



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

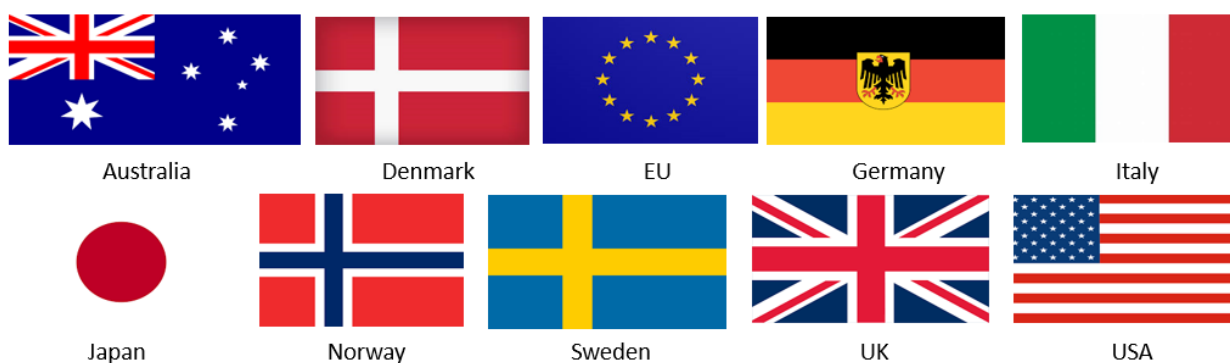
# UN Electoral Support Project (UNESP)

## 2020 FIRST QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT



UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

## DONORS



## PROJECT INFORMATION

<b>Project ID:</b>	00105005
<b>Duration:</b>	01 October 2017 – 31 December 2019
<b>ANDS Component:</b>	Governance, Rule of Law, Human Rights
<b>Contributing to NPP &amp; ANPDF:</b>	NPP 1: National Transparency and Accountability NPP 6: National Human Rights and Civic Responsibilities ANPDF: 5.3.A: Reforming the Public Sector
<b>CPD Outcome:</b>	Outcome 1: Improved legitimate, transparent and inclusive governance at all levels that enables progressive realization of human rights
<b>UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome:</b>	Outcome 2: Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development. Output 2.2.2: Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability.
<b>Total Budget 2017-2020:</b>	\$ 134,488,151
<b>Annual Budget 2020:</b>	\$ 34,621,097
<b>Unfunded Amount:</b>	\$ 0
<b>Implementing Partner:</b>	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
<b>Responsible Parties:</b>	Independent Election Commission (IEC), Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC)
<b>Project Manager a.i.:</b>	Ali Al-Bayati
<b>Responsible Head of Programme a.i.:</b>	Sainey Ceesay

**COVER PAGE PHOTOS:** Provincial IEC staff conduct the recount [as part of implementing ECC decisions in nine provinces] in the presence of observers in Sar-e-Pul province.

## ACRONYMS

AABRAR	Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation
ACSFO	Afghanistan Civil Society Forum
ACCRA	Afghan Central Civil Registration Authority
ANDSF	Afghanistan National Defense and Security Forces
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections
BVV	Biometric Voter Verification
DCEO	Deputy Chief Electoral Officer
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DC	District Council
ECC	Electoral Complaints Commission
EDR	Electoral Dispute Resolution
EMB	Electoral Management Body
ERD	External Relations Department
ESG	Electoral Support Group
EU	European Union
FEFA	Free and Fair Elections Forum of Afghanistan
GoIRA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HQ	Headquarters
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IEC	Independent Election Commission
IPOD	Information and Public Outreach Department
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NATO RS	North Atlantic Treaty Organization Resolute Support Mission
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NTC	National Tally Centre
NUG	National Unity Government
PC	Polling Centre
PC	Provincial Council
PECC	Provincial Electoral Complaints Commission
PEO	Provincial Election Officer
PIEC	Provincial Independent Election Commission
Prodoc	Project Document
PS	Polling Station
TEFA	Transparent Elections Foundation of Afghanistan
THRA	Training Human Rights Organization for Women
TV	Television
UK	United Kingdom
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESP	United Nations Electoral Support Project
USA	United States of America
VR	Voter Registration
WJ	Wolesi Jirga

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Contents

I.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	i
	EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER.....	ii
II.	RESULTS .....	1
A.	OUTPUT 1: Administration of credible elections is facilitated by the meeting of key IEC structural and planning milestones. ....	1
	EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER.....	3
B.	OUTPUT 2: Credible electoral dispute resolution (EDR) is provided by the ECC.....	6
	EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER.....	9
C.	OUTPUT 3: Afghan public and political stakeholders are informed of the electoral process and committed to participating in the next electoral cycle in accordance with the law. ....	11
	EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER.....	15
D.	OUTPUT 4: A polling centre-specific voter list for the next elections is produced by the IEC. ....	17
	EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER.....	17
E.	OUTPUT 5: The IEC and ECC provide credible administration of an electoral dispute resolution for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections, respectively.....	19
	EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER.....	19
F.	OUTPUT 6: The IEC and ECC are able to provide credible administration of, and electoral dispute resolution for the 2019 Presidential elections.....	22
	EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER.....	24
III.	GENDER-SPECIFIC RESULTS .....	26
IV.	PARTNERSHIPS.....	26
V.	ISSUES .....	27
VI.	RISKS .....	27
VII.	LESSONS LEARNED.....	28
VIII.	FUTURE PLANS.....	28
IX.	ANNEXES.....	29
	ANNEX I: FINANCIAL TABLE.....	29
	ANNEX II: EXPENSES BY OUTPUT .....	30
	ANNEX III: ISSUE LOG .....	31
	ANNEX IV: RISK LOG .....	32
	ANNEX V: KEY DEVELOPMENTS AROUND THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.....	36

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2020 first quarterly progress report for the United Nations Development Programme United Nations Electoral Support Project (UNDP-UNESP) covers the period 1 January to 31 March 2020. The report is structured around the outputs outlined in the UNESP Project Document (Prodoc) of August 2019, no-cost extension for 2020 and corresponding Annual Work Plan (AWP) for 2020. UNDP-UNESP with funding from Australia, Denmark, Sweden, the European Union (EU), Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States of America (USA) provided financial, operational, advisory and technical support to the two Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs), the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) of Afghanistan to achieve the following:

**Adjudication of registered complaints against preliminary results:** Following announcement of preliminary results by IEC on 22 December 2019, ECC initiated another complaints registration period and proceeded to register 16,738 complaints from 23 to 25 December at the ECC and provincial ECC offices (PECCs). The ECC and PECCs, with legal inputs from UNDP-UNESP, completed adjudication of the registered complaints within the legal timeline of 15 working days.

**Appeals against decisions from adjudication of complaints against preliminary results:** Following the prolonged process of notifying parties on decisions reached on registered complaints, ECC received appeals from 16 to 20 January. ECC received 6,377 appeals across 29 provinces. No appeal was filed in Parwan, Wardak, Takhar, Jawzjan and Badghis within the five-day period. The highest number of appeals were received Kandahar (1,573), Paktia (853), Nangarhar (818), Khost (772), Kabul (505), and Paktika (485) provinces. On 5 February, ECC announced seven decisions and shared a copy of the final decisions made on the appeal cases to the IEC for implementation.

**IEC implements ECC decisions:** The IEC Secretariat with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP on the interpretation and implementation of ECC decisions conducted the special audit for two decisions on 15 and 16 February and recount of 298 polling stations (PSs) across nine provinces from 16 to 17 February. Then, from 17 to 18 February IEC, with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP, the IEC processed audit and recount results at the National Tally Centre (NTC) paving the way for announcement of final results on 18 February.

**Announcement of final results:** On 18 February, IEC announced results. From the final results, Mohammad Ashraf Ghani was declared the winner with 923,868 votes [50.64%]; Dr. Abdullah Abdullah with 720,990 votes [39.52%]; Gulbuddin Hekmatyar with 70,242 votes [3.85%] and Rahmatullah Nabil with 33,921 votes [1.86%]. On 9 March 2020, the incumbent President Ashraf Ghani was sworn in for a second term in

office; Amrullah Saleh sworn in as First Vice President; Sarwar Danish sworn in as Second Vice President and by a presidential decree, Mohammad Yusuf Ghazanfar was also appointed a Special Envoy with a rank of Vice President. Second runner-up Dr. Abdullah Abdullah rejected the final results and held a swearing-in ceremony on the same day.

**Challenges:** Lessons learned exercises could not be rolled out at provincial level following the adoption of alternative work modalities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, UNDP-UNESP has been working with the EMBs to modify the methodology of gathering inputs on lessons from the 2019 Presidential election.

**Looking Ahead:** UNDP-UNESP will focus on the following in the next quarter:

- providing additional inputs to proposed concepts for future election events [Ghazni Wolesi Jirga, District Council and Provincial Council elections];
- providing technical inputs to concept for voter registration;
- providing technical support for the conducting of lessons learned exercises;
- direct support to the Commissioners on election management; and
- implementing identified training initiatives upon successful contracting of relevant training service providers.

Future electoral assistance support needs are yet to be finalized, and subject to recommendations of the Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) or Desk Review.

## **EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER**

During the quarter, a total of US\$ 3,533,348 was spent for this project. For more details, please see [Annex 2](#).

## II. RESULTS

### A. OUTPUT 1: Administration of credible elections is facilitated by the meeting of key IEC structural and planning milestones.

UNDP-UNESP provided advisory and operational support to the IEC targeting communications, strategic and operational planning, IEC structures, procedures and systems, including the electoral environment in which the commission operates.

#### IEC Recruitment

**Permanent staff:** The Tashkeel structure increased from 465 to 582 staff as guided by Decree 2000 of 30 October 2019 resulting in a vacancy rate of 28 percent compared to 10 percent in the last quarter. The IEC, using gender inclusive recruitment and human resources policies revised with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP recruited two senior staff (Logistics Director and Provincial Electoral Officer for Badakhshan).

#	Category	Quarter 4, 2019			Quarter 1, 2020		
			No.	%		No.	%
1	Filled Tashkeel positions		417	90		420	72
2	Vacant Tashkeel positions		48	10		162	28
3	Tashkeel positions in approved organogram		465			582	
4	Gender breakdown of recruited Tashkeel positions	Male	Female	% Female	Male	Female	% Female
		387	30	7	392	28	7
5	Seniority breakdown of recruited Tashkeel positions	Senior	Other	% Senior	Senior	Other	% Senior
		76	341	18	87	333	21
6	Gender breakdown of Senior positions (Grades 1-3)	Male	Female	% Female	Male	Female	% Female
		71	5	7	83	4	5
7	Gender breakdown of other positions (Grades 4+)	Male	Female	% Female	Male	Female	% Female
		316	25	7	307	26	8

Table 1: IEC HR Breakdown Quarter 1, 2020 compared to Quarter 4, 2019

#### IEC Capacity Building

**Lessons learned workshops:** The IEC and UNDP-UNESP discussed the conducting of lessons learned workshops aimed at a reflection on 2019 electoral process. Consequently, UNDP-UNESP developed a concept note outlining the methodology to be used, number and types of participants and required number of workshops. Following changes to work modalities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, IEC with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP developed a questionnaire to solicit inputs on lessons learned from the provincial level. This questionnaire will be finalized and disseminated to the provinces for information gathering in the next quarter.

**Capacity building related trainings:** In line with training needs identified in the 2019 Training Needs Assessments, UNDP-UNESP facilitated procurement process for the



capacity building initiatives. The procurement process is ongoing, with implementation of capacity building trainings anticipated from the next quarter [if a service provider is identified at the completion of evaluation].

### **IEC Regulations, Guidelines, Procedures, Codes of Conduct, and Plans**

In the period under review, the IEC Legal department, with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP developed and supported subsequent implementation of relevant procedures, timelines, codes of conduct and concept papers. The procedures and timelines developed as preparedness for possible run-off became redundant following the announcement of final results:

- **Procedures for:** [1] Joint Committee approved by both Commissions; [2] Polling and Counting for possible Presidential run-off election.
- **Timelines for:** [1] possible Presidential run-off election.
- **Codes of Conduct for:** [1] IEC staff to be involved in special audit and recount as part of implementing the decisions of the ECC.
- **Concept papers drafted for:** [1] Provincial Council (PC) and Ghazni Wolesi Jirga (WJ) elections; [2] District Council elections.

At the request of the Legal Department, UNDP-UNESP updated the legal analysis and observation paper on the affected provisions of the Election Law following the Presidential decree of February 2019. Further, UNDP-UNESP developed and submitted another legal analysis and observations on the unaffected<sup>1</sup> legal provisions of the Election Law.

**Gender considerations in development and implementation of plans and procedures:** UNDP-UNESP provided gender inputs into the development of the action plan for the possible Presidential run-off election. This included strategies to improve recruitment of women as Civic Educators (CEs); and establishing an enabling environment for women to participate in public outreach events prior to the run-off.

**IEC Asset and Public Financial Management:** UNDP-UNESP continued to provide advisory support to the IEC on financial and administrative processes. The project supported IEC management and the Deputy Chief Electoral Officer (DCEO) to reactivate the tagging and registration of assets in the Asset Tracking System, the registration process is ongoing.

**IEC Strategic Plan and Operational Plans:** The IEC, with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP developed an operational plans for possible Presidential run-off election. Following the announcement of final results, the implementation of the plan became redundant. UNDP-UNESP began preliminary discussions on the strategic planning

---

<sup>1</sup> Unaffected legal provisions are those legal provisions that remain intact and are not affected by the Presidential decree.



process for the IEC; the planning process will be informed by recommendations of the Needs Assessment Mission anticipated for the next quarter.

### **Security coordination**

**Security coordination for special audit and recounts:** Following announcement of the decisions regarding the special cases by the ECC, UNDP-UNESP provided inputs to the security cell in finalization of security arrangements for the implementation of recounts across 298 polling stations in nine provinces<sup>2</sup>. Consequently, the Security Coordination Cell, with inputs from UNDP-UNESP developed and coordinated implementation of the movement plan for materials and 60 staff and coordinated retrieval of audit and recount materials through the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP).

### **EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER**

During the quarter, a total of US\$ 2,216,780 was spent for this output. For more details, please see [Annex 2](#).

---

<sup>2</sup> Provinces: Badakhshan, Faryab, Ghazni, Helmand, Kabul, Kandahar, Nangahar, Sar-e-Pul and Takhar.

Below is a snapshot of where UNDP-UNESP is in relation to its 2020 quarter one targets.

Output 1 performance indicator table

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
1.1 A comprehensive Strategic Plan is designed and adopted by the IEC, including an M&E plan.	No	Yes	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned for this Quarter.
1.2 Number of reviews/assessments of the comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan in line with the IEC's Strategic Plan.	0	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
1.3.1 Percentage of recruited Tashkeel staff in relation to the approved IEC organigram (disaggregated F/M).	T: 89.7% F: 7% M: 93%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
1.3.2 Percentage of IEC Tashkeel staff who have received induction and technical training and are therefore able to effectively fulfil their functions (disaggregated F/M).	T: 40% F: 18% M: 42%	T: 80% F: 12% M: 88%	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned for this Quarter.
1.4 Availability of an Institutional Cooperation Framework.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
1.5 Extent to which the IEC is compliant with the Afghan public financial management system (Scale: not compliant, somewhat compliant, fully compliant).	Fully compliant	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
1.6 Comprehensive asset management, logistics and transport procedures are updated, approved and implemented by the IEC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
1.7 Number (or %) of IEC operational plans and procedures that incorporate specific needs of women.	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
1.8 Availability of a comprehensive and credible list of polling locations for elections approved and published by the IEC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
1.9 Availability of finalized boundaries for the Wolesi Jirga, district council and provincial council constituencies published by the IDLG and IEC.	Dropped in May 2018.	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned.
1.10 Availability of revised and approved regulations, procedures and plans for (1) voter registration, (2) candidate nominations, (3) polling procedures and (4) results management are adopted and implemented by the IEC.	4	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
1.11 Availability of approved budgeted operational plan for the next elections incorporating (1) voter registration, (2) candidate nomination, (3) polling operations, (4) counting operations, results management & announcement, (5) comprehensive electoral budget (Score: 1-5).	5	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
1.12 A functional elections security coordination mechanism in place.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.

## B. OUTPUT 2: Credible electoral dispute resolution (EDR) is provided by the ECC.

UNDP-UNESP provided support to the ECC to fulfil its role in electoral dispute resolution in accordance with the Afghan electoral legal framework. The project provided legal inputs during investigation and analysis of electoral complaints and to define and enforce the legal and regulatory requirements for participation in and contestation of the elections.

### ECC Recruitment

**Permanent staff:** The ECC did not recruit any permanent staff (*Tashkeel*), consequently the staffing breakdown remained unchanged from last quarter. The Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) reportedly rejected the proposed expanded staffing structure citing a Presidential decree that bans governmental ministries and directorates from increasing permanent staff in *Tashkeel* structures. In the past, IARCSC rejected the proposed structure noting the proposal as untimely at that point in the fiscal year.

#	Category	Quarter 4, 2019			Quarter 1, 2020		
		No.	%		No.	%	
%	Filled Tashkeel positions		377	92		377	92
2	Vacant Tashkeel positions		33	8		33	8
3	Tashkeel positions in approved organogram		410			410	
4	Gender breakdown of recruited Tashkeel positions	Male	Female	% Female	Male	Female	% Female
		344	33	9	344	33	9
5	Seniority breakdown of recruited Tashkeel positions	Senior	Other	% Senior	Senior	Other	% Senior
		73	304	19	73	304	19
6	Gender breakdown of Senior positions (Grades 1-3)	Male	Female	% Female	Male	Female	% Female
		68	5	7	68	5	7
7	Gender breakdown of other positions (Grades 4+)	Male	Female	% Female	Male	Female	% Female
		276	28	9	276	28	9

Table 2: ECC HR Breakdown Quarter 1, 2020 compared to Quarter 4, 2019

**Temporary staff:** Following Presidential approval for recruitment of 300 temporary staff for the call centre; data entry into the electoral dispute resolution (EDR) case management system and various roles across departments and sections, field reports indicated that ECC commenced recruitment processes to fill the approved positions.

### ECC Capacity Building

**Lessons learned workshops:** UNDP-UNESP developed and submitted the concept paper for conducting lessons learned workshops to the Capacity Building Unit. The concept note has been updated to incorporate review comments and areas of support

for implementation of the lessons learned workshops; implementation is anticipated in the next quarter.

**Capacity building related trainings:** In line with the results of the Training Needs Assessment for ECC, UNDP-UNESP replicated modalities of implementing capacity building related trainings that are being considered for IEC, more details are available under the section on [IEC Capacity Building](#).

### **ECC Regulations, Guidelines, Procedures, Codes of Conduct, and Plans**

In the period under review, the ECC, with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP developed one procedure (joint IEC-ECC):

- **Procedures for:** (1) Joint Committee approved by both Commissions [also reported under IEC]

**ECC Strategic Plan:** The ECC and UNDP-UNESP began preliminary discussions on the strategic planning process.

### **EDR case management system and adjudication of electoral complaints**

**Adjudication of 32 letter based exceptional cases:** UNDP-UNESP provided legal inputs during the analysis and investigation of 32 letter based exceptional cases. The ECC referred back one complaint to the Ghazni PECC; this complaint was resolved with no recourse to appeal. Following completion of the analysis and investigation for the 31 remaining cases, the Board of Commissioners announced decisions, no appeals were registered against the decisions of the Commissioners.

**Electoral complaints for presidential election preliminary results:** Updated records show that the ECC and PECCs registered 16,738<sup>3</sup> complaints against the preliminary results. Then, the ECC and PECCs, with legal inputs from UNDP-UNESP adjudicated the complaints, with 6,377 appeals lodged against the decisions.

**Appeals against decisions from adjudication of complaints against preliminary results:** From 16 to 20 January, ECC received 6,377 appeals across 29 provinces; no appeals were filed for Parwan, Wardak, Takhar, Jawzjan and Badghis. The ECC adjudicated exceptional and appeal cases<sup>4</sup> and shared final decisions on the appeal cases with the IEC for implementation, the full implementation of these decisions paved way for announcement of the final results on 18 February 2020 [Output 6 provides detail on implementation of the decisions].

---

<sup>3</sup> December 2019: 16,551 cases then 20 January 2020: 16,545 complaints. Final update of 27 February 2020: 16,783 cases registered.

<sup>4</sup> Based on UNDP-UNESP observations, the project communicated concerns and appropriate mitigation measures to the ECC Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson for consideration of the BoC. The recommendations related to [1] ways to increase the output of Investigation and Analysis departments, modus operandi to deal with the case-load; [2] legal concerns related, but not limited to audit and recount; and [3] legal options for ECC to extend the deadline of 15 days in order for ECC to have more time to deal with the caseload in a diligent manner, which UNESP was prepared to provide further assistance with if requested.

1. Exceptional cases covering 137,630 suspicious votes which encompasses 4,563 PSs.
  - ECC decided that 10 percent of the above-mentioned PSs to undergo special audit.
  - If 65 percent of 10 percent PSs audited fulfil the criteria; (matching information in journal with the number of votes in result sheet and BVV devices), then all 137,630 votes will be considered valid.
  - In case 35 percent of the 10 percent audited PSs do not fulfil the criterion, then all PSs should undergo special audit; and then the valid and invalid votes to be identified during the audit process.
2. Exceptional cases covering 102,012 out of time votes which encompasses 7,354 PSs.
  - ECC decided that 15 percent of the above-mentioned PSs to undergo special audit.
  - In case 65 percent fulfil that criteria (matching information in journal with the number of votes in result sheet and BVV devices), then all 102,012 votes will be valid.
  - In case 35 percent of the votes do not fulfil the criteria, then all 102,012 votes will be invalid.
3. Exceptional cases; non- BVV votes; 2,423 PSs.
  - ECC decided that 298 PSs to undergo recount and during the process the PSs that fulfilled the criteria (matching information in journal with the number of votes in result sheet and BVV devices) will be considered valid and those that do not fulfil the criteria will be invalid.
4. Appeal cases; difference in the number of votes in BVV devices and paper result sheet; 1-5 difference.
  - ECC decided to validate all those votes. The PECCs decisions will be nullified if otherwise.
5. Appeal cases; more than 6 votes difference between the BVV and paper result sheet.
  - ECC decided that all those cases under this category to undergo audit and recount. The PECCs decision will be nullified if otherwise.
6. Other cases.
  - Cash fine for two staff of PIEC of Panjshir province: The PEO is fined 10,000 Afghan and the Admin Officer is fined 5000 Afghan.
  - Invalidation of 4 PSs in Faryab: The PECC decision of invalidation of mentioned PSs is valid.

Below is an updated summary of complaints registered and appeals lodged against initial decisions during the 2019 Presidential election.

Complaints for 2019 Presidential election	Complaints	Appeals
2019 Voter Registration	18	0
Early Campaigning	6	0
Campaign Period	124	5
Presidential election	4,528	184 <sup>5</sup>
Presidential election – paper based exceptional cases	32	0
Presidential election preliminary results	16,738	6,377
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,446</b>	<b>6,566</b>

Table 3: Summary of Presidential election complaints registered + adjudicated and appeals against initial decisions

<sup>5</sup> A total 189 appeals initially lodged; however 5 appeals were withdrawn.

**Implementation of the electoral dispute resolution electronic case management system:** The ECC and PECCs, with continued technical support for data capturing, quality checks and system maintenance from UNDP-UNESP captured 10,805 additional complaints in the EDR case management database in 33 provinces<sup>6</sup>. The relatively weak internet connectivity and expiry of contracts for data entry personnel reportedly affected completion of the data entry process. In addition, the power outage and challenges with the system firewall at ECC central office affected subsequent data transfer from provinces to the central server.

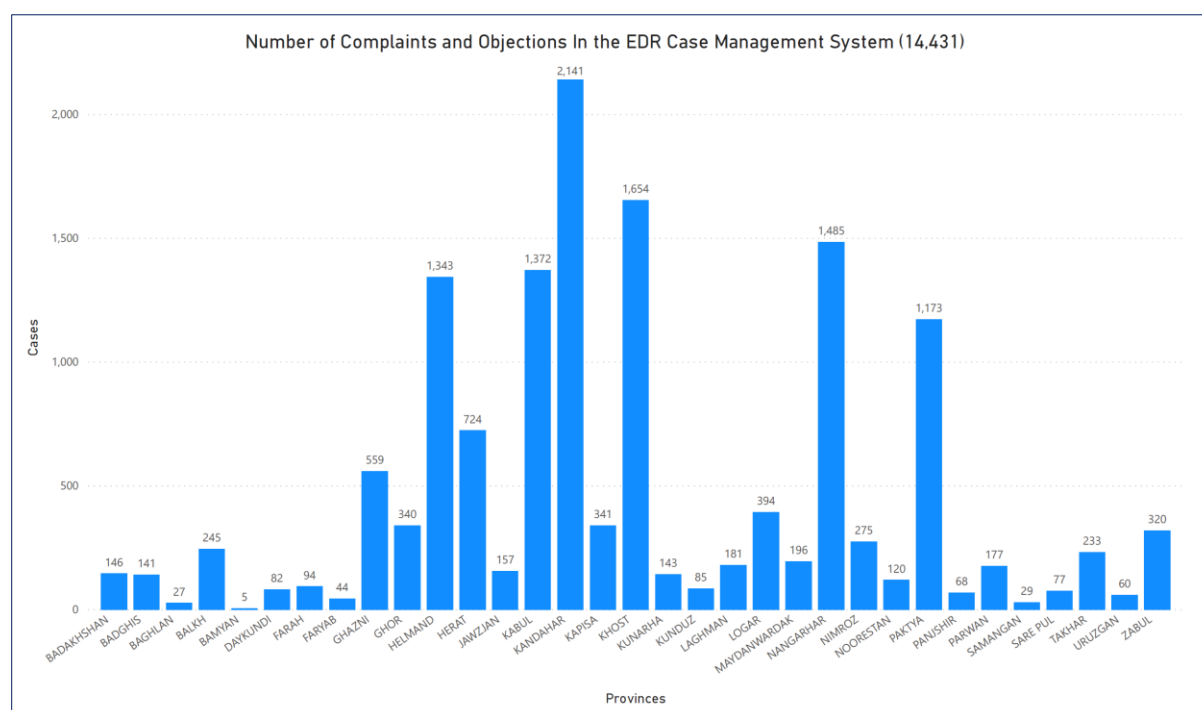


Figure 1: Summary of complaints captured in the EDR case management system by end March 2020

## EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During the quarter, a total of US\$ 276,013 was spent for this output. For more details, please see [Annex 2](#).

<sup>6</sup> No data entry conducted in Paktika province due to lack of data entry staff to perform the task.



Below is a snapshot of where UNDP-UNESP is in relation to its 2020 quarter one targets.

Output 2 performance indicator table

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
2.1 A comprehensive Strategic Plan is designed and adopted by the ECC, including organigram and TORs.	No	Yes	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned for this Quarter.
2.2 Availability of an Institutional Cooperation Framework for the ECC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
2.3.1 Percentage of recruited Tashkeel staff in relation to the approved ECC organigram (disaggregated F/M).	T: 92% F: 9% M: 91%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
2.3.2 Percentage of ECC Tashkeel staff who have received induction and technical training and are therefore able to effectively fulfil their functions.	T: 20% F: 15% M: 20%	T: 80% F: 12% M: 88%	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned for this Quarter.
2.4 Percentage of women employed at ECC.	Dropped May 2018	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned.
2.5 Number of new regulations on the conduct of the complaints process drafted, adopted and published on time.	10	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
2.6 Number (or %) of ECC operational plans and procedures that integrate programme specific needs of women.	70%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
2.7 EDR Case Management System in place.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	On track.
2.8 Availability of budgeted operational plan for the adjudication of electoral complaints for the upcoming elections, approved by the ECC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
2.9 Percentage of electoral complaints, which are timely adjudicated by the ECC as per the national electoral legal framework.	85%	100%	preliminary results: 100%	100%	On track.

### **C. OUTPUT 3: Afghan public and political stakeholders are informed of the electoral process and committed to participating in the next electoral cycle in accordance with the law.**

UNDP-UNESP provided technical and operational guidance to the ECC and IEC IPOD on communication, public outreach and stakeholder engagement. The project continued to support implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plans, Communication and Public Outreach Plans, and expanded use of social media.

#### **IEC Communication and Public Outreach**

**Public outreach action plan:** The Information and Public Outreach Department (IPOD), with technical support from UNDP-UNESP developed nine publications to raise awareness on the special audit and recount process, these are uploaded on the [IEC Facebook page](#). Further, IPOD with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP drafted the Public Outreach Campaign action plan for a possible run-off outlining proposed activities; billboards; print materials [factsheet, posters, leaflets, brochures]; public service announcements (PSAs); and grassroots meetings and training of Provincial Public Outreach Officers (PPOOs) and Civic Educators (CEs). The action plan became redundant following announcement of final results.

**Website and social media:** IPOD, with advisory support from UNDP-UNESP, developed a policy for publishing on website and social media pages with guidance on professional and responsible use of social media including messaging on social media platforms. Further, as part of implementing the newly developed policy, IEC with technical support from UNDP-UNESP updated the disaggregated final results of the presidential election on the website. In addition, following announcement of the final results, IPOD with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP designed the infographic with the final results; this is uploaded on the IEC website and social media.

The project continued to provide technical support to the expanded social media team on use of social media for information dissemination. In comparison to the previous quarter, there was a 23.1 percent increase in number of followers on Twitter (19,944 to 24,552); 91 tweets and 7,088 profile visits recorded. Similarly, on Facebook there was a 3.5 percent increase in number of followers (145,726 to 150,828) and a 3 percent increase in number of people who liked the page (143,353 to 144,700). From January to end of the quarter, post reach improved from 55.8k to 115.8k and post engagement improved from 13.6k to 39.6k. These statistics reflect the engagement of followers on social media pages in accordance with electoral events. More than 50,000 people watched the livestreamed announcement of the Presidential election final results through the IEC Facebook page; the video was shared 339 times. UNDP-UNESP provided content to support development of news articles, web and social media products to inform electoral stakeholders and citizens.

## IEC Electoral Stakeholder Engagement

The External Relations Department, in consultation with UNDP-UNESP continued implementation of the Open Door Policy maintaining the Election Information Centre for post-election observers and monitors as well as guided tours and information dissemination to observers and monitors on the special audit and recounts. Further, in anticipation of a possible run-off, ERD with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP developed a timeline for proposed stakeholder engagement activities and material requirements; this was not implemented following announcement of final results. At the invitation of ERD, electoral stakeholders comprising the ECC; candidates; political parties; national and international CSOs and organizations as well as candidate's agents observed implementation of the special audit and recounts at the IEC National Tally Centre and nine provinces<sup>7</sup>. Field reports indicated minimal to no participation of ECC staff in the provinces.

Finally, on 23 February, at a meeting facilitated and coordinated by ERD and UNDP-UNESP, civil society representatives from National Democratic Institute (NDI), Afghan Amputee Bicyclists for Rehabilitation and Recreation (AABRAR), Training Human Rights Organization for Women (THRA), and Afghanistan Civil Society Forum (ACSFO) shared their monitoring findings on the 2019 Presidential election with IEC leadership highlights improvements compared to the 2014 election.

## Electoral Observation

ERD, with technical and advisory support from UNDP-UNESP facilitated a briefing on monitoring and observation of audit and recounts to be implemented as part of ECC decisions; 16 representatives (1 woman) participated. The ERD discussed the audit and recount process including roles of the observers at the IEC NTC and provincial level.

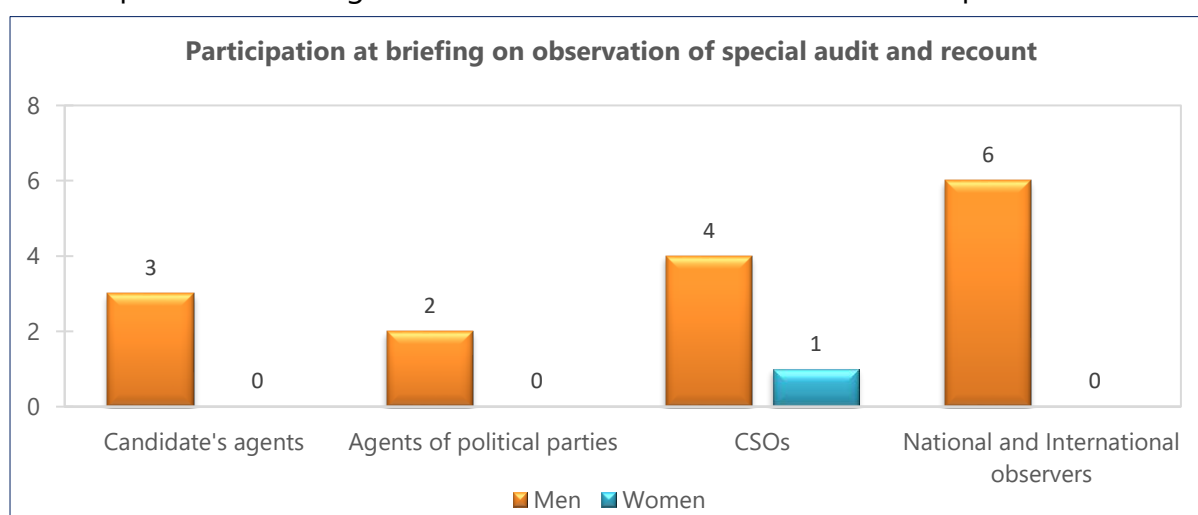


Figure 2: Participation of electoral stakeholders at briefing for monitoring and observation of audit and recount

<sup>7</sup> Nine provinces: Badakhshan; Faryab; Ghazni; Helmand; Kabul; Kandahar; Nangahar; Sar-e-Pul and Takhar.

**Monitoring and observation of special audit and recount:** Some field reports indicated participation of these stakeholders at the provincial level:

- Candidate's agents: Dr. Ashraf Ghani; Dr. Faramarz Tamana; Noorullaq Ulome; Dr. Abdullah Abdullah [Dr. Abdullah's agents left in protest over non-use of barcode readers];
- Political parties: Hezb-e-Nejat-e-mili; Hezb-e-Mutahed-e-mili; Majma-e-Haqiqat-e-Afghan.
- Civil society and other national organizations: AABRAR; ACSFO; THRA; Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN); Free and Fair Elections Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA); Transparent Elections Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA); Social Welfare Development Welfare Organization (SCWO); Free Election and Transparency Watch Organisation (FETWO).
- Local and international media organisations: Tolo TV; Enekas TV; Japanese media organisation.
- International organisations: National Democratic Institute.
- United Nations: UNAMA and UNDP also followed the process.
- EMBs at provincial level: IEC staff; ECC staff [in some provinces ECC staff reportedly left as directed by the ECC HQ].



Figure 3: Recount in presence of observers, Sar-e-Pul  
PIEC



Figure 4: Special audit proceedings in presence of IEC Commissioners and observers – IEC National Tally Centre

At the IEC HQ, cumulatively 26 representatives<sup>8</sup> (all men) of two candidates; four political parties; six civil society and two international organisations observed the audit and recount process, the figure below depicts the number of observers.

<sup>8</sup> Candidate's agents: State Builder's as well as Prudence and Development.

Agents of political parties: Hezb-e- Ahtedal; Hezb-e- Nejat -e-mili; Hezb-e-Mutahed-e-mili and Majma-e-Haqiqat-e Afghan.

Civil society: FEFA; TEFA; ACSFO; THRA; WADAN and Shahamat Organization.

International organizations: NDI and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

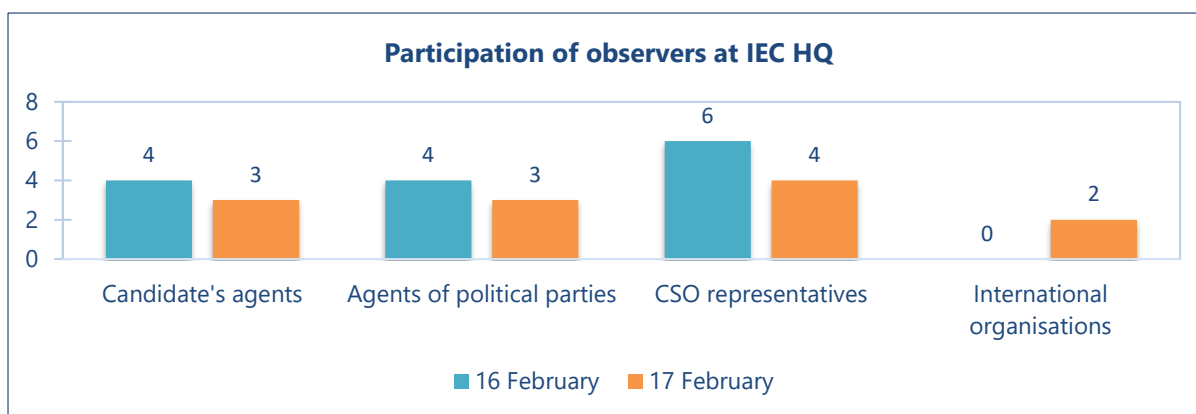


Figure 5: Participation of observers in special audit and recounts at the IEC NTC on 16 and 17 February 2020

## ECC Communication and Public Outreach

**Communication Policies, Plans and Strategies:** The ECC IPOD, with technical inputs from UNESP-UNESP developed a Communication Policy and Public Outreach Strategy for the possible Presidential election run-off. The documents with guidance on activities, approaches, communication tools and key messages to be delivered were not implemented following completion of the election in one round of polling.

**Press conferences:** With technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP, the ECC held four press conferences and six daily live streamed media briefings to provide updates on:

- status of adjudication of complaints registered against preliminary results;
- updates on the types of appeals lodged against initial decisions of the complaint adjudication process;
- status of adjudication of appeals and commitment to complete adjudication within the timeline and in compliance with procedures, regulations and election law; and;
- decisions made for the appeals registered against the decisions of the complaints against preliminary results.

In addition, IPOD with technical and advisory support from UNDP-UNESP developed and disseminated press releases and media notes through the ECC website and social media pages. Further, ECC streamed the announcement of decisions on the 6,377 appeals live on [Facebook](#) with more than 11,000 viewers during the livestream.

**ECC website and social media pages:** ECC, with technical and advisory support from UNDP-UNESP continued to implement the website improvement plan, social media plan and media monitoring plan in the management of the ECC website and social media pages. At the request of ECC, UNDP-UNESP trained 17 staff (1 woman) from Plan and Policy Department, IPOD and ERD on social media, with a focus on use of twitter in social media and conducting twitter analysis. The social media analysis shows that compared to the previous quarter; on [Facebook](#) there was a 6.1 percent increase in number of followers (24,104 to 25,565); by end of the quarter post reach had decreased from 90,543 to 9,076 and average post engagement had decreased from

35,941 to 2,000. Similarly, on [Twitter](#) there was a 28.7 percent increase in number of followers (1,981 to 2,549); 70 tweets and 2,201 profile visits recorded. There was a decrease in tweet impressions [visibility] from 227k to 68.5k. The downward trends on post engagement and tweet impressions is consistent with the reduced focus on ECC following completion of the complaints and appeal adjudication processes.

**Media monitoring:** ECC Media Monitors, using knowledge and skills from the training conducted by UNDP-UNESP and routine technical support from the project developed and disseminated 38 media monitoring reports on how the media and public perceive the work of the ECC. The media monitoring reports shaped stakeholder engagement by ECC including preparedness in responding to media enquiries.

**Bulletins and infographs:** ECC, with technical inputs to content and design from UNDP-UNESP finalized and disseminated four combined Bulletins and Flash Updates [Bulletins 23, 24, 25 and 26] with highlights on adjudication of complaints against preliminary results; registration and adjudication of filed appeals; and press conferences announcing updates; these bulletins are accessible on the [ECC Website](#).

**Call Centre:** The call centre established with technical and operational support from UNDP-UNESP started operating on 9 September with 18 trained Call Centre Operators (5 women). The operators who were guided by a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) developed with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP received 1,569 calls (140 women) in the previous year. In January 2020, ECC assumed full responsibility of managing the call centre and with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP developed the operational budget including staffing requirements. By end of the quarter, the national procurement process to identify a telecommunications company to host the call centre had commenced and the proposed staffing to operate the call centre was approved.

## **ECC Electoral Stakeholder Engagement**

**Coordination meetings:** On 12 February, at a joint meeting between ECC and IEC at the IEC headquarters (HQ), the Commissions and technical teams discussed analysis and implementation of ECC decisions on the 6,377 appeals to pave way for the announcement of final Presidential election results. Then, on 24 February, at a meeting with representatives of ACSFO, NDI and AABRAR, the ECC leadership commended the CSOs for their cooperation and provided an update on the registration and adjudication of complaints and objections highlighting that IEC announced final results without coordination with ECC. The CSOs stated concerns on the ensuing political situation and shared their observation reports about the presidential election.

## **EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER**

During the quarter, US\$ 116,084 was spent for this output. For more details, please see [Annex 2](#).

Below is a snapshot of where UNDP-UNESP is in relation to its 2020 quarter one targets.

Output 3 performance indicator table

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
3.1.1 Percentage of people/eligible voters reached through IEC's public TV and Radio information campaigns.	80.9%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
3.1.2 Percentage of people who declare themselves (a) informed and (b) satisfied with IEC's and ECC's role in the electoral process (disaggregated F/M).	(a) 80.9% (b) IEC: 42.3%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
3.2 Percentage of people who declare their intention to register for the next election cycle.	75.1%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
3.3 Percentage of people/eligible voters reached through IEC public information campaigns (about the functions of the entities they are voting for, the importance of making an informed choice, and their rights and responsibilities according to the law as voters.	Dropped in May 2018.	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned.
3.4 Number of Afghan civil society organizations delivering common civic and voter education	Dropped in May 2018.	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned	Not planned.
3.5 Percentage of women (a) registered, (b) nominated (c) voted	a. 34.5% b. 0% c. 31%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
3.5.1 Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Regulations, SOPs and TOR are in place to facilitate IEC stakeholder engagement with political parties, observers, monitors, media and international actors.	2 Plans 2 Guidelines 2 Regulations	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
3.6. Number of political parties, electoral contestants and civil society groups that participate in public consultation/stakeholder engagement events with IEC.	1,641	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.



#### D. OUTPUT 4: A polling centre-specific voter list for the next elections is produced by the IEC.

**Voter registration:** In the period under review, there was no specific work related to voter registration. However, at the request of IEC, UNDP-UNESP provided inputs on future considerations for voter registration in comments to the concepts for Ghazni WJ and PC elections prepared by IEC. UNDP-UNESP recommended technical discussions on voter registration during development of the concepts for these elections.

**Gender sensitization:** The IEC, with technical inputs to content from UNDP-UNESP developed an action plan with proposed activities to address gaps and issues identified in the presidential election. The action plan included strategies to improve recruitment of women as Civic Educators (CEs) for the possible run-off and targeted public outreach messaging. The Gender Unit in collaboration with UNDP-UNESP is consolidating a list of women's businesses through Afghan Women Chamber of Commerce and Industries (AWCCI), and Youth and Women Gender Groups for linkages and cooperation during public outreach campaigns targeting women and youths.

**International Women's Day:** IPOD with technical inputs to content development from UNDP-UNESP developed a video message to commemorate International Women's Day on 8 March; this is uploaded on the IEC [Facebook](#) page. Similarly, the ECC commemorated International Women's Day with key note speeches from ECC leadership and a representative from the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA); the press statement is accessible on the ECC [Facebook](#) page.



Figure 6: Screenshot of IEC Chairperson giving message on International Women's Day

#### EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During the quarter, a total of US\$ 4,318 was spent for this output. For more details, please see [Annex 2](#).

Below is a snapshot of where UNDP-UNESP is in relation to its 2020 quarter one targets.

Output 4 performance indicator table

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Targets	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
4.1. Percentage of materials (items) for voter registration, as per the IEC operational plan, procured on time.	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
4.2. A credible polling centre specific voter list for the upcoming elections is finalised by the IEC.	89.6% VRT: 93.2% Ghazni: 82.9%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
4.3.1. Number of gender sensitization training sessions.	8	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
4.3.2. Number of gender sensitization training beneficiaries (security personnel, IEC personnel, etc.)	696 F: 189 M: 507	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.

## E. OUTPUT 5: The IEC and ECC provide credible administration of an electoral dispute resolution for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections, respectively.

**Wolesi Jirga elections for Ghazni and District Council elections:** Following the May 2019 decision by IEC not to conduct Wolesi Jirga elections for Ghazni and District Council elections, the project discontinued activities under this output. In the period under review, UNDP-UNESP provided inputs to the concepts for Ghazni Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council<sup>9</sup> elections prepared by IEC. The recommendations are:

1. Determination of election timelines for Ghazni WJ and PC elections;
2. Need to further enhance integrity/fraud mitigation of the electoral process;
3. Lessons learned should be implemented at all levels including an assessment of not only the process but also staff and facilities/infrastructure;
4. Electoral regulations and procedures must be aligned with the amended Election Law;
5. If the Multi-Dimensional Representation (MDR) system will be implemented in the next electoral cycle, there will be need for extensive voter education on the new electoral system;
6. Future direction of voter registration needs to be discussed further;
7. Training and human resources practices need to be intertwined with revision of HR policies and practices; and
8. Candidate nomination and counting of ballots are affected by the amended law and system and IEC should ensure the operational timeline is aligned with the new electoral system.

**Payment of 2018 polling staff:** As of 31 March 2020, payment status is as follows<sup>10</sup>:

Payment method	Planned payments	Completed payments	Percent completed
Bank transfer	13,249	13,249	100
M-Paisa	39,147	29,307	75
Pay on ID	38,408	11,832	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>90,804</b>	<b>54,388</b>	<b>60</b>

Table 4: Breakdown of payment of 2018 polling staff

## EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During the quarter, US\$ 81,891 was reimbursed to the UNDP account for polling staff that did not turn up to be paid. For more details, please see [Annex 2](#).

<sup>9</sup> At this point, there is no specific output covering Provincial Council elections.

<sup>10</sup> The process was affected by prolonged processing of documentation; payment delays in provinces where the AIB bank has no branches and loss or change of phone numbers by polling staff who had opted for payment through M-Paisa. As such, these staff have to resubmit their contact details. The process was also affected by initial challenges with processing M-Paisa payments for non-Roshan subscribers. While the project extended vendor contracts to 2020 to enable completion of outstanding payments, some polling staff did not turn up to be paid.

Below is a snapshot of where UNDP-UNESP is in relation to its 2020 quarter one targets.

#### Output 5 performance indicator table

In late May 2019, the IEC made a decision to conduct Presidential elections only. Therefore, the project discontinued work on this output and as such in Project Revision III of July 2019, these performance indicators were changed to Not planned for 2019.

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
5.1. Percentage of Polling Centres/Polling Stations receiving electoral materials for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections.	91.78%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.1.1. Percentage of procured equipment (US\$ Value), as per the IEC operational plan. (Note: As required and requested by the IEC, delivered by the Project as per the IEC operational plan.)	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.2 Percentage of media complaints adjudicated by the Media Committee in a timely manner.	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.2.1 The IEC Media Committee is in place, according to the Electoral Law.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.3 Percentage of candidate nominations for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections vetted by the IEC (breakdown WJ/DC, F/M).	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.3.1. Candidate vetting (verification) procedures are in place for the WJ and DC elections as approved by the IEC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.3.2 Procedures on the candidate nomination complaints process are in place for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections, as approved by the ECC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
5.4 Percentage of Polling Centres and Polling Stations that open for polling on 20 October, as per the IEC operational plan.	94.84%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.4.1 Number of trainings delivered to the IEC and ECC temporary polling staff, on counting, polling and results processing procedures for the WJ and DC elections.	2,961 excluding Farah	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.4.2 Number of IEC and ECC temporary polling staff trained in counting, polling and results processing procedures for the WJ and DC elections	T: 102,313 F: 30,464 M: 71,849	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.5.1 Provisional polling results publicized on time (according to the electoral calendar) by the IEC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.5.1.1 Procedures for Results Management System and processes are in place, as approved by the IEC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.5.2 Final polling results publicized on time (according to the electoral calendar) by the IEC.	No	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	
5.5.2.1. Data centre (infrastructure, software and training plan for data centre operators) is in place.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	

## **F. OUTPUT 6: The IEC and ECC are able to provide credible administration of, and electoral dispute resolution for the 2019 Presidential elections.**

Following announcement of preliminary results by IEC on 22 December, UNDP-UNESP worked with the ECC to complete the adjudication of complaints against preliminary results and appeals lodged against the initial decisions. UNDP-UNESP provided logistical and operational support to IEC for the implementation of special audit and recount and subsequent retrieval of these materials; implementation of ECC decisions and subsequent announcement of final results; as well as stakeholder engagement.

### **2019 Presidential elections**

**Implementation of ECC decisions regarding the 6,377 appeals:** The IEC, with technical inputs on the interpretation of ECC decisions implemented the seven decisions paving the way for announcement of the final results of the Presidential election results. Following implementation of the first four decisions by the IEC Secretariat; UNDP-UNESP provided technical support for interpretation and implementation of three remaining decisions comprising two 'special audit' cases and one recount.

#### **Order of implementing ECC decisions**

1. Invalidation of the results of four polling stations from Faryab province.
2. Applying a monetary fine to Panjshir PIEC staff due to irregular validation of votes that had no biometric data.
3. Validation of PSs results that displayed vote discrepancies within the procedurally agreed 1-5 tolerance level.
4. Invalidation of PSs results displaying discrepancies between BVV transmitted votes and those recorded on results forms and exceeding the procedurally agreed 1-5 tolerance level.
5. Caseload of data anomalies amounting to 137,630 units eventually originating in 3,097 PSs and to be subjected to a 'special audit'.
6. Caseload of 102,012 votes allegedly cast outside the procedural voting day/hours, originating in 7,354 PSs and to be subjected to a 'special audit'.
7. Recount of 298 PSs distributed across nine provinces and belonging to the category of 2,423 PSs where biometric datasets were not transferred from the BVV device to the central server.

**Special audit:** The 'special audit' cases required random sampling of PSs. UNDP-UNESP contributed to development of special audit implementation criteria and procedures; IEC used the guidance during the joint briefing with technical staff from ECC. Then, IEC using a random sampling application developed by the Information Technology staff with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP conducted the sampling process in the presence of ECC and observers resulting in 7,240 out of time PSs; 1,086 PSs from the 102k sample; 3,010 PSs from the 137k PSs and 311 PSs from the 137k sample.



Thereafter, IEC confirmed the presence of biometric results data, the journal and the results form for every PS included in the sample of decisions 5 and 6 respectively. Overall, according to the IEC, the percentage of PSs of both samples that did in effect hold the three crucial items amounted to over 97 percent, therefore the preliminary results of all PSs included in both decisions could be validated.

Description	PSs	Sample	Has Biometrics	Has Journal	Has Result Sheets
Out of Time 102k PSs	7,240	1,086	1,086	1,069	1,086
137k discrepancy	3,010	311	311	305	311

Table 5: Comparison of PSs in the obtained list of PSs for special audit with the number prescribed by the ECC Decision

**Recount of 298 polling stations across nine provinces:** IEC, with logistical support from UNDP-UNESP completed preparations for the recount, including reviewing of security arrangements (security cell); prepositioned materials for deployment; movement plan of staff from IEC HQ to PIECs to support recount and instructions and guidance for the PEOs. Then, IEC, with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP conducted the recount from 16 to 17 February with retrieval and processing of results at the NTC from 17 to 18 February. The DCEO Strategic Communications, with support from UNDP-UNESP, prepared a report on the implementation and submitted to the IEC Commissioners. The report formed the basis for announcement of final results as approved by six of the seven Commissioners.

UNDP-UNESP provided technical inputs in readiness for the recount process as follows: [1] identification of PSs for the recount; [2] invitation for observation and monitoring of the recounts; [3] updating audit/recount checklists and Election Day Support System (EDSS) for reporting purposes; [4] preparing the NTC to process the retrieved recount forms; [5] comparing the recount results with the preliminary results.



Figure 7: Setting up for recount, Helmand province



Figure 8: Ongoing recount, Nangarhar province



**Announcement of final results:** On 18 February, IEC announced the final results where Ashraf Ghani was declared the winner with 923,868 votes [50.64%]; Dr. Abdullah Abdullah with 720,990 votes [39.52%]; Gulbuddin Hekmatyar with 70,242 votes [3.85%] and Rahmatullah Nabil with 33,921 votes [1.86%].



Figure 9: IEC Chairperson announcing final results of the Presidential election, February 2020



Figure 10: Press conference, announcement of final results

NO.	Candidate's Photo	Candidate's Name	Total Votes	Percentage of Votes
1		Mohammad Ashraf Ghani	923868	50.64%
2		Dr. Abdullah Abdullah	720990	39.52%
3		Eng. Gulbodin Hekmatyar	70242	3.85%
4		Rahmatullah Nabil	33921	1.86%
5		Dr. Faramarz Tamana	18066	0.99%
6		Sayed Noorullah Jalili	15526	0.85%
7		Abdul Latif Pedram	12608	0.69%
8		Enayatullah Hafiz	11374	0.62%
9		Mohammad Hakim Tursan	6504	0.36%
10		Ahmad Wali Masoud	3942	0.22%
11		Mohammad Shahab Hakimi	3324	0.18%
12		Pohand Professor Doctor Ghulam Faruq Nijrabi	1606	0.09%
13		Noorahman Liwal	865	0.05%

Figure 1: Infographic of final election results

Reconciliations completed since announcement of final results show the following

PSs Included	Voters In Included PSs	Final Valid Votes	Invalid Ballots Cast	Spoiled Ballots	Unused Ballots	Ballots Issued
24,258	8,260,215	1,823,948	482,848	25,915	5,680,263	8,761,041

Table 6: Reconciliation information database of 2019 Presidential election

Candidate	Ashraf Ghani	Dr. Abdullah Abdullah	Gulbuddin Hekmatyar	Rahmatullah Nabil
Valid votes	923,592	720,841	70,241	33,919
% of votes	50.64	39.52	3.85	1.86

Table 7: Reconciliation of valid votes for the four top candidates of 2019 Presidential election

## EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

During the quarter, a total of US\$ 1,002,044 was spent for this output. For more details, please see [Annex 2](#).

Below is a snapshot of where UNDP-UNESP is in relation to its 2020 quarter one targets.

Output 6 performance indicator table

Prodoc Indicators	Baseline	Annual Target	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
6.1. Percentage of candidate nominations for the Presidential elections vetted by the IEC (F/M).	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
6.2 Percentage of Polling Centres/Polling Stations receiving electoral materials for election day.	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
6.2.1 Number of IEC and ECC temporary polling staff trained in counting, polling and results processing procedures for the Presidential election (M/F).	T: 191,922 F: 61,983 M: 129,939	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
6.2.2 % of Polling Centres/Polling Stations that open for polling on election day, as per the IEC operational plan.	PCs: 87.1% PSs: 89.8%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
6.2.3 Percentage of media complaints adjudicated by the Media Committee in a timely manner, according to the adjudication schedule.	100%	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
6.2.4 Number of people accredited for electoral observation (disaggregated domestic observer/ political party monitor/media/candidate's agents; F/M).	140,008	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
6.3.1 Provisional polling results publicized on time, according to the electoral calendar by the IEC.	Yes	Not targeted	N/A	N/A	Completed in 2019.
6.3.2 Final polling results publicized on time, according to the electoral calendar by the IEC.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	On track. Electoral calendar changed.
6.3.3 Data centre with infrastructure, software and training plan for data centre operators is in place.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	On track. Completed.
6.4 Percentage of electoral complaints, which are timely adjudicated by the ECC as per the national electoral legal framework.	e-day: 100%	100%	preliminary results: 100%	100%	On track. Completed.

### III. GENDER-SPECIFIC RESULTS

**Participation of women in observation and monitoring:** 6.3 percent of the people who participated in the briefing on monitoring and observation of audit and recounts that were implemented by IEC as part of ECC decisions were women.

**Commemoration of International Women's Day:** On 8 March, IEC and ECC commemorated International Women's Day with key note speeches from the Chairpersons; the video developed with technical inputs from UNDP-UNESP is accessible on the IEC Facebook page.

### IV. PARTNERSHIPS

In the period under review, UNDP-UNESP maintained the following partnerships:

**United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA):** UNAMA, through dedicated human resources continued to convene and participate in consultations on electoral issues of political bearing including those beyond the scope of UNESP. UNAMA continued to lead development of key messages and joint statements for the Electoral Support Group (ESG) and also facilitated the conducting of regular working level and ambassadorial meetings. UNAMA through its good offices regularly reached out to a broad range of stakeholders to facilitate a conducive environment in order for the process to be concluded in a credible and peaceful manner.

**UNAMA coordination and public outreach efforts in regional offices:** At the field level, the UNAMA Field Offices, at times in collaboration with UNDP-UNESP project staff, coordinated stakeholder engagement meetings and in some of the nine provinces, followed the recount process conducted during implementation of ECC decisions.

**Electoral Support Group:** UNAMA, through the ESG coordinating mechanism at Ambassadorial and working group level, facilitated international coordination on electoral issues at a strategic political level. The ESG continued to encourage transparency and credibility in conduct of the election, timely and accurate information to political parties, voters and for candidate to engage in a constructive manner including by addressing any complaints through the appropriate channels.

**Donors:** The donors from Australia, Denmark, the EU, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, the USA and the UK continued to support the electoral processes.

**National Partners:** UNDP-UNESP continued to work with the IEC and the ECC as their key national partners. The project also supported the EMBs on budget related discussions for the 2019 Presidential election with the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

**Civil Society Sector:** UNDP-UNESP continued to support the EMBs in engagement of the electoral civil society organizations (CSOs) in the country. The CSOs participated

in observation and monitoring of the special audit and recounts and had separate meetings with the ECC and IEC leadership to discuss monitoring findings related to the 2019 Presidential election.

**Security Coordination mechanism:** UNDP-UNESP continued working level partnerships with the security coordination partners (MoIA, NATO Resolute Support and Ministry of Defense). They collaborated on movement and retrieval of electoral materials for the recounts.

## V. ISSUES

Please refer to [Annex III: Issue Log](#) for a detailed breakdown. Issues which have shaped the operating environment include the following developments.

**Prolonged announcement of Presidential election results:** The announcement of final results was delayed by the prolonged adjudication of electoral complaints and appeals including implementation of ECC decisions.

**Response:** UNDP-UNESP continued to provide technical inputs to the analysis and investigation of registered complaints and adjudication of appeals lodged against the initial decisions.

**Political Environment:** Following announcement of the final results, there have been mixed reactions on the results, while mediation efforts on the post-election deadlock continued amidst a tense political situation.

**Response:** As this is beyond the scope of UNDP-UNESP, project staff continued to provide technical advice and guidance to planned lessons learned exercises and concepts for proposed Ghazni Wolesi Jirga and Provincial Council elections.

**Operating environment:** The COVID-19 pandemic has not spared Afghanistan as a country, with cases being detected and some citizens hospitalized. The lockdown has affected the activities of the EMBs.

**Response:** UNDP Afghanistan and the EMBs have adopted alternative work modalities. This has resulted in minimal staff physically in Afghanistan with most project staff telecommuting from various locations across the globe. Planned lessons learned exercises are being modified to suit the operating environment while work plans are being modified accordingly.

## VI. RISKS

Please refer to [Annex IV: Risk Log](#) for a detailed breakdown.

**EMB Decision Delays:** The EMBs took a while to conclude adjudication of complaints and appeals, including subsequent implementation of ECC decisions.

**Response:** The project provided technical inputs on analysis and investigation of complaints and shared legal options for ECC to extend the deadline of 15 days in order for ECC to have more time to deal with the caseload in a diligent manner. The project also provided technical inputs to the IEC for the implementation of ECC decisions including interpretation of the outcome of the special audit and recount process.

**Security Risk:** The security environment continued to affect electoral processes with a coordinated approach required for deployment and retrieval of materials after the recounts.

**Response:** The project continued supporting cooperation and coordination with the EMBs, ANDSF, and NATO RS to facilitate deployment of staff and materials for the recounts and subsequent retrievals.

**Political Independence Risk:** Excessive political interference affects work of the EMBs.

**Response:** The international community continued to advocate for the IEC and ECC to be given the space to do their work without political interference.

**Logistical Risks:** Logistical breakdowns affect electoral operations.

**Response:** UNESP and the IEC continued to coordinate with ANDSF and NATO representatives for all items regarding security of people, goods, and operations.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNED**

There were no key lessons learned in the period under review.

## **VIII. FUTURE PLANS**

In the next quarter, the project will continue to provide operational, financial, technical, and advisory assistance to the EMBs to complete the 2019 presidential elections and future electoral assistance through:

- providing technical inputs to proposed concepts for future election events [Ghazni Wolesi Jirga, District Council and Provincial Council elections];
- providing technical inputs to concept for voter registration;
- providing technical support for the conducting of lessons learned exercises.

Discussions have been ongoing regarding PC and Ghazni WJ elections. The direction of future electoral assistance support needs are yet to be finalized and are subject to recommendations of the anticipated NAM or Desk Review. In line with the UN's Security Council Resolution 2489 (2019), the UN will continue to support efforts to strengthen the capacity of the electoral institutions.

## IX. ANNEXES

### ANNEX I: FINANCIAL TABLE

Interim Donor Report for the period January to March 2020 for UN Electoral Support Project

Donor Name	COMMITMENT/ PAST YEARS RECORD				CURRENT YEAR (2020)					FUTURE EXPENSES		TOTAL RECEIVABLE		Available Resources N=(i-j-k)
	Commitment (a)	Revenue Collected 31/12/2019 (b)	Expenses 31/12/2019 (c)	Other Revenue (d)	Opening Balance E=(b-c+d)	Contribution Revenue (f)	IPSAS Adj. (g)	Expenses (h)	Closing Balance i=(e+f-g-h)	Commitments (Unliquidated Obligations) (j)	Undepreciated of fixed Assets and Inventory (k)	(Future Due) L=(a-b-f)	(Past Due) (m)	
Denmark	2,443,475	2,443,475	1,513,721	39,174	968,928	-	-	51,554	917,373	16,330	-	-		901,043
DFID	14,944,326	9,701,862	7,093,395		2,608,468	-	-	422,367	2,186,101	422,976	-	5,242,464		1,763,125
EU	27,213,080	25,901,696	14,879,547		11,022,149	-	-	(68,945)	11,091,094	946,760	-	1,311,384		10,144,334
Germany	8,376,836	14,370,884	14,370,884		(0)	-	-	-	(0)	-	-	-		(0)
Italy	3,296,703	3,296,703	95,508		3,201,196	-	-	63,216	3,137,979	-	-			3,137,979
SIDA	4,442,963	4,442,963	3,439,805		1,003,158	-	-	653	1,002,506	810,573	-	-		191,933
DFAT	5,000,000	5,000,000	3,173,016		1,826,984	-	-	76	1,826,908	197,869	-	-		1,629,039
Norway	4,737,302	2,368,651	2,366,106		2,545	-	-	-	2,545	-	-	2,368,651		2,545
MFA Norway	2,202,886	2,202,886	1,146,806		1,056,080	-	-	37,374	1,018,706	27,232	-			991,474
Japan	13,739,390	13,739,390	9,242,638		4,496,752	-	42,410	220,159	4,234,183	206,049	-	-		4,028,134
USAID	68,539,601	49,863,415	36,106,704		13,756,710	-	34,442	2,806,893	10,915,375	2,058,861	176,890	18,676,186		8,679,624
CCF	84,444	84,444	84,444		(0)	-	-	-	(0)	-	-	-		(0)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>155,021,006</b>	<b>133,416,369</b>	<b>93,512,574</b>	<b>39,174</b>	<b>39,942,969</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>76,852</b>	<b>3,533,348</b>	<b>36,332,770</b>	<b>4,686,649</b>	<b>176,890</b>	<b>27,598,685</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31,469,231</b>

Note:

i) Data contained in this report is an extract of UNDP financial records.

ii) Income received in currency other than USD is approximated to USD based on UN- Operational Rate of Exchange applied.



## ANNEX II: EXPENSES BY OUTPUT

Project Output ID and Description	2020 Budget (AWP)	Jan-Mar 2020	Delivery Rate
Output 1 (00106325): Administration of credible elections is facilitated by the meeting of key IEC structural and planning milestones.	9,977,060	2,216,780	22%
<b>Sub-total Output 1</b>	<b>9,977,060</b>	<b>2,216,780</b>	<b>22%</b>
Output 2 (00106326): Credible electoral dispute resolution (EDR) is provided by the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC).	2,929,365	276,013	9%
<b>Sub-total Output 2</b>	<b>2,929,365</b>	<b>276,013</b>	<b>9%</b>
Output 3 (00106327): Afghan public and political stakeholders are informed of the electoral process and committed to participating in the next electoral cycle in accordance with the law.	1,557,005	116,084	7%
<b>Sub-total Output 3</b>	<b>1,557,005</b>	<b>116,084</b>	<b>7%</b>
Output 4 (00108499): A polling centre specific voter list for the upcoming elections is produced by the IEC.	3,548,984	4,318	0%
<b>Sub-total Output 4</b>	<b>3,548,984</b>	<b>4,318</b>	<b>0%</b>
Output 5 (00111484): The IEC and ECC provide credible administration of and electoral dispute resolution for the Wolesi Jirga and District Council elections, respectively.	4,670,646	(81,891)	-2%
<b>Sub-total Output 5</b>	<b>4,670,646</b>	<b>(81,891)</b>	<b>-2%</b>
Output 6 (00117164): The IEC and ECC are able to provide credible administration of, and electoral dispute resolution, for the 2019 Presidential elections.	11,938,037	1,002,044	8%
<b>Sub-total Output 6</b>	<b>11,938,037</b>	<b>1,002,044</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>34,621,097</b>	<b>3,533,348</b>	<b>10%</b>



## ANNEX III: ISSUE LOG

#	Description	Date Identified	Impact/ Priority	Countermeasure	Owner	Status
1	Changing GoIRA and EMBs focus and priorities. Uncertain political will and conflicting agendas among major political stakeholders regarding the implementation of the long overdue 2018 Election.	October 2017	Impact 4 Priority 2	UNESP has remained flexible in the changing political environment, while supporting a timely implementation of all electoral phases. The 2018 Wolesi Jirga elections and 2019 Presidential elections have been completed.	NUG	Reducing
2	Lack of clarification regarding constituency delimitation, continued past deadlines for consequent electoral changes.	October 2017	Impact 3 Priority 2	UNESP will support the IEC to take measures when the new constituency delimitation will be officially announced.	IDLG and NUG	No change
3	Political Turmoil. A number of political parties are jointly demanding change of the electoral system threaten with boycotting elections, even at the risk of postponing elections beyond 2018	March 2018	Impact 4 Priority 1	The Election Support Group has continued to be engaged in high level discussions for the 2019 electoral processes.	UNAMA, Political Parties	Reducing
4	IEC states that elections cannot be held in 11 "black" districts under AGE control. Security incidents, and in particular election-related incidents and casualties, increased in the fighting season and with the start of the VR. Threats demotivate a number of potential voters from registering to vote.	October 2017	Impact 5 Priority 1	UNESP will continue supporting the EMBs in their cooperation with the ANDSF and NATO RS to maximize security during all phases of the electoral process. In the voter registration processes, there were 22 black districts.	ANDSF	Reducing
5	Lack of awareness about roles of DCs, no government budget or salaries for these positions, and insecurity contribute to low DC candidate nominations	June 2018	Impact 5 Priority 1	UNESP will provide advisory support to the IEC to provide alternatives for districts with insufficient number of DC candidates. In 2019, the DD elections were postponed.	IEC	No change
6.	DC election postponement has affected UNESP support to the electoral processes.	September 2018	Impact 5 Priority 1	Nil action at this time. UNESP to recommence support at time of DC election announcement.	IEC	No change
7.	Introduction of BVV use on Election Day	September 2018	Impact 5 Priority 1	UNESP provided technical support to the IEC regarding use of technology in elections, training on use of BVV devices and data transmission from BVV devices. The project developed analysis papers on interpretation of results from BVV devices.	IEC	Reducing

## ANNEX IV: RISK LOG

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Management response	Owner	Submitted by	Last Update	Status
1	<b>Important decisions are delayed, delaying in turn electoral preparations.</b> (1) Slow recruitment, especially of senior level positions within the IEC decreases the efficacy of the body. (2) Delays in planning, last minute changes in planning, and over-reliance on UNESP advisors' technical decisions affects procurement and logistical operations. (3) ACCRA's slow pace of Tazkira issuance in remote and inaccessible areas prevents people to register to vote.	November 2017	Regulatory, Organisational	Impact: 5 Probability: 5	Advise and support the IEC to prioritize and accelerate recruitment of senior level positions. Advise the IEC to speed up and complete planning and decision-making exercises. Advise the IEC to work closely with ACCRA emphasizing the causal relationship between Tazkira issuance and successful elections.	NUG, IEC, ACCRA	UNESP	8 April 2020	No change
2	<b>Political interference in the EMBs.</b> The controversial situation of President's interference in the case of Tazkira copies. Political parties' pressure for major electoral reforms and protests blocking the Ghazni IEC office.	November 2017	Political	Impact: 4 Probability: 4	Work with IEC to strengthen their independence, to increase the transparency of their work and build public support and trust.	NUG	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing
3	<b>Electoral stakeholders refuse to recognize results or respond to allegations of fraud through noninstitutional means, including the threats and/or use of violence.</b> Electoral stakeholders in the previous parliamentary and presidential elections threatened to commit violence if results were not reviewed. Allegations of fraud, whether substantiated or not, have in the past undermined the reputation of the EMBs and generated serious political instability.	October 2017	Political	Impact: 4 Probability: 5	Increased focus on building voter confidence and that of electoral stakeholders on the capacity, integrity, and impartiality of the EMBs so that the results of the election are acceptable for everyone. Increase stakeholder engagement and share information and address concerns raised in consultations. Fraud mitigation continues to be top priority for future electoral support.	EMBs, UNESP & Donors	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing
4	<b>The government limits UN support to the electoral process.</b> The government has indicated on several occasions that it has reservations regarding the UN's involvement in national projects.	November 2017	Political	Impact: 5 Probability: 1	UN will strengthen its engagement with the government to ensure the government is aware of UN's added value.	UNAMA and UNDP	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Management response	Owner	Submitted by	Last Update	Status
5	<b>Geography, climate, and (lack of) infrastructure create delays.</b> No major issues were encountered in the delivery of electoral materials. Minor issues include AGE attacks on convoys and VR sites, with marginal destruction of electoral materials.	October 2017	Operational	Impact: 2 Probability: 2	UNESP adjusts its logistics plans according to the security, geographic, and infrastructure setup, ANDSF provides air support for movement of electoral materials on IEC request.	ANDSF, IEC, UNESP	UNESP	8 April 2020	No change
6	<b>Security.</b> Increasing threats, number of incidents, and casualties affect the VR and CN numbers, and will affect the voter turnout. At least 11 “black” districts won’t have elections, according to the IEC.	November 2017	Other (Security)	Impact: 5 Probability: 5	Work with IEC, ANDSF, and NATO RS to ensure security of sites, staff, voters, candidates and observers, and to enable access to as many sites as possible.	ANDSF, AGE	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing
7	<b>Security.</b> The security environment deteriorates to the point where the EMBs are unable to function in parts of the country. Insecurity in the country has dramatically escalated over the years. According to security analysts, this is expected to remain the same or worsen in the period covered by this project document. AGE’s have been explicit in their intention to intensify their attacks. IEC personnel and facilities have been attacked in previous elections.	November 2017	Other (Security)	Impact: 4 Probability: 4	Formulate a comprehensive Security Response Plan for different threat levels. Liaise and coordinate with the government to provide adequate security for EMB facilities.	EMBs and UNESP, GoIRA	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing
8	<b>Logistical breakdowns.</b> Minor logistical challenges encountered due to terrain, distance and security risks.	October 2017	Operational	Impact: 3 Probability: 3	Air support provided for movement of electoral materials in inaccessible or high-risk areas.	Multiple	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing
9	<b>Electoral fraud.</b> Allegations of all types of electoral fraud received from all parts of the country. IEC and ACCRA staff implicated.	October 2017	Organisational / Legal	Impact: 4 Probability: 3	Work with the IEC and the ECC to prevent fraud, closely monitor electoral processes and staff, and refer cases to the responsible institutions in this regard.	Multiple	UNESP	8 April 2020	No change

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Management response	Owner	Submitted by	Last Update	Status
10	<b>Constituency Delimitation decision delayed past the deadline.</b> Zero impact on 2018 on 2019 elections. This will be revisited for 2020 elections (once decided).	October 2017	Regulatory	Impact: 0 Probability: 0	No response required at this time.	NUG and IDLG	UNESP	8 April 2020	No change
11	<b>Polling Results.</b> The 25 political parties threatening to boycott the elections unless the electoral system is changed may lead to their refusal to recognize the polling results.	March 2018	Political	Impact: 3 Probability: 3	High-level meetings were conducted to ensure consensus and inclusivity of the 2018 elections, and the opening of the Ghazni IEC office. In 2019, political parties recommended use of biometrics [considered] and the MDR electoral system [yet to be adopted].	Multiple	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing
12	<b>IEC is unable to recruit the required number of staff - particularly women - to conduct the voter registration exercise.</b> Because of inadequate staffing in some areas, IEC could be forced to open fewer registration centres, therefore disenfranchising voters.	October 2017	Organisational	Impact: 4 Probability: 3	Secure the buy in of religious and tribal leaders in encouraging qualified people, including women, to work with the IEC. Conduct grassroot level meetings and consultative meetings for effective participation of women in electoral processes.	IEC	UNESP	8 April 2020	No change
13	<b>Turnover in personnel results in loss of skills acquired through EMBs staff training and institutional memory.</b> Loss of technical capacity within the EMBs will have administrative, operational, and financial implications for the scope of work. This will also impact overall coordination and performance within the EMBs.	October 2017	Organizational	Impact: 3 Probability: 2	Appropriate capacity building measures within the EMBs to create internal resilience. Knowledge management systems to be developed. Have onboarding packages readily available for newly recruited staff and provide on the job training.	EMBs, UNESP	UNESP	8 April 2020	No change

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Management response	Owner	Submitted by	Last Update	Status
14	<b>Gender mainstreaming falls short of targets in the EMBs.</b> The training and other support activities might be insufficient in and of themselves to address the deep-seated cultural prejudices which disadvantage women, the disabled, Kuchis, and other marginalised social groups.	October 2017	Gender	Impact: 2 Probability: 2	Coordinate the work of the Gender Units with relevant activities and/or programmes of the MOWA, UN Women, and CSOs, with the support of UN Women as required. Continue to engage Mullahs and Ulamas in advocacy for increased participation of women and other groups in electoral processes.	IEC, UNESP	UNESP	8 April 2020	No change
15	<b>Public awareness of electoral procedures and guidelines remain poor.</b> High levels of illiteracy and the difficult security environment are likely to limit voters' exposure to voter education messages. As a result, an uninformed public is more vulnerable to electoral manipulation.	October 2017	Strategic	Impact: 3 Probability: 4	Use a wide range of non-written materials in voter education campaigns. In the 2019 presidential elections, TV and radio PSAs were used in addition to increased use of social media and grassroots public outreach.	IEC	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing
16	<b>EMBs stakeholder engagement is insufficient.</b> There would be lower confidence in the EMB's ability to function as an institution independent of external assistance, and greater chance of contestation of decisions taken by the EMBs, regardless of the actual quality of those decisions.	October 2017	Strategic	Impact: 3 Probability: 3	Support and encourage the EMBs to establish formalized coordination mechanisms and external reporting systems.	UNESP	UNESP	8 April 2020	Reducing

## ANNEX V: KEY DEVELOPMENTS AROUND THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

**January 2020:** On 1 January, the Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA) issued a press statement expressing concerns over the complaints adjudication process related to the preliminary results of the 28 September presidential election. On 16 January, in response to ECC's press conference on the complaint adjudication process, CE Abdullah's ticket urged ECC to address complaints based on the "legal and ethical obligation"; highlighted inconsistencies in handling of similar cases by various PECCs and advised ECC to correct this in the adjudication of appeals. On 24 January, IEC spokesperson indicated that the list of polling stations sent by ECC had some technical problems, stating that the vote recount would not commence until ECC submitted a revised list. On 25 January, the Head of IEC Secretariat noted that from the 5,576 PSs identified for recount, 1,372 were previously recounted and need not go through another recount. Consequently, IEC shared an analysis of the polling station list and requested further clarifications from ECC. On 31 January, Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA) stated that based on its findings and observations, ECC was under political pressure from certain electoral stakeholders to facilitate a political agreement between the two frontrunners, President Ghani and CE Abdullah.

**February 2020:** On 2 February, observer organisations, Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA), Election and Transparency Watch Organization of Afghanistan (ETWA), Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA), and several women activists criticized the electoral management bodies (EMBs) for the prolonged delay in announcing the results of the 2019 presidential election. Following announcement of ECC decisions on the 6,377 appeals and special cases on 5 February, there were mixed reactions from different stakeholder groups including presidential tickets, CSOs and other political actors. Domestic election observer organizations including TEFA, FEFA and Free Election and Transparency Watch Organization (FETWO) each issued press statements expressing dissatisfaction with the manner in which the ECC handled the complaints and appeals adjudication process citing concerns over the lack of clarity and alleged non-adherence to the legal framework.

Separately, presidential candidates Dr Abdullah, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Rahmatullah Nabil and other tickets rejected the ECC rulings, stating that these decisions were made under political pressure. In response, members of President Ghani's State Builders team expressed satisfaction with the work of the electoral management body noting it was usual for teams to reject decisions that are not in their interests. At a meeting with ECC leadership, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) stressed the importance of IEC-ECC cooperation and urged the ECC leadership to provide more clarity and legal explanation on its decisions to the electoral tickets, CSOs, the Afghan public and other national and international organizations. On 17 February, the IEC stated that it had completed the special audit and recount for the nine provinces identified through the ECC decisions. The ECC Deputy Chairperson alleged that the IEC did not implement the decisions as outlined. On 18 February, the IEC announced the final results of the 2019 Presidential election, with President Ghani declared the winner, public reactions emerged from major tickets. Dr. Abdullah stated that the IEC's announcement of election result is illegal and that he does not accept the results; Rahmatullah Nabil, characterized the announcement as a "demise of democracy"; Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's running mate Hafiz-ul-Rahman Taqi stated that results which lacked legal basis were not acceptable with the Taliban terming the results "illegal" and President Ghani's re-election as "illegitimate". Opposition political figures emphasized on the

establishment of an 'inclusive' government which reflects the political consensus among the Afghan people and is supportive of the peace process.

**March 2020:** Political reactions to the final results of the 2019 Presidential elections and mediation efforts on the post-election deadlock continued. Former President Hamid Karzai and Mujahidin leader Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf continued their meetings with both sides to discuss the on-going post-election deadlock. On 9 March, incumbent President Ashraf Ghani was sworn-in for a second term in office, with Amrullah Saleh and Sarwar Danish also sworn-in as First and Second Vice Presidents, respectively. In another engagement, on the same day, Dr. Abdullah held a swearing-in ceremony in Sapedar Palace in parallel with President Ghani's, after an outright rejection of the election results by his Stability and Convergence team. On 10 March, the head of TEFA stated that the EMBs are responsible for the current political crisis and bringing disrepute to democracy.

Mediation efforts continued but the political situation remained tense. At a mediation meeting, key Afghan political leaders called for an end to the political impasse. On 21 March, President Ghani chaired the first cabinet meeting and in his inauguration speech, President Ghani stated that he will continue to work with the old cabinet from the National Unity Government (NUG), "until the formation of an inclusive cabinet". On 24 March, Chief Electoral Officer Dr. Nang was quoted by media stating that the IEC was ready to conduct provincial and district council and Wolesi Jirga elections in Ghazni province.