well as inadequate and swift website information. During this phase, ELECT II was excluded from tally centre data, a point picked up in later lessons learnt meetings for the IEC to improve upon. For the 14 June

elections, ELECT II assisted the IEC with improvements in tally centre information as well as web information. After the audit process, the IEC did not provide the details of the presidential results as part of a political agreement that prioritised the formation of a cabinet.

At the technical level, ELECT II assisted the IEC with the improvements of the tally and results management process to enhance data processing and integrity. In this respect, ELECT II assisted the IEC with the development and implementation of software for e-day reporting, as well as tallying of the results. This reporting tool was a major improvement and provided live updates of open and closed polling centres throughout the day. ELECT II Advisors also provided input to the drafting process of the tally and results announcement regulations on tallying and results management, including participation of observers and open IEC meetings.



Provincial council (green) and presidential (blue) results forms

With regards to the results forms, ELECT II assisted the IEC with integrity improvements, from layout to processing and transparency. Immediately after polling closed, results forms were completed by polling staff and dispersed in four identical bar-coded copies. One was placed in the transparent tamper evident bag (TEB) and sent

to IEC HQ, one was placed in the ballot box with the counted ballots, one was shared with an observer or candidate agent, and one was displayed outside at a wall at the polling station²³. The primary copies were put in polling station-specific bar coded envelopes, which went into the coded TEBs, and later entered at the provincial centre in the provincial intake database, before being sent to the IEC HQ in sealed blue boxes. All results forms were finally entered into the National Tally Centre (NTC) database, according to procedures, developed with input of ELECT II.

ELECT II further assisted the IEC with the testing of the tally software, as well as the provision of the secure hardware infrastructure. With ELECT II input, the IEC developed a comprehensive approach for storing tally data back-up for disaster recovery at multiple locations. ELECT II also assisted the IEC with transforming its existing data operating centre into a National Tally Centre, including provision of IT infrastructure and layout adjustments. In the meantime, with the project's support, the

²³For the second round, it was decided that agents of both candidates received a copy of the results form, while no form was placed outside the polling station.

IEC developed an online application to track polling day activities and progress. The National Tally Centre was open to agents, observers, and media representatives.

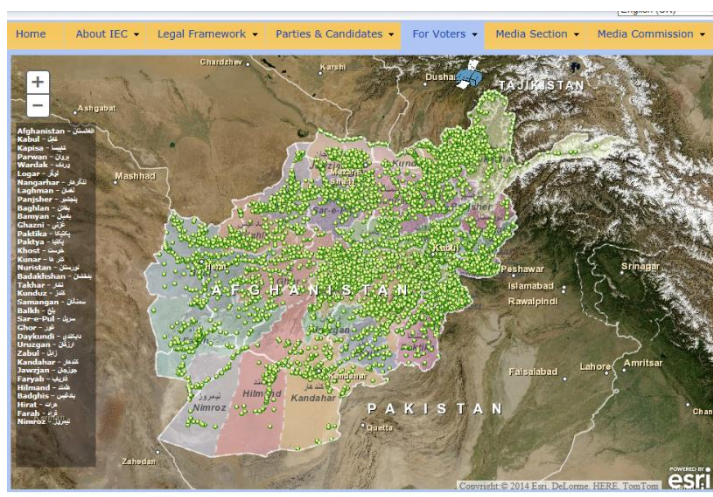
During the audit process, ELECT II assisted the IEC with the enhancement of the tally process at the NTC, to allow swift input and crosschecking of audit forms. In addition, as part of the framework supported by ELECT II, the IEC held from 25 August to 14 September nine open sessions regarding the decision-making of the audit results.

Regarding the tally process, DI stated that “as was the case with the work of the IEC and IECC after the first round of elections, DI’s observers reported that the EMBs substantially complied with their mandated procedures.”²⁴

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

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

A total of 98.5% of polling centre locations were mapped with GIS codes. The remaining 1.5% GIS mapping of polling centres



Map of polling centres

faced difficulties due to incomplete or conflicting data. Further processing was dependent on Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO) data. Ultimately, after audit and recount, 18,866 polling stations in 5,976 polling centres were considered open during the 5 April elections. For the second round on 14 June, the IEC increased the number of planned polling stations to counter the issues experienced on 5 April of long queues and the ambiguous release of contingency ballot boxes. In total, out of the planned 23,136 polling stations in 6,365 polling centres, on 14 June, 22,828 were opened in 6,172 polling centres. <http://www.iec.org.af/2012-05-31-16-45-49/pcmap>

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

In 2014, due to priority given to the elections, ELECT II and the IEC did not engage with the government regarding the boundary delimitation for the District Council Elections. ELECT II did, however, prepare an examination of boundary issues ready for discussion.

²⁴ Democracy International, Final Report, page 34

Expenses for the year

In 2014, a total of \$ 36,259,612 was spent for output 5, together with \$ 15,709,554 under Japanese funding (7.5) and \$ 36,283,148 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 1: Progress Update, Output 5, 2014

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	2014 Actual	Comments
<p>Baseline: Baseline 5.1: qualitative statements in the observer reports of the 2009 presidential and 2010 parliamentary elections, respectively (Baseline: 2009 EU and OSCE reports)</p>	<p>5.1: (2014) improved statistical reporting and procedural and administrative error reduction measured, as well as qualitative statements in observer reports, which indicate the successful conduct of elections, acceptable to the Afghan electorate, aiming to achieve transition of political power.</p>	<p>Improved electoral process compared to 2009 and 2010 elections according to observers' qualitative statements and statistical reporting. Electoral observation reports noted an improvement of the administrative capacity of the IEC to organise the 2014 elections, while the conduct of both rounds have been characterized as Afghan-led and Afghan-managed. Statistical improvements in procedures and error reduction</p>	<p>On target</p>
<p>Baseline 5.2: poor result management strategy during 2009 and 2010 elections (BASELINE: OSCE 2009: Observer reports indicate sub-</p>	<p>5.2: (2014) implementation of a results management strategy that includes proper results certification and communication mechanisms to release partial, temporary and certified/uncertified results after the</p>	<p>Improved ballot tracking and tally process for results certification</p>	<p>On target</p>

<p>optimal transparency and release of results at HQ (OSCE) -BASELINE: 2009 EU report: The sensitiveness of this [Results Release] process was not matched by a commensurate level of transparency and accountability in the IEC decision-making.)</p>	<p>Presidential and Provincial Council elections</p>		
<p>Baseline 5.3.a: Physical verification of 6,845 polling centres identified (2011) - zero mapped before 2012, 98.5% in 2013 Baseline 5.3.b: No official district boundaries established</p>	<p>5.3.a:100% of all polling centre locations mapped with GIS 5.3.a: establishment of a co-ordination mechanism with Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), CSO and AGCHO on electoral boundary delimitation, for possible 2015 district council elections</p>	<p>5.3.a. 98.5%</p> <p>5.3.b. No coordination mechanism established yet with IDLG, CSO and AGCHO regarding district boundary delimitation</p>	<p>Delayed: In 2014, due to priority given to the Presidential and Provincial Council elections, ELECT II and the IEC did not engage yet with the government on boundary delimitation for the District Council elections.</p>

Table 5: Progress Update Output 5

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

Indicator 6.1.a: Electoral dispute resolution mechanism is fully established and staffed in all provincial offices and HQ

Capacity Building and Lessons Learnt

IFES and UNOPS supported the IECC in preparation of training materials and guidelines to assist the Provincial Commissioners and staff, as well as HQ staff in achieving their task. Seminars, lessons learned and refresher trainings were held for all IECC in HQ and Provinces. The trainings during the year included complaints adjudication process, international principles and best practices for complaints adjudication, public outreach and external relations, administration and finance, case management, database, gender awareness, and basics of management. The IECC conducted their own trainings and lessons learned after the first round election, which is a positive step for the sustainability and institutional capacity of the IECC. The IECC also held a joint lessons learned workshop with IEC.

Training Needs assessment and Capacity Building Plan

In July and August, the IECC HR and Capacity Building Unit conducted a Training Needs Assessment (TNA) and compiled a report. A Capacity Building Plan was designed based on this TNA and included trainings for administrative and finance, internal communication, reporting, management, procurement, audit, training methodology, complaints adjudication, drafting of legal and regulatory text, case management/database.

The joint Capacity Building Plan for IECC for 2015 was officially shared in December that includes timelines and an implementation plan for facilitation of all formal and technical training, coaching, mentoring, and monitoring and assessment of capacity building activities aimed at addressing skills and training gaps. The document is the result of a series of activities the IECC conducted such as the Post-Election Review Seminar in Dubai, strategic planning exercises, lessons learnt sessions, training needs assessments, staff debriefing as well as individual, group and department consultations at HQ and Provincial Offices.

The Capacity Building Group, consisting of representatives from the Human Resources/Capacity Building and Development departments of the IECC, IFES and UNOPS project team collated options based on a Training Needs Assessment and consultations. This document is expected to facilitate the intervention of the UNOPS SECCA project team and IFES to build IECC capacity while also providing a mechanism for the IECC to harness its human resources to build its own capacity.

The IECC held a Post-Election Review Seminar from 10 to 16 October 2014 that was facilitated by UNOPS and IFES. The IECC Chairman, Commissioners and Senior Management of the Secretariat of the IECC were invited to participate in the event that aimed to review issues from the past year and agree on best practice for future electoral processes. The event brought together external experts from several countries to share insights and expertise — targeting key areas of weakness identified in the IECC over the 2014 elections. Three IECC Commissioners, the Secretary General and 12 IECC staff members attended, including the two Deputies (Technical and Operations and Administrative and Finance) as well as representatives from the legal, complaints registration, public outreach, external relations, chief of staff and finance and administration departments. IFES also invited four senior election and legal experts to participate. In preparation for the seminar, UNOPS and IFES worked closely with the Secretariat to prepare for discussions, raise challenges and suggest improvements.

The IECC Chairman and Spokesperson attended an IFES biennial U.S. Election Day programme in November in Washington, DC that brought together election officials, parliamentarians and diplomats from around the world to observe and learn about the U.S. electoral system as well as to discuss elections and voting from comparative international perspectives. The delegation met with representatives from USAID and the U.S. State Department as well as UNOPS and UNDP representatives in New York. Two IECC senior officials attended a workshop in Sydney (Australia) from in September on Electoral Security Administration Fundamentals of Policy and Practice for Election Management Bodies. The IECC was represented by the Technical Deputy for Election Management Bodies. The IECC was represented by the Technical Deputy of the CEO and Legal Analysis and Assessment Director. Organized by UNDP, the workshop was designed for election Commissioners and staff from Election Management Bodies in countries that have electoral risks that have the potential to cause an electoral security problem. The goal was to obtain fundamental analysis, planning, and implementation skills to develop appropriate and effective measures to prevent, manage, or mediate electoral risk and conflict. The workshop included a session on election dispute resolution.

Strategic Advice

Throughout the year, IFES provided strategic advice to the IECC on effective ways to adjudicate election complaints and investigate alleged electoral violations from the 2014 presidential and PC elections in a fair, effective, and transparent manner, while ensuring commitment to rights-based standards and principles. This includes support on drafting regulations, procedures and forms, adjudication of election complaints and strategic planning.

During the course of 2014 IFES and UNOPS have established regular meetings with all of the commissioners and built a strong relationship. Continued discussions and advice had been among other aspects focused on the future sustainability of the IECC.

These discussions have been in parallel to advice and discussions with the Secretariat staffs.

Public Outreach and External Relations

The IECC launched its official website in Dari, Pashto and English in January 2014. Also, the IECC developed and produced informational print, audio and video public outreach materials to educate voters about the electoral dispute resolution process and how to access it. Before the first round, the IECC developed a communication/public outreach strategy, which was revised for the 2nd round of the presidential election.

Focusing on the 5 April Elections, the IECC produced three TV and radio spots, which were broadcasted in Dari/Pashto on 11 TV and 11 radio channels for 21 days. These PSAs informed the public, candidates, and agents on the right to file a complaint relating to Election Day and relating to preliminary results. The IECC also held several briefings for observers, domestic and international stakeholders, candidates and agents, as well as media, during the course of the election cycle. The first informational briefing took place on 16 March. The IECC Commissioners organized a briefing for Presidential candidates and agents on 7 April that was well attended by candidates' teams, including three Presidential candidates. The IECC held a series of press conferences on Election Day and the four following days (6, 7, 8 and 9 April), with similar outreach activities after the second round election.

Between the two rounds of elections, on 8 June, the IECC held an information sharing meeting with candidates, agents and observers where clarification on deadlines for filing, quarantine, open sessions, collection of evidence, and decision-making were discussed. The IECC also provided regular updates on the complaints adjudication of presidential and provincial council complaints and appeals and published this information on its website.

The IECC finalized a communication plan (press conference schedule) in early June, which was published on its website and shared with the IEC. A few days before and after the 2nd round presidential election, the IECC held a series of press conferences and issued press release on the number of complaints registered, phone reports received and the relevant deadlines for filing and adjudicating complaints and appeals. During the adjudication of complaints related to the nationwide audit, the IECC provided regular updates on its website, during press conferences, and at the end of each open session. The IECC informed the public and relevant stakeholders of the number of complaints received, the relevant deadlines to file, the date and place of open sessions, and the types of decisions made on the complaints and appeals.

Case management system

On 4 February 2014, the IECC adopted a procedure on adjudication of complaints and challenges, which described the case management system. A case management

database was established to ensure accurate data collection and management, and the provision of reports on the number and types of complaints received by the IECC. The design of the database started on 7 March 2014 and was finalized on 29 March 2014. The database was designed based on forms and report templates developed by the Registration and Statistics Department of the IECC. The IECC also developed a guideline related to the registration of complaints, outlining each step of the adjudication process.

Gender

Gender was discussed on several occasions as a cross-cutting issue, which enhanced IECC leadership and staff awareness on gender issues and resulted in a decision by the IECC Strategic Planning Committee to mainstream gender in its draft strategic plan. Strategic gender objectives associated with each of the strategic goal listed in the plan will guide the activities of the IECC for the next five years.

In October and November 2014, the IECC held a series of training sessions on gender for 25 HQ staff members in cooperation with the Ministry of Women. Information was shared on the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) as well as basic principles regarding work environment and recruitment.

The IECC, through the Gender Unit and in cooperation with the Civil Service Commission, organized a conference on violence against women on 26 November 2014 at IECC to mark the U.N. International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

In November 2014, the UNOPS project team commenced discussions with the IECC CEO about the possibility of offering internships for a small number of Afghan females. The CEO appeared receptive to this initiative and it is hoped that meaningful progress on the initiative will be achieved early in 2015.

The IECC Gender Unit organized a workshop on self-confidence for HQ staff on 14 December 2014 that was facilitated by the IFES Training and Public Outreach Adviser and attended by 25 IECC HQ staff.

On 16 December 2014, the IECC Gender Unit organized a workshop at IECC HQ on the NAPWA with the assistance of Afghanistan Justice Sector Support Programme that included 30 participants, who discussed the topic of gender mainstreaming at the IECC.

IECC senior staff members encouraged the Gender Team to inaugurate a library that was recently established at the Commission by the Gender Team in close coordination and cooperation with Capacity Building Team. The library features 500 books donated by the Ministry of Women Affairs that focus on gender- and human rights-related matters.

As of late December 2014, advisory support is being provided to the IECC Gender Unit by a Gender Adviser who is currently under contract by United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan. The support will continue until a suitable candidate is identified for the vacancy as part of a UNOPS initiative managed in cooperation with the Capacity Building team.

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

- Fourteen forms for the complaints resolution process were approved by the Board of Commissioners on 22 January and the relevant forms for the public were subsequently published. These forms also formed part of the training programs with all IECC and PIECC personnel:
 - Challenge Form (Form 1)
 - Complaint Form (Form 2)
 - Categorization/Prioritization Form (Form 3)
 - Notification and Response Form (Form 4)
 - Handover/Receipt Form (Form 5)
 - Contact/Communication Form (Form 6)
 - Assessment Summary Form (Form 7)
 - Provincial Decision Form (Form 8)
 - Appeal Form (Form 9)
 - Analysis Opinion Form (Form 10)
 - Central Decision Form (Form 11)
 - Decision Notification Form (Form 12)
 - Exceptional cases Form (Form 13)
 - Checklist Form (Form 14)
- On 4 February IECC adopted the Procedure for filing and adjudication of challenges and complaints, amended on 16 April
- On 4 February IECC approved four guidelines on Archiving, Filing Complaints on Election Day, Filling out Complaints Forms, and Registration of Challenges and Complaints
- Guideline on how to file a complaint at a polling station/polling center approved on 4 February
- Code of Conduct for IECC staff approved on 19 February.
- The IECC adopted a regulation on assessment of the validity of ballots on 10 April.
- On 18 April the regulation on the validity of ballots was approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Complaints Process

The Presidential elections:

The IECC finalized its adjudication of presidential nomination challenges in November; 25 complaints related to the presidential election campaign were registered. The IECC held an open session where it announced a few sanctions against presidential candidates including a fine and a warning.

The IECC announced registered a total of 2,133 complaints related to polling and counting for the first round of the presidential elections. Following the announcement of preliminary results by the IEC on 26 April, the IECC registered 112 complaints against these results and 9 complaints against the IEC's invalidation of polling stations. The IECC finalized all decisions on complaints related to the first presidential election on 13 May.

In the presidential run-off election, the IECC registered 11 complaints from both candidates, alleging campaign violations by candidates' teams or by public officials. IECC decisions on these complaints were in open session on 3 September. Also, the IECC received 2,576 complaints filed related to polling and counting in the presidential runoff election. After the publication of PIECC decisions, 135 appeals were filed by Presidential candidate Ashraf Ghani's team.

The IECC registered a total of 389 complaints related to IEC audit decisions, and held open sessions to adjudicate these complaints. On 18 September, the IECC announced its final decisions on all complaints and appeals from the runoff election during a press conference. On 19 September, the IEC formally objected to IECC decisions invalidating 118 PS from Election Day complaints. On the same day, the IECC made decisions on the IEC's objections.

Adjudication of complaints related to PC elections:

A total of 2,704 PC candidates were included in the preliminary candidate list from IEC. The IECC commissioners finalized all cases related to eligibility of candidates on 19 March. The IECC received 2,918 complaints and appeals related to PC elections. The IECC conducted six days of open sessions from 31 May to 6 June for all pending complaints related to PC elections, based on the assessment of the Provincial IECCs (PIECCs). The open sessions resulted in the IECC ordering some recounts in specific polling stations.

The IECC made final decisions on PC election complaints and publicly announced its decisions on 9 October, and sent its decisions to the IEC on 10 October. After reviewing these decisions, the IEC filed 12 objections to IECC decisions, and IECC replied to the IEC's objections on 12 October. From 12 to 25 October, the IEC and IECC staff worked together at the National Tally Center to ensure proper implementation of IECC decisions in the IEC database.

Indicator 6.1.c: Timely establishment of a co-ordination mechanism between the IEC and the electoral dispute resolution mechanism to address electoral complaints

In January 2014, the IECC negotiated and finalized of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the IEC. The MoU outlines key technical aspects of cooperation in support of effective complaints adjudication, implementation of decisions, and observance of deadlines. Coordination between the institutions improved significantly during the year, and there is commitment to review and improve the MoU in 2015, work together on regulatory review, conduct joint training, and continue with joint lessons learned sessions.

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

During the course of the year UNOPS purchased and provided most of the assets that are in use with the IECC HQ and Provincial Offices. Due to the late start-up of the IECC and the electoral activities that took place during 2014 it was not practical for UNOPS to focus on asset management until the final quarter of the year.

Therefore UNOPS commenced physical verification of all assets delivered and in use at IECC HQ during the last quarter of 2014. The UNOPS SECCA project team worked closely with IECC counterparts to not only ensure assets had been properly recorded and accounted for, but also through on the job training to build capacity by ensuring enhanced asset management accountability practices were in place. The exercise was to be complete by mid-December 2014, but due to security constraints it was extended until the end of December 2014 at which time all UNOPS provided assets were tagged and accounted for. Procedures were instigated and formally put in place in response to a couple of minor items that were not immediately found. During this exercise Asset Hand-Over Forms were introduced and now a robust system is in place whereby each and every asset that is provided to the IECC is signed for by a specific custodian. Work will continue during 2015 to enhance systems further and also provide additional training to staff.

Following the successful conclusion of the HQ asset tagging and verification exercise this process will continue at Provincial IECC offices during 2015.

Expenses for the year

Expenditure for Output 6 in 2014 was total: \$ 3,317,363 from which \$ 2,872,475 (UNOPS) and \$ 444,888 (IFES). During 2014, also a total of \$ 11,231,053 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. Below is a snapshot of where ELECT II is in relation to its annual targets:

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 6, 2014

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	2014 Actual	Comments
Baseline 6.a.: 6 months before polling day	6.1.a (2014) Electoral dispute resolution mechanism is fully established and staffed in all provincial offices and HQ	The IECC is effectively fully established at both provincial and HQ level.	On track.
NA	6.1.b. (2014) Systems, procedures and processes developed/ revised and implemented for filing, hearing and resolving complaints and appeals during and after elections. Improvement of the triage system for dispute handling	3 regulations and procedures developed, 2 guidelines, 14 forms and 1 MoU. Following the final adjudication of complaints and appeals, the IECC showed commitment to revise the entire regulatory framework in light of the 2014 experience: regulations, procedures and guidelines will be amended and additional rules will be developed to complete the framework.	On track.
NA	6.1.c (2014) development of a co-ordination mechanism between the IEC and IECC to address electoral complaints	The IECC and IEC showed good cooperation, especially during the adjudication of complaints related to the IEC audit decisions: sharing relevant document and evidence in a short timeframe.	On track.
NA	6.1.d. (2014) IECC unqualified asset audit report (end of year)	UNOPS commenced and completed physical verification of all assets delivered and in use at IECC HQ during the fourth quarter of 2014. The asset tagging and verification exercise will continue at Provincial IECC offices in 2015.	On track.

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

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

After the official establishment of the IEC Media Commission on 4 December 2013, ELECT II provided the IEC with all the necessary support to enable the Media Commission to be fully operational well ahead of the start of the campaign period. A few weeks after the nomination of five Commissioners, the IEC to process to recruit support staff. ELECT II, in a concept paper for the establishment of the IEC Media Commission, adopted by IEC in 2013, recommended a team of seven support staff members. These included: (1) legal Advisor, (2) investigation officers, (1) administration and finance assistant, (1) media monitoring co-ordinator, (1) secretary, (1) public outreach/external relations officer. ELECT II and the Media Commission encouraged the IEC Human Resources Department to speed up the process, and to promote professionally-based and gender-balanced recruitment. Despite the urgency, only five out of seven staff were finally recruited in total and most notably with considerable delay. This left the Media Commission understaffed until mid-February. The Media Commission was, however, able to complete almost all tasks and crucially, ensured that the media regulatory framework was in place by the beginning of the presidential campaign in early February.

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

Following the IEC's approval of the Media Commission concept paper, ELECT II's Media Commission Advisor supported the IEC Legal Department in developing a comprehensive regulatory framework for media activities during the electoral campaign. A first set of regulations, passed on 17 December 2013, was lately amended after consultations with all direct stakeholders and approved by the IEC on 14 January 2014²⁵. Main changes pertained to coverage of candidates before and after the official campaign period as well as the publication of opinion polls. ELECT II provided continued support to the Media Commission with respect to internal procedures, including procedures for adjudication of electoral media violations adopted on 9 February 2014. Additional guidelines were published by the Media Commission that clarified the rules regarding the coverage of the 48-hour silent period.

ELECT II assisted the Media Commission to establish a reliable media monitoring mechanism, based on internationally recognized practice. The terms of reference and the methodological approach were developed by the ELECT II Media Commission Advisor in order to ensure third-party contracting of a professional and experienced media monitoring organisation. An additional advisor was recruited by ELECT II to

²⁵IEC Regulation on Mass Media Activities during the Elections.

ensure quality assurance and specialized advice to the firm, with a focus on strengthening monitoring methodology and data analysis. The third-party media monitoring firm provided weekly reports as well as ad hoc reports to the Media Commission, containing statistics and analysis of candidates' campaigns coverage, and media violations. The media monitoring reports helped the Media Commission throughout its mandate to support the decision-making process for the adjudication of violation cases.

Enhancing the role of the Media Commission with key stakeholders

As part of its mandate, ELECT II supported the Media Commission's effort to reach out to the public and media stakeholders in order to promote 1.) the role of the institution 2.) the importance of fair media coverage to establish a level playing field for all candidates. In this respect, from February until June, the Media Commission held a number of regional-level consultation sessions with journalists, candidate agents, and other stakeholders, in each of Afghanistan's eight regions (Jalalabad, Herat, Parwan, Helmand, Kandahar, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kunduz, and Badakhshan).

On 17 March, in the run-up during the candidate campaign period, the Media Commission gave its first press conference regarding media monitoring findings. Other press conferences followed related to media campaigning, the silence period, the results release, as well as the imposition of financial penalties.

A media regulatory and monitoring mechanism is enhanced and fully implemented

The Media Commission received and adjudicated four complaints related to media violations of regulations, as well as misconduct of candidates towards media operators during the first round of the electoral campaign. Additionally, following investigations, the Media Commission adjudicated that a number of media organisations were in violation of the established regulatory framework during the electoral campaign period and also the silence period for both the first and second round of the Presidential Election, and the Provincial Council Election. In total, the Media Commission fined 18 media organisations for the first round of the Presidential Election (which combined the Provincial Council election) and 22 for the second round of the Presidential Election. The Media Commission also referred four cases to the Attorney General's Office²⁶.

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

The Media Commission's mandate was terminated on 12 December 2014, as required by the provision in 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. The report suggested reforms aimed at strengthening the media regulatory system and the role of the Media Commission during the electoral process. Moreover, the Commission held joint discussions with

²⁶ IEC Decision No 1393-32: Request of the Media Commission on presenting violating media to Attorney General's office.

media representatives regarding the regulatory framework for the media and submitted proposals for amendments to the Electoral Law in this respect (the proposals were included in the Final Report and made public at the Media Commission's final press conference).

Gender

ELECT II advocated for the nomination of female candidates for the Media Commission as well as for recruitment of female staff. A common effort by the IEC External Relations Department and the Legal Department, supported by ELECT II, led to the nomination of a female commissioner, Farida Nekzad, lately elected as Chair of the Media Commission. In line with ELECT II recommendations included in the Media Commission concept paper, a gender balance was encouraged for the recruitment of support staff. Unfortunately, only one of the selected Commissioners was female.

Overall, the performance of the IEC Media Commission was assessed positively by stakeholders. Despite a limited budget and restrictive mandate, the Media Commission fulfilled its main role of monitoring media coverage of the election and candidates' campaigns, detecting and correcting bias and inappropriate behavior. The role of the Media Commission was generally recognized by media representatives which positively engaged in regular consultation with the body.

Expenses for the year

Expenditure for Output 7 in 2014 was \$ 19,455,861. For more details, please see Annex 2.

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

Table 1: Progress Update, Output 7, 2014

BASELINE	2014 ANNUAL TARGETS	2014 Actual	Comments
Baseline a.: 1 month before polling day Baseline b: NA Baseline c: 45 days after elections	7.1.a Media regulatory body fully established and staffed 7.1.b. Media monitoring systems, procedures and processes developed/revised and implemented 7.1.c: NA	7.1.a. The Media Commission was formally established on 4 December 2013 and is fully staffed since Q1 2014. 7.1.b. Media monitoring systems, procedures and processes developed/revised and implemented 7.1.c The Media Commission’s mandate was terminated on 12 December 2014, as required by the provision in 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.	On target

III. GENDER SPECIFIC RESULTS

Women's participation in elections as voters, candidates, electoral staff, observers, candidate agents, and in the media, is crucial: women strengthen democratic institutions and to aid peacebuilding, particularly in post-conflict countries. The IEC, with ELECT II support, promoted women's participation in these roles during 2014 through various initiatives aimed at increasing awareness and encouraging participation, particularly among marginalized groups.

Although significant progress was noted in some areas during the year, women still face many challenges to impose them as a legitimized interlocutor and competitor and to see their rights recognized. Multiple factors such as insecurity, sociocultural constraints, a lack of understanding of gender issues, make it arduous, in the short term, to close the gender gap, particularly when a general lack of willingness is present among stakeholders, and that including the IEC itself.



Young women queue to vote at a female polling station. (14 June 2014). Photo: ELECT II

1. Women voters

Despite widespread insecurity and prevailing cultural norms, Afghan women participated in significant numbers in the 2014 elections. An approximate 37% of voters in the run-off round of the Presidential election were women. In comparison with 2010 Parliamentary election, about one million more women voted. At a provincial level, the lowest participation was recorded in the most insecure and culturally conservative provinces, such as Helmand, Zabul, and Uruzgan.

International media organizations reported on the enthusiastic female voter turnout in 2014. The BBC, for example, showcased a woman voter who came to vote carrying a newborn baby in the province of Helmand²⁷. Moreover, FEFA observers' group stated that "despite more security incidents, rocket attacks, roadside bombs, people still showed up in the most difficult areas. We also saw women in areas we did not expect."²⁸

²⁷BBC World News, television broadcast, 14 June 2014.

²⁸<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/14/afghanistan-votes-election-taliban-threat>, 14 June, 2014.

Elections	Female Voters %	Female Voters (million)	Total Voters (million)
2004 Presidential election	40%	3.2 m	8.1 m
2005 Parliamentary election	41%	2.6m	6.4m
2009 Presidential election and Provincial Council election	no female data		4.2m
2010 Parliamentary election	40%	1.7m	4.2m
2014 Presidential election (first round)	36%	2.4m	6.6m
2014 Presidential election (run-off)	37%	2.6m	7.1m
2014 Provincial Council elections	36%	2.2m	6.2m

Although a more extensive study would be necessary to understand voting behavior from a gender perspective, some preliminary observation may be anticipated by analyzing Provincial Council elections results. Voters' preference for female candidates was evident in Kabul and Daikundi, where four women in Kabul and one woman in Daikundi emerged as the top winners. In addition, a total of 18 women won Provincial Council seats without the help of the gender quota in 10 provinces, namely: Daikundi, Farah, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Kunduz, Logar, Nimroz, Samangan, and Wardak.

2. Women as candidates and elected representatives

This section will discuss the reform on the reserved seats, presidential and provincial council candidacy, the candidate nomination process, and the Provincial Council results.

Reserved seats for women in the Provincial Council elections

Amendments to the Electoral Law in 2013 by the Afghan Parliament, brought a reduction of women's reserved seats for each Provincial Council from 25% to 20%. This equates to 96 seats reserved for women out of a total of 458 seats nationally²⁹. The Parliamentary decision was a setback for women's political participation, as opportunities narrowed for women's representation at the subnational governance level.

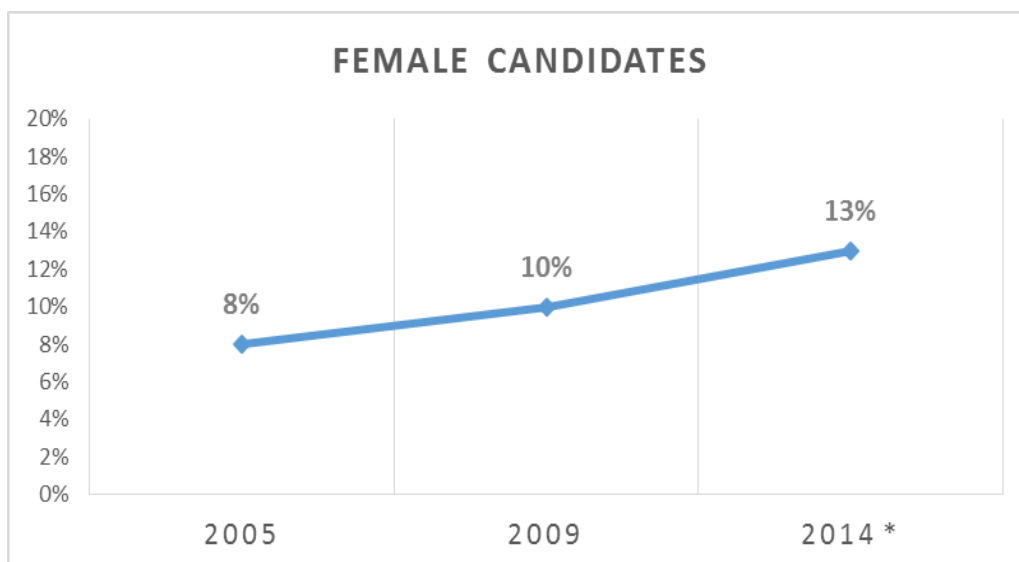
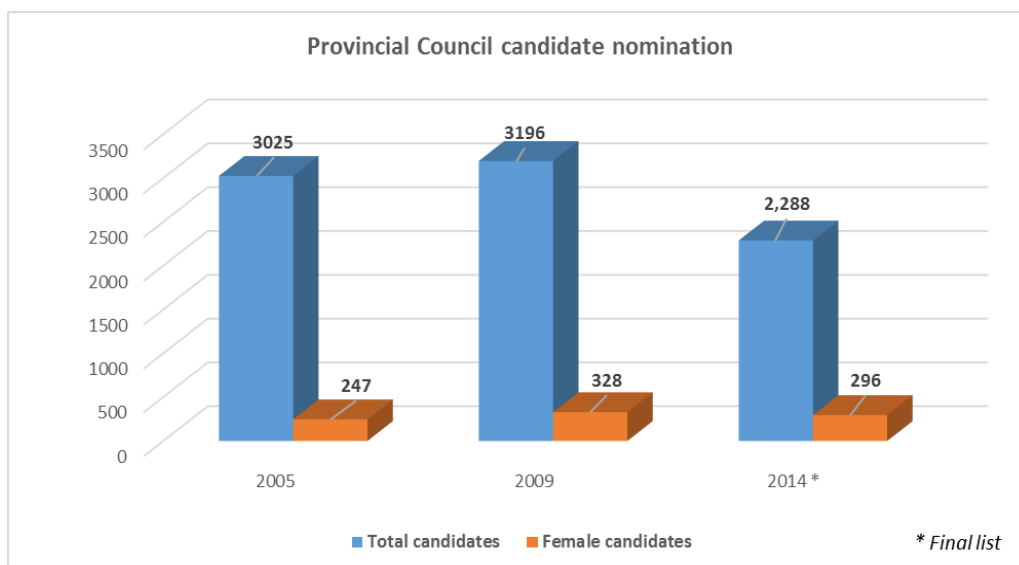
Candidate nomination process

Presidential candidacy - Only one woman nominated herself for the 2014 Presidential election. In addition, two women were selected as vice-presidential candidate of two (male) presidential contenders. The female presidential candidate did not qualify for candidacy as she failed to submit names and voter registration card numbers of 100,000 eligible voters with their signatures and finger prints from at least 20

²⁹By comparison, in 2010 the number of reserved seats for women was 124.

provinces, as required by the Law. Meeting such criteria has proved to be particularly challenging for women. Therefore, special focus needs to be given to explore ways to facilitate women in securing their candidacy for forthcoming elections.

Provincial Council candidate nomination - For the 2014 Provincial Council elections, of 2,295 total candidates registered, 13% women. This constitutes a positive trend compared to 2005 and 2009 Provincial Council elections. In total, 323 women registered, out of which 15 were disqualified by the IEC. The IECC disqualified a further 12 female nominees, bringing down the final number to 296. Those candidates were mostly disqualified for not meeting educational and age criteria. The encouraging trend of female candidacy should be complimented by electoral reform that expands political space for female representation across various levels of government, including District Councils.



The three-week nomination process proved to be challenging with respect to women's participation. Female registration showed a weak trend in the first week (16-22 September) with 30 out of 34 provinces not reaching the minimum to fill the reserved seats. As an exception, Khost, Takhar, Nimroz, and Farah provinces registered more women than was needed. Female registration improved during the second week, although 16 provinces still struggled to reach the required numbers to fill the reserved seats. Paktika, for example, had no female candidates registered until the end of the second week.



A young woman holding up her inked finger at a polling station in Kabul. (14 June 2014) Photo: ELECT II

Following the IEC decision to refund deposits for female candidates, registration improved significantly. It appears evident that the provision adopted had eliminated some financial constraints thus enabling more women to register. By the end of the registration process, all the provinces exceeded the targets with an average of three women candidates for every available

woman's quota seats nationwide: Kabul (51 candidates), Herat (23 candidates), and Balkh (17 candidates) recorded the highest female candidate registration; the lowest number of female registration was recorded in Kapisa, Logar, and Zabol, (only four women registered in each province) reflecting the divide with respect to insecurity and cultural conservatism.

Provincial Council election results

The results of the Provincial Council elections were encouraging from a gender perspective. The Law foresees a minimum quota of 96 female seats, while 97 women won a seat. Out of these 97 women, a total of 18 would have won their seats without the help of the reserved quota. Notably, the top three candidates in Kabul and the top candidate in Daikundi were women.

3. IEC Gender Unit

Structural and recruitment-related issues in the IEC Gender Unit appear to be the main reason weakening its position and role within the IEC. In fact, within the IEC Gender Unit none of the staff is part of the permanent civil service structure as all are under temporary National Technical Assistants (NTA) contracts funded by ELECT II. This prevent the development of capacities as well as building institutional memory within the unit, as opportunities for training, particularly outside the country, are limited while

not encouraged, as the Civil Service law³⁰ only applies to permanent staff. Furthermore, key positions, such as the head of the unit, have been vacant since August 2011 (the unit's National Gender Advisor was acting office-in-charge), despite continuous pressure from ELECT II to fill the position. With the departure of the National Gender Advisor in December 2014, two key positions currently vacant in the Unit. In response to ELECT II advice, the Acting Deputy CEO pledged to make the recruitment a priority for these positions. The ELECT II Gender Advisor also advised the IEC to consider including an international observer in the recruitment process.

Female staff at the IEC HQ and provincial offices

The IEC strategic plan states the target ratio for female staff is 30%. As of December 2014, the overall number of female staff was estimated to be 9%. Tracking numbers of female staff working for the IEC has, however, been a considerable challenge as data is not readily made available or shared by the IEC.

Female staff at IEC			
<u>Staff Category</u>	Total	Female	%
HQ - Tashkeel	106	17	13.82%
HQ - NTA	307	31	9.17%
Prov - Tashkeel	129	4	3.1%
Prov - NTA	42	0	-
Grand Total	584	52	8.9%

To our knowledge, 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. Regardless the IEC refers to encourage female staff recruitment for many of these vacant positions, the 30% minimum target appears evidently difficult to achieve. At HQ level, only 14% of the *tashkeel* positions are female, and 9% of the temporary positions.

The ELECT II Gender Advisor supports the IEC Gender Unit to reach the target in cooperation with IEC senior management. Out of ten departments at the IEC HQ only two are headed by women, namely the Capacity Development Department and the Plan and Policy Department. Although a considerable progress has to be noted in 2014 as per the presence of temporary female staff during electoral operations, the recruitment of regular female staff at the IEC HQ and in the provinces remains a challenge. This is a key priority of the ELECT II Gender Advisor and the IEC Gender Unit.

Gender officers in provincial offices

To promote gender programmes at the provincial level for the 2014 elections, the IEC had recruited and trained Gender officers for each of the 34 provinces. An induction training plus a refresher training were held for gender officers between September

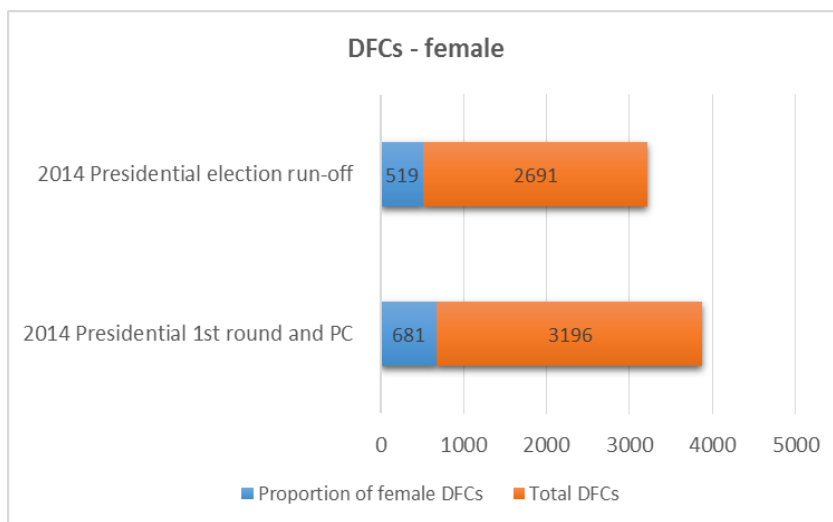
³⁰ Article 27, Civil Service Act 2005.

2013 and February 2014. The gender officers implemented a series of activities in coordination with the IEC Gender Unit and contributed to gender mainstreaming efforts at the provincial level.

Female staff recruited for electoral operations

The IEC hired around 100,000 staff for electoral operations. The key positions were District Field Co-ordinators (DFCs), Civic and Voter Educators (CVEs), Trainers, and polling staff.

Female District Field Co-ordinators (DFCs)

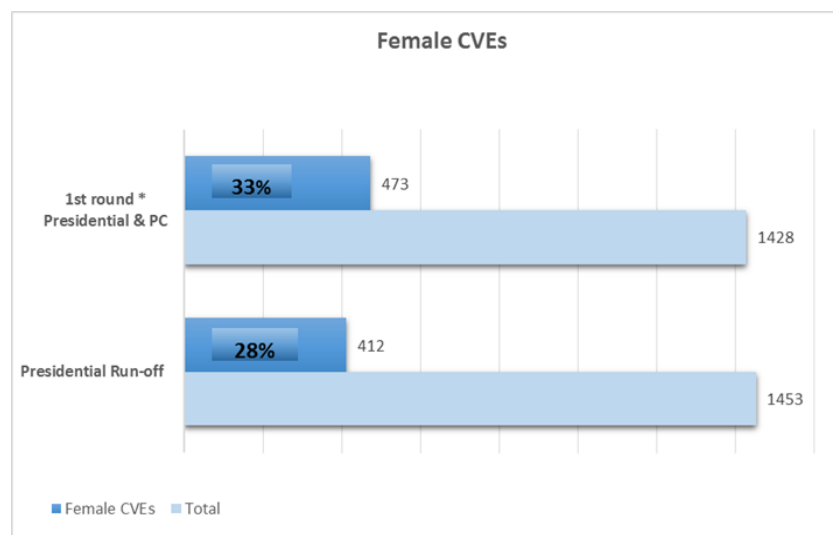


DFCs are the lead IEC officials in the district. DFCs are responsible for hiring district level staff, including polling staff.

Recruitment of female DFCs proved to be challenging in many provinces, particularly those with more serious security issues. Out of

34,200 applications, 3,800 (11%) were from women. In both rounds, around 20% DFCs were women. According to the IEC, cultural considerations precluded the recruitment of more female DFCs, as the functions included work after hours/night, dealing with money, having signature responsibilities, and unavoidable interaction with security and military personnel as well as truck drivers.

Female Civic and Voter Educators (CVEs)



The IEC hired CVEs two months prior to the first round of elections for voter education activities. In total, 1,428 CVEs were hired out of which 473 were women (33%) for the first round. In the second round, this number dropped to 28%. In addition recruitment of female-relatives was also undertaken as an

additional measure to encourage female participation as staff. A 3% increase in the proportion of female CVEs recruitment was noted, in comparison with the 2010 elections (30% CVEs were female). However, the IEC target of recruiting equal numbers of men and women could not be reached due a lack of applications from qualified female staff. Concerns over insecurity as well as educational qualifications and experience of among the main obstacles.

Female polling stations

The IEC established separate male and female polling stations. In both rounds, around 40% of the polling stations were specifically for women. Challenges were also faced to recruit female staff for polling stations in 2014 elections. Both in the first round and the run-off, about 40% of polling stations were assigned for female voters. However, almost 2,000 female polling stations were staffed with *male* IEC workers (mainly elderly men). The recruitment of male staff for female polling stations negatively impacts women’s access to voting. Furthermore, due to security reasons in the run-off round IEC closed a significant number of female polling stations in Herat, Balkh, and Bamyan where female participation in the first round was substantial. The ELECT II Gender Advisor will work with the IEC to discuss how to promote better access to polling stations for women in forthcoming elections.

Female polling staff

Every polling station has five staff, Polling Station Chairperson, Ballot Issuer, Identification Officer, Ballot Box Controller, and Queue Controller. Female polling staff constituted 24 and 22% of the total number of polling staff in the 2014 Provincial Council and Presidential elections (first round and second round, respectively).

Female call centre operators

The call centre operators were responsible for providing electoral information to the public. The call centre was based in Kabul and was staffed with 90 operators, of which 19% were women. Female operators played a crucial role in responding to female callers and addressing specific issues including women’s facilities for voting.

Election	Number of female operators	% of female operators	Total number of operators
2009 elections	15	17	90
2010 elections	18	20	90
2014 elections	17	19	90

Female searchers

Female searchers were recruited to ensure searching of female voters during both rounds. The Mol hired approximately 13,000 female searchers for more than 8,000 female polling stations. The finalization of the list was repeatedly delayed to the extent that it resulted in rushed and chaotic recruitment and training very close to the Election Day.

Women as observers, candidate agents, and in the media

This section explores women's participation as observers, candidate agents, and media professionals.

Observers

The IEC manages accreditation for both national and international observers. In comparison to Presidential election in 2009, the proportion of female national observers decreased by 9% in the first round and by 12% in the run-off of 2014 elections. Such difference could be attributed to the increased insecurity in the country. The IEC had called for greater participation of women observers, inviting observer organisations such as FEFA, TIFA, during the IEC-organised gender co-ordination meetings. Women play a key role as observers and women's participation is noteworthy in Afghanistan. The downward trend in the number of female national observers needs to be addressed and additional measures should be explore to ensure participation. In contrast, the number of international women observers increased.

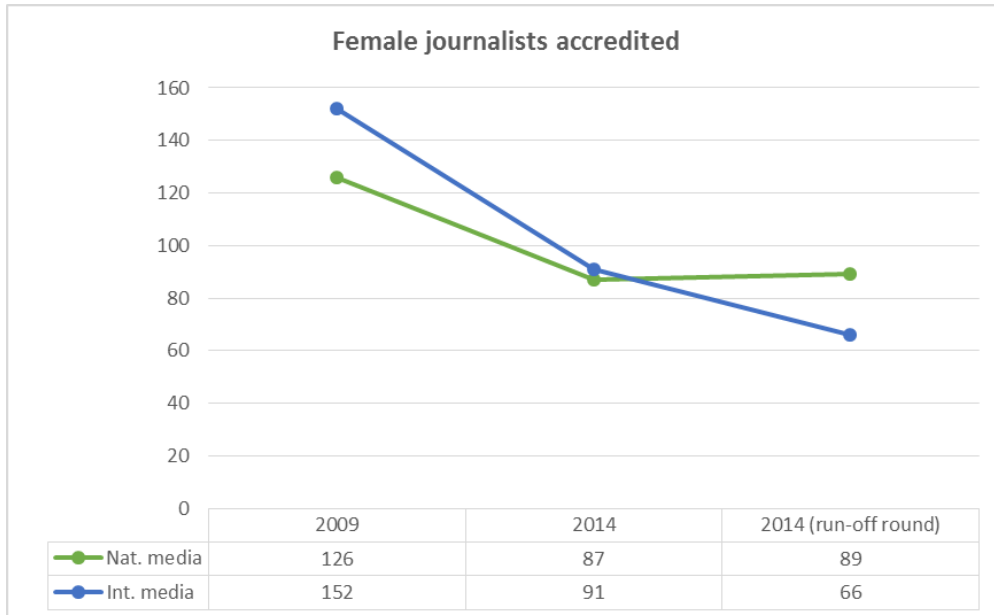
	2009			2014			Run Off 2014		
	Female	Total	%	Female	Total	%	Female	Total	%
Nat. Observers	3,758	9,228	41	4,669	14,585	32	5,360	1,885	29
Int. Observers	108	1,106	10	199	1,256	16	174	1,233	14

Candidate agents

Of the accreditation cards issued to Provincial Council candidate agents, 22% were for female agents. For the Presidential candidate agents, 24% were for women and for the political party agents, 18% were for women.

Accredited women working in the media

There has been a downward trend in the percentage of accredited women in the media. The percentage of national female media personnel covering elections decreased by 7% between 2009 and 2014 and by 12% over the same period for international females. As security ranks up amongst main factors preventing female journalist participation, such figures reflect a widespread struggle for women to impose themselves within the professional media environment, particularly in relation to the political debate.



Consultation with mullahs – release of Khutba

The IEC Gender Unit successfully liaised with the Ministry of Haj to promote awareness among men and women about women’s electoral participation. The IEC and the Ministry held joint meetings with mullahs in Kabul and in all the provinces. This resulted in a *Khutba* – a religious declaration on women’s participation – which was read in the major mosques across the country encouraging men to extend support to women to participate in the elections.

Co-ordination and joint effort with MOWA and women’s organisations for recruitment

A direct outcome from the IEC convened Gender and Elections Coordination meetings has been the acceptance of MOWA and women’s organizations to divulge IEC vacancy notices with potential female staff and provided the IEC with a list of potential candidates. Such co-ordination and information sharing contributed to the IEC effort to recruit female staff.

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 ELECTII 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 donors³¹. Through the various forums, such as the Project Board Meeting, the Technical Working Group, and the ELECT II Donor Group, ELECT II kept donors up-to-date throughout 2014 and discussed issues and developments with them.

C. UNAMA

On 17 March 2014, the UN Security Council extended UNAMA's mandate for another year. The mandate specifically includes electoral support. UNAMA plays a convening role with political stakeholders. Throughout 2014, ELECT II and UNAMA liaised closely, particularly during the election periods and the audit.

D. International Observer Organizations

ELECT II liaised with international election and audit observation organisations, including the EU EAT, the OSCE/ODIHR, Creative Associates, Democracy International, and National Democratic Institute. These organizations played an essential role during the audit, sending national and international observers to monitor the process.

E. Key political stakeholders

Throughout the audit, ELECT II management, in partnership with UNAMA, co-ordinated and mediated with the electoral teams of both presidential candidates.

E. Afghan National Security Forces and ISAF/NATO

ELECT II co-ordinated with ISAF to organise the timely retrieval of 22,828 ballot boxes from the IEC's provincial offices to Kabul. ISAF maintained a 24/7 presence at the IEC compound during the audit. ANSF played a key role in protecting electoral materials that were transported by road.

³¹ 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

In 2014, the project has been facing a number of significant and unforeseen issues, from the unprecedented ballot audit, credibility concerns of the IEC, to operational and timeline ambiguities for the next elections.

1. Unprecedented full audit process

- The political agreement required a direct implementation of the audit process, requiring ELECT II to adjust its advisory scope to a supervisory role, while on the other hand still working closely as advisors with the IEC in domains of logistics, training, and regulations.

This has put a lot of pressure on both the project and the team to find the right balance. Response: While UNAMA took the political lead during the audit process together with the swift deployment of the 128 UN audit supervisors helped the project to deal with this task.

2. Integrity and credibility IEC

- The issue of electoral integrity has been a concern during and in the aftermath of the Presidential and Provincial Council elections.

Actual and perceived electoral integrity issues have affected the IEC and IECC's credibility. The fallout of this could also undermine the conduct and perception of the Parliamentary and District Council elections if electoral integrity and credibility could not be restored.

Response: ELECT II is assisting the IEC with outlining enhanced integrity measures based on lessons learnt, while the issue of undue political involvement also to be addressed not only within the electoral management bodies but also with the wider group of direct partners and electoral stakeholders.

3. Electoral timeframe issues

- Given the protracted audit process of the 2014 presidential elections, it has become impossible to organise the Parliamentary elections within the constitutional foreseen window.

The protracted Presidential election made it impracticable to conduct preparations for the Parliamentary and District Council elections in spring 2015 in order to adhere to the constitutional date for the termination of the incumbent Lower House. In addition, the National Unity Government are pursuing electoral reforms which casts uncertainty over the timings of both the Parliamentary and District Council election. Uncertainty about the electoral timeline for the *Wolesi Jirga* and District Council Elections, affecting all upcoming electoral planning.

Response: Unspoken consensus by GIRoA and partners (UN, IEC, donors) that passing the constitutional deadline for the Parliamentary elections would not become

a political issue if sound electoral preparations, including a possible revision of the legal framework, may require more time.

4. Legal framework

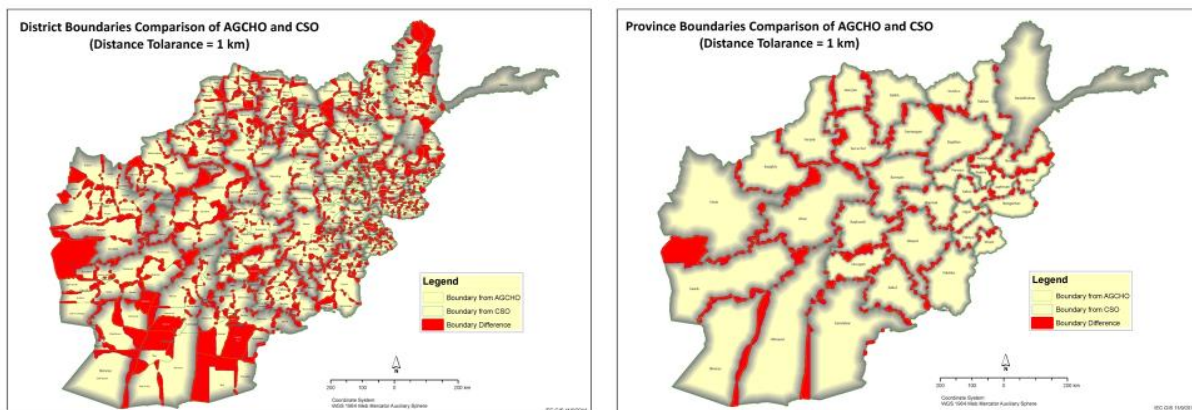
- The current legal framework for Parliamentary elections needs legal elaboration on the provision in the Electoral Law of 10 Kuchi representatives in seven constituencies, as well as how to implement the (nation-wide) quota of a minimum of three female Kuchi representatives.

The revised (2013) Electoral Law adjusted the Kuchi provision from one nation-wide 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 therefore the issue of proportional seat distribution per constituency as well as turnout estimates and related technical issues such as polling station allocation planning. In addition, legal consideration needs to be given as how to the implement of the (nation-wide) quota of a minimum three female Kuchi representatives.

Response: ELECT II continues to raise the issue with the IEC and partners to address this issue well ahead of the Parliamentary elections whilst working with the IEC on understanding the challenges and being prepared for different options.

5. Boundary delimitation

- No clear district boundaries have been set, undermining the conduct of District Council Elections.



Besides the fact that no *electoral* district boundaries have been established, geographical data from two official institutions, the Central Statistics Organisation (CSO) and the Afghan Geodesy and Cartography Head Office (AGCHO), show significant delimitation differences, both at the provincial and district level (see below in the graphs in red the boundary differences between CSO and AGCHO).

Response: IEC/ELECT II to form a co-ordination mechanism with AGCHO and CSO in order to define final provincial and district boundaries. In the absence of a decision by the above institutions, IEC to unilaterally define electoral boundaries.

6. Gender

- Failure to encourage women to participate significantly in the electoral process, both as voters as well as candidates, seriously affects women's representation.

Gender mainstreaming in elections remains a serious concern in Afghanistan, both in terms of voters' participation as well as female candidates' representation, but also in terms of female staff employed by the IEC, in particular at female polling stations, which enables women's participation in the electoral processes. In case the IEC fails to register sufficient female candidates for those elections, all other gender mainstreaming efforts to ensure women in elected positions become obsolete.

Wolesi Jirga: The revised (2013) Electoral Law states a minimum quota of 20% female elected members for the Parliamentary. (Previously the quota was 25%. In 2010, 69 women were elected for 249 WJ seats, which is 27%.) In addition, there is a risk that not all constituencies would meet the minimum quorum of female candidates, hence affected the total number of women to be elected during the elections. District Council: The Electoral Law does not foresee a minimum quota for female district council candidates, while required educational criteria (minimum grade 12) could be extra detrimental for women. In this respect, there is a severe risk that in many districts hardly any women would be elected.

Response and mitigation measures ELECT II and the IEC to take during candidate nomination:

- In case of renewed discussions on legal reform, proposals of amendments to the Electoral Law which review quorums and educational criteria to better benefit women's participation.
- IEC to look into the option to reimburse female candidates their candidate deposit, disregarding their eventual vote result.
- Targeted public outreach efforts at provincial and district level, engaging community leaders, religious leaders and women groups to encourage female participation and voting.

7. Voter registration

- The lack of an integrated voter register impairs proper polling station allocation and sound voter turnout verification.

The lack of a clear voter register has contributed to the electoral integrity issues during the 2014 Presidential and Provincial council elections, as it impairs proper allocation of polling stations and it does not allow voter turnout verification. This is also an issue for the Parliamentary and District Council elections. Prior to the 2014 elections, the IEC's proposals of a nationwide voter registration as well as a 'revalidation' exercise was rejected by GIRoA, 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. Given that the ‘Law on Registration of Population Records’, which provides the legal framework for the *e-tazkira*, was only signed in late 2014 and that implementation still has to be set up, the risk exists that the *e-tazkira* system will not yet be operational or not have sufficient people registered for the next Parliamentary and District Council elections, hence not providing any relevant voter registration data.

Response: IEC, with ELECT II support, to assess and propose different voter registration options, taking into account timeliness, budget, security and risks of disenfranchisement. Possibility of a (limited) provincial level top-up for new voters who turned 18 since 5 April 2014. Furthermore, the IEC, with ELECT II support, is working closely with the MoI and MoCIT, supported by IOM, to achieve in the long run the best integration of civic and voter registration data during the *e-tazkira* project.

8. IEC institutional issues

- Open vacancies of senior IEC positions (CEO/Deputy CEO Electoral Operations, Department Heads) as well as (political) ambiguity about the Commissioners’ positions, undermine ELECT II capacity development efforts as well as the IEC’s electoral planning capacity.

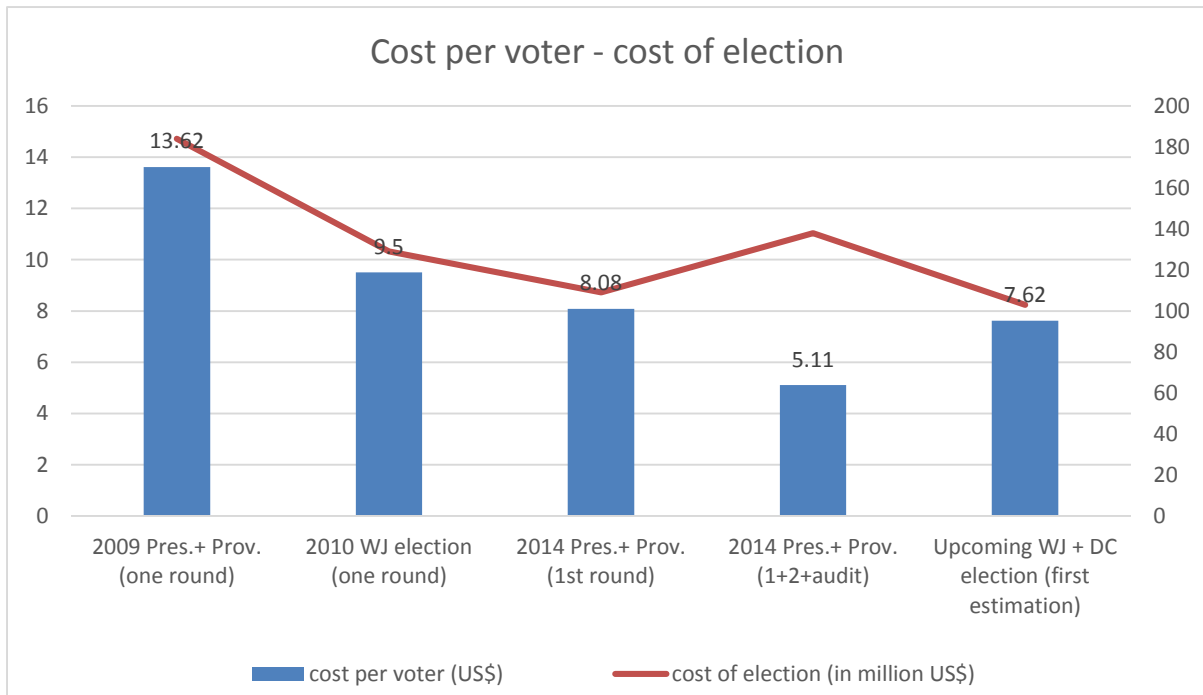
Response: ELECT II to continue raising the issue as a matter of concern for the IEC’s institutional capacity.

9. IEC Sustainability

- Concern about the IEC’s sustainability beyond the duration of ELECT II could affect the development of a long-term electoral tradition in Afghanistan.

Financial sustainability: Financial sustainability is a main issue and the key risk to maintain the country’s electoral institutions in the long-run. Electoral operations in Afghanistan have been funded by and large by the international community. The input from the GIRoA budget is low. The 2013 ‘Garmin mission’ recommended \$10 million to be allocated per year for the IEC to cover regular costs. In 2014, however, GIRoA allocated \$4.1 million, of which ultimately the only \$2.7 million was given. For 2015, the government allocated \$2 .5 million for the IEC.

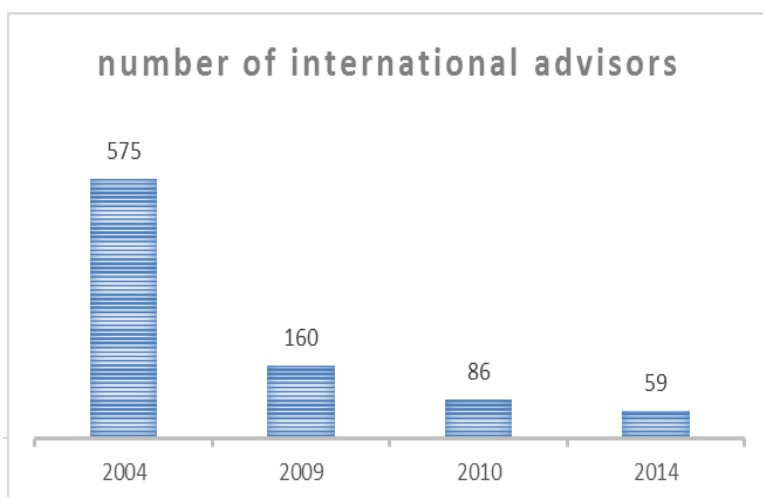
Different risks exist that the project, and by large the international community and the national government, can not ensure the IEC’s long-term sustainability if no holistic sustainability approach is worked out to assist the GIRoA at large.



Over the past years, the project managed to decrease the cost of elections in Afghanistan as well as the average cost per voter, as indicated below. In 2014, even with the inclusion of a complete, nationwide audit, the direct costs of electing an Afghan President appeared to be substantively less (34%) expensive than the 2009 Presidential Elections, and also less expensive than Parliamentary Elections held in 2010 and 2005.

Responses:

- ELECT II explores with the IEC further options of a decrease in spending for electoral operations.
- ELECT II continues to inform UN and donor partners of the importance of a national government budget that should cover sufficiently the IEC and IECC’s regular costs.
- The issue of electoral sustainability in Afghanistan is something that ELECT II can only address within the framework of a long-term strategy that also includes a reduction of foreign aid, and needs to be discussed by all partners at the highest government levels.



Technical sustainability:

Decreased reliance on international staff.

Each subsequent election has been supported by fewer international staff, from 575 in 2005 to just 59 in 2014 – a reduction of 89.7%.

10. ELECT II programmatic issues

- Due to ambiguity of the electoral timeline, the ELECT II 2015 AWP has been approved by donor partners for only Q1.
- Elections in summer/autumn 2015 may not provide enough lead time to mobilize resources.
- ELECT II staffing (vacancy of two senior positions).

Response: UNDP maintains close co-ordination with donor partners on Annual Work Planning 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

Risks anticipate the possibility of something that could affect the project in the future, and for which a mitigation action needs to be foreseen.

1. Security

- A deteriorated security environment, in particular decreased electoral security – affecting voters, candidates, IEC, ELECT II staff and/or electoral stakeholders – could lead to an impaired conduct of the elections, electoral disenfranchisements of groups or regions, and even lead to a rejection of the credibility of the electoral process.

Response:

Continued structured co-ordination with IEC, ANSF, and other security stakeholders regarding electoral security, at political and technical levels; while incorporating seasonal timing/weather conditions in the electoral timeline.

2. Electoral operations – timeline

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

Response:

Ensure that the electoral timeline foresees sufficient time for proper planning and conduct of all pre-election stages and operations.

3. Electoral integrity

- 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.

Response:

ELECT II 2015 Action Plan on Electoral Integrity.

4. District Council Elections – 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 (20,000+ candidates), could fail if not planned properly in time and in detail.

Response: Detailed and sound planning for District Council Elections in an electoral timeline that provides sufficient time for preparations.

5. Voter registration – e-tazkira

- The e-tazkira process is unable to produce in a timely and effective manner a civil register from which a sound voter register can be derived.

Response:

Close co-ordination with IOM and MIO/MOCIT on establishment of civic registration system and integrating voter registration data.

6. Gender

- Failure to encourage women to participate significantly in the electoral process, both as voters as well as candidates, seriously affects women's representation.

Response:

- In case of renewed discussions on legal reform, proposals of amendments to the Electoral Law which review quorums and educational criteria to better benefit women's participation.
- IEC to look into the option to reimburse female candidates their candidate deposit, disregarding their eventual vote result.
- Targeted public outreach efforts at provincial and district level, engaging community leaders, religious leaders and women groups to encourage female participation and voting.

7. IEC Capacity: Leadership – Civil Service reform issues

- Weak leadership, (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.

Response:

- Advising partners, including the government, 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 international HR Advisors who will work closely with the IEC on the Civil Service Commission reform, while providing oversight of other HR issues.
- Advising partners, including the government, of the importance to restructure the IEC after the WJ/DC elections if those are to be scheduled soon.

8. IEC Capacity Development

- Priorities given to electoral operations conflict with long-term capacity development activities. Delayed WJ/DC elections could absorb all focus and resources, detrimental for sound post-ELECT II sustainability planning.

Response:

- ELECT II to recruit senior Capacity Development Advisor with focus on the IEC's institutional capacity to enhance and further streamline capacity development efforts across the IEC, working closely with the Commissioners to prepare the IEC to streamline its organizational structure as recommended by the Civil Service Commission. In the meantime, ELECT II continues to work on long-term capacity of the IEC, by focusing on ensuring that staff is knowledgeable and that systems are in place.

9. ELECT II Programmatic Risks

- 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.

Responses:

- As recommended in 2013 (GARMIN mission), ELECT II currently works with an on-budget modality that indirectly still preserves an element of independence and oversight.
- ELECT II continues to establish more internal oversight mechanisms on operational-management issues, including the option of enabling more ELECT II advisors to have a supervisory role, in particular in IEC finance, HR, and procurement. Third-party monitoring control of large-scale transport contracts and field-level training programmes.
- ELECT II explores the continuation of the on-budget modality, in particular for sensitive electoral operations.

VII. LESSONS LEARNT

Many valuable lessons were learnt in 2014. These translate into many actionable items that ELECT II is optimistic can bring genuine improvements to the electoral process in Afghanistan. ELECT II initiated responses to many lessons learnt in 2014 and will continue to implement improvements in 2015.

In 2015, ELECT II will mine the data from the 2014 process with a view to focus on: imparting skills more systematically; establishing a more strategic institutional plan; establishing accountability mechanisms; elevating the importance of capacity development; promulgating values/integrity; instilling ownership/responsibility and work on continual refinements of the operation. The goal is to leave the IEC as an institution with sustainable infrastructure, knowledge and practices, and staffed by confident, professional employees.

A key lesson for ELECT II in 2014 concerns 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 will therefore work 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.

Comprehensive 2014 lessons learnt exercises

With ELECT II support, in the fourth quarter the IEC completed the most comprehensive lessons learnt program ever conducted by the IEC or JEMB, which included three days in each of eight regions and a four-day workshop in Kabul. ELECT II conducted two of its own internal lessons learnt workshops – one in April and one in November. Key topics and themes included sustainability, electoral fraud, capacity development, gender issues, public outreach, structural and administrative initiatives, and financial fraud. Additionally, in September, ELECT II facilitated a lessons learnt exercise with UN electoral experts on the audit process. Key ELECT II lessons learnt are summarized here. (The proceeding Future Plans section details concrete action points that address a number of lessons learnt identified here).

Electoral integrity

In preparation for the 2014 elections, a fraud mitigation plan was developed that focused on technical improvements, reduction of errors, and promotion of community ownership. Although a number of technical improvements were implemented that reduced opportunities for electoral fraud, malfeasance and/or a lack of electoral ethics committed by electoral workers – at different levels in the IEC– as well as undue ‘external’ political involvement, undermined the integrity of the electoral process. Contingency polling stations were a major source of fraud. Some ANSF and government officials ballot-stuffed openly. The principal lesson to be learnt is that many opportunities for fraud resulted from the fact that there was no voter registry. Fraud mitigation measures were successful to a degree but electoral integrity is

achieved through a complex combination of elements, including socio-economic factors and political will. Electoral integrity can, however, be increased through a revised fraud mitigation plan that includes technical integrity measures. Specifically, there should be more rigorous enforcement of punitive action against perpetrators of fraud.

Financial transparency

Key lessons can be learnt from a number of problems that were experienced across different areas. First, ELECT II discovered a number of financial irregularities and suspected mismanagement of financial resources by the IEC pertaining to the NIM advances released in 2014. This highlights the importance of continuous ELECT II oversight of IEC finances and exploration for continue on-budget modality. Second, during the 2014 elections approximately 1,500 polling stations were reported to have opened but no voting took place. Polling staff were, however, paid. Payroll verification criteria need to be strengthened.

IEC infrastructure

Infrastructure development was successful and produced real cost savings which will contribute to the long-term financial sustainability of the IEC. The infrastructure programme overcame significant challenges in 2014, including land ownership and quality control issues. Infrastructure development requires close scrutiny on the part of the IEC and ELECT II of local implementing partners, contractors, and sub-contractors. It also requires liaison with local stakeholders such as provincial governors, provincial councils, and an understanding of law, customs, and local politics.

Capacity development

Event-driven operational delivery often took precedence over capacity development in 2014. Furthermore, ELECT II capacity development during 2014 focused on developing the capacity of individuals rather than the institution. There is a need to institutionalize knowledge so that there is no gap when key IEC personnel leave the organisation. The capacity development of the IEC should be focused on three levels: individual, departmental, and institutional. Some areas with shortcomings for capacity development within the IEC are in the implementation of the strategic plan, development and implementation of standard operational procedure, and periodic reporting. A key lesson learnt is that capacity development needs to be given a higher priority during peak election operation periods.

Gender

The Gender Unit continued to have a weak position within the IEC due to a number of factors. This greatly hampered the Unit's advisory role and monitoring function. It is of the utmost importance that the Unit is strengthened through a permanent staff structure and the recruitment of an experienced head with robust leadership skills. There were also a number of lessons learnt with regard to female participation in the

elections. First, about 2,000 female polling stations were staffed by men. This compromised women's access to polling stations. Second, the IEC recruitment process marginalized women due to the terms of reference and job requirements, especially for positions in rural areas where education levels are low. Third, the IEC's decision to refund deposits for Provincial Council female candidates served as a motivation for them to nominate themselves.

VIII. FUTURE PLANS

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 2014 there was no clear decision or policy on what the election reform will entail, including what scope or timeline it will encompass. ELECT II was, however, ready to assist upon request and able to provide technical advice on maximizing the success of the electoral process in the short term. ELECT II was 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 will revise its structure to elevate capacity development to 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 initiated work with the IEC to develop institutional knowledge products that will be accessible to the IEC and which will provide them with an institutionalised 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 fraud mitigation strategy**

The project is in discussions with IFES to engage an electoral expert to assist with the revision of the 2015 IEC fraud mitigation strategy. The 2013 strategy was in large part based on the IFES Afghanistan integrity assessment which he drafted. This would provide significant value and continuity of development to the IEC's strategy.

- **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 organisations 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 was 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 to engage more actively with the Mol to explore possibilities of inserting a brief module in the training curriculum on this issue.

- **Technical integrity measures**

The project is formulating a draft of technical improvements which focus both on improvements to the operational framework but also work to ensure compliance and reporting.

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.

- **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 the past 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.

Strengthening communication with donors

- **Better Reporting**

ELECT II is committed to providing more timely regular updates, with more detail and greater analysis. Furthermore, UNDP aims to deliver more streamlined, focused, and analytical quarterly reports. ELECT II donor meetings will be more structured and will ensure that donors are regularly updated on the elaboration of risks.

IX. ANNEXES

- A. Annex 1: Financial Table**
- B. Annex 2: Expenses by Output**
- C. Annex 3: Expenses by Donor**
- D. Annex 4: Risk Log**
- E. Annex 5: Issue Log**

ANNEX 1: FINANCIAL TABLE

The Interim Donor Report for the Period Jan - Dec 2014 for ELECT II - 00063078

Annex 1. Financial Table

Donor Name	COMMITMENT/ PREVIOUS YEARS RECORD				CURRENT YEAR (2014)						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 2014 (f)	Other Revenue (g)	Prior Period Adjustment Expenses of (PPE) (h)	Expenses (i)	Closing Balance I=(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) (n)	Available Resources O=(i -j - k-m)
AusAid	10,472,610	10,472,610	9,674,494	22,531	820,647	-			754,026	66,620		32,532	-	-	34,088
Denmark	6,651,291	4,817,774	3,292,829	1,537	1,526,483	1,833,517			3,332,743	27,256		26,363	-	-	893
DFID	31,698,206	26,725,968	16,644,802	14,579	10,095,745	4,972,238			12,805,308	2,262,675		33,632	0	-	2,229,043
EC	26,786,483	8,442,421	6,286,364	12,667	2,168,723	17,457,640			17,240,163	2,386,200	403,031	9,764	886,423	-	1,973,405
France	2,680,220	2,680,220	-		2,680,220	-			2,673,812	6,408			-		6,408
Germany	15,120,012	5,120,012	4,970,430	(114,942)	34,640	10,000,000			6,785,055	3,249,584	40,520		-		3,209,064
Italy	1,440,000	1,000,000	187,897	-	812,103	440,000			1,003,898	248,205	32,485	30,493	0		185,228
Japan	24,978,313	24,978,313	1,691,713	-	23,286,600	-			19,455,861	3,830,739			-	-	3,830,739
Korea	1,872,741	357	-		357	1,872,384			1,256,360	616,381			(0)		616,381
Netherland	10,000,000	4,865,000	-		4,865,000	3,135,000	7		7,767,894	232,113	167,528	1,753	2,000,000		62,832
Norway	16,906,682	6,971,630	1,838,451	-	5,133,179	5,007,511			8,804,793	1,335,898	56,502	46,690	4,927,541		1,232,706
SDC	1,127,396					679,502			680,190	(688)			447,894		(688)
SIDA	9,002,587	4,542,987	2,565,813		1,977,174	3,070,782			2,706,476	2,341,480			1,388,819	-	2,341,480
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	-					
USA	1,700,000	-	-		-	1,700,000			1,163,152	536,848			-		536,848
USAID	65,720,825	369,567	369,567		-	65,351,258			64,952,215	399,043	244,795		-		154,248
Total	228,157,365	101,986,858	48,508,220	(63,629)	53,415,010	116,519,830	7	-	152,381,946	17,552,901	944,861	181,227	9,650,676	-	16,426,814

Note:

i) The figures provided in the above statement are provisional; the final figures will be known once the 2014 year closure exercise is completed.

ii) 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 - Dec 2014 for ELECT II - 00063078

Annex 3. Expenses by Output/ELECT II

Project Output ID and Description	2014 Budget (AWP)	Cumulative Expenses (Jan-Dec 2014)	Delivery Rate
Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	8,766,489	6,756,431	77%
Sub-Total	8,766,489	6,756,431	77%
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.	1,848,559	1,195,216	65%
Sub-Total	1,848,559	1,195,216	65%
Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	8,219,524	6,836,748	83%
Sub-Total	8,219,524	6,836,748	83%
Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	11,254,009	10,404,964	92%
Sub-Total	11,254,009	10,404,964	92%
Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	39,054,865	36,259,612	93%
Sub-Total	39,054,865	36,259,612	93%
Output 6 (00087513): The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced	3,170,981	3,317,363	105%
Sub-Total	3,170,981	3,317,363	105%
Output 7 (00083558): Human resource and infrastructural capacity of the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan developed (Japanese support): Linked / contributing to Output 1	23,286,600	19,455,861	84%
Sub-Total	23,286,600	19,455,861	84%
Output 8 (00087514): The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced (Output 7 according to Prodoc)	1,377,495	784,025	57%
Sub-Total	1,377,495	784,025	57%
Output 9 (00087872) Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow - Phase II (ELECT-II) USAID Support Linked to All/ contributing to Output 1	64,281,833	64,952,215	101%
Sub-Total	64,281,833	64,952,215	101%
Output 11 (00089564): Female searchers	3,572,384	2,419,512	68%
Sub-Total	3,572,384	2,419,512	68%
Grand Total	164,832,737	152,381,946	92%

ANNEX 3: EXPENSES BY DONOR

The Interim Donor Report for the Period Jan - Dec 2014 for ELECT II - 00063078

Annex 3. Expenses by Donor-ELECT II

Donor Name	Project Output ID and Description	2014 Budget (Revised AWP)***	Commulative Expenses (Jan-Dec-2014)	Delivery Rates
AusAid	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.		(23,508)	0%
	Output 3 (ID 00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	94,156	88,736	94%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	11,351	(2,118)	0%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	715,140	690,916	97%
Sub-Total		820,646	754,026	92%
Denmark	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	259,036	263,197	102%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	160,500	163,833	102%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	1,416,345	1,363,421	96%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	1,542,288	1,542,292	100%
Sub-Total		3,378,169	3,332,743	99%
DFID	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	1,500,519	448,558	30%
	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.	57,967	12,085	21%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	522,160	524,524	100%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	1,367,961	911,293	67%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	10,446,750	10,211,541	98%
	Output 8 (00087514): The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced	1,286,195	697,307	54%
Sub-Total		15,181,551	12,805,308	84%

EC	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	5,222,878	4,353,937	83%
	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.	1,790,592	1,206,640	67%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	3,870,444	2,905,088	75%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner		(860)	0%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	6,395,481	5,902,883	92%
	Output 6 (00087513): The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced	2,540,981	2,872,475	113%
Sub-Total		19,820,376	17,240,163	87%
France	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	297,973	286,836	96%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	1,223,458	1,240,791	101%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	299,279	288,198	96%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	859,512	857,987	100%
Sub-Total		2,680,222	2,673,812	100%
Germany	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	10,800	8,958	83%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	8,024,493	6,776,098	84%
Sub-Total		8,035,293	6,785,055	84%
Italy	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	264,960	85,847	32%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	403,390	352,541	87%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	369,749	388,519	105%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	214,000	176,991	83%
Sub-Total**		1,252,099	1,003,898	80%

Japan	Output 7 (00083558): Human resource and infrastructural capacity of the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan developed (Japanese support): Linked / contributing to Output 1	23,286,600	19,455,861	84%
Sub-Total		23,286,600	19,455,861	84%
Korea	Output 11 (00089564): Female searchers	1,872,384	1,256,360	67%
Sub-Total		1,872,384	1,256,360	67%
Netherland	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	175,480	140,097	80%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	4,244,632	4,060,914	96%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	3,579,886	3,566,884	100%
Sub-Total		7,999,998	7,767,894	97%
Norway	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	54,495	692	1%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	1,472,155	1,095,583	74%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	3,325,474	3,164,711	95%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	5,235,043	4,490,960	86%
	Output 8 (00087514): The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced	53,500	52,847	99%
Sub-Total		10,140,668	8,804,793	87%
SDC	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	679,502	680,190	100%
Sub-Total		679,502	680,190	100%
SIDA	Output 1 (00080393): The IEC's institutional competencies, systems and facilities are improved	1,166,628	1,317,365	113%
	Output 3 (00080395): The IEC's engagement and informational outreach with key stakeholders and the electorate is enhanced.	297,781	325,554	109%
	Output 4 (00080396): The IEC's operational management functions and the project support services are provided in a transparent, efficient and effective manner	208,418	221,929	106%
	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	362,769	362,870	100%
	Output 6 (00087513): The electoral dispute resolution mechanisms of the electoral process are enhanced	630,000	444,888	71%
	Output 8 (00087514): The electoral media regulatory mechanisms are enhanced	37,800	33,871	90%
Sub-Total		2,703,396	2,706,476	100%

UNDP	Output 5 (00087512): The conduct of polling, counting and result management operations by the IEC is improved	1,000,000	1,000,000	100%
Sub-Total		1,000,000	1,000,000	100%
USA	Output 11 (00089564): Female searchers	1,700,000	1,163,152	68%
Sub-Total		1,700,000	1,163,152	68%
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	64,281,833	64,952,215	101%
Sub-Total		64,281,833	64,952,215	101%
Grand total		164,832,737	152,381,946	92%

Note:

i) The negative expenditures under AusAid and EC are due to the change in accounting practice in ATLAS, UNDP has changed its capitalization threshold on Assets.

ii) The over spent under Denmark, EC, France, Italy, SIDA and USAid donors is because of the Voter Audit process that was started in July and continued until end of October 2014. It was an additional activity that was not planned at the beginning of the year.

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. 	high	ELECT II 2015 Action Plan on Electoral Integrity.	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. 	high	<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. 	High	<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. 	Medium	<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.	High	ELECT II security and UNDP CO security work closely together with UN DSS as well as IEC security, and nation security (ANSF) partners.	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 (including CTA) to be replaced	High	Intensified recruitment process to find and recruit suitable candidates	UNDP CO