

FAST FACTS

United Nations
Development Programme



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SUPPORTING DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN TUNISIA

Since the departure of former President Ben Ali in January 2011, Tunisia has been witnessing a phase of dramatic transition to democracy involving a complete overhaul of its political system. UNDP has immediately refocused its work in Tunisia to support key institutions, processes and stakeholders that can have a significant impact in assuring the steady transition to democracy – including support to the constitutional process, political parties, and women's political participation.

Through its Global Programme for Parliamentary Strengthening (a joint effort of the Bureau for Development Policy, the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and UNDP Tunisia) UNDP provided support to more than 50 political parties, between April and July 2011. The support focused on strengthening capacities, knowledge and skills of politicians and technocrats and affording them an opportunity to work together and agree on best means to ensuring a peaceful, democratic and a more inclusive and consensus-based transition process. This effort also gave UNDP Tunisia the opportunity to identify future interventions in the short-term (2011/2012) to support the continuity of dialogue amongst the various political actors and entities.

SUPPORT TO POLITICAL PARTIES

UNDP provided experts to guide the national process of drafting the transitional law for political parties and supported the effort to make the process more inclusive through virtual and direct consultancies and activities. Those included a workshop on the "Legislation and Financing of Political Parties" organized in partnership with Al Kawakibi Democracy Transition Center in May 2011. The workshop involved legal advisors in the High Commission for the Fulfilment of the Revolution Goals, Political Reform, and Democratic Transition and the Sub-Committee on Liberties.

RESULTS

- Technical Support was provided to draft new laws for political parties and NGOs.
- Participative process afforded representatives of political parties and NGOs the opportunity to provide inputs and recommendations for final version of both laws.
- 45 women politicians were trained to conduct successful electoral campaigns and to train others within their political parties.
- Representatives of 50 political parties benefited from Knowledge exchange and comparative experiences on constitutional processes in transitions - with special focus on south-south exchange (South Africa and Latin America experiences)

Technical information needed to support the finalization of the draft law on political parties, best practices and case studies -- mainly from Europe (France) and East Europe – were shared amongst the participants. Specific recommendations were drafted by representatives of political parties and submitted to the Sub-Committee, which took into consideration the recommendations in the final draft law. The full report is accessible here:

<https://agora.trustedarea.net/groups/49/documents/816>



Political parties' representatives discussing the recommendations for the law

In follow-up, UNDP Tunisia also organized a workshop on NGOs law as well as round tables and discussions on the role of the political parties in the transition with comparative perspectives from Latin America.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

For the first time in the Arab States Region, the coming Tunisian elections (slated for 23 October 2011) will be based on equal electoral lists. The High Authority has adopted a proportional electoral system with equal representation between men and women.

In June 2011, UNDP initiated the first "Summer University for Women in Politics" to train potential women candidates in preparing and running their electoral campaigns. The event was conducted in partnership with National Democratic Institute, UN Women, iKnow Politics, and the Center for Arab Women Training and Research. Participants had the opportunity to receive training by international and national experts on how to overcome campaigning challenges, including establishing campaigning teams, collaborating with CSOs, and communicating successfully with the voters and the media. At the end, participants committed to train other women within their political parties. The full report is accessible here:

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UNDP and NDI experts sharing the experiences of electoral campaigns in Canada and Senegal

As a follow-up, UNDP Tunisia has developed a full program to reinforce women in politics and continue to support them during the campaign and the elections.

CONSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The future Constitutional Assembly in charge of drafting the new constitution will face multiple challenges due to the complexity of its mandate and responsibilities in a political context that remains volatile.

UNDP Tunisia supported the process through inaugurating discussions around the constitution, engaging political parties, members of the High Commission, the media, and civil society in a workshop on 'Constitutional Processes: Comparative Perspectives' in July 2011.

The experiences of South Africa, Iraq and Nepal were highlighted by international high-level experts including Nicholas Haysom, (Head of the Office of Constitutional Support in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, 2005-2006 and legal advisor to Nelson Mandela, 1994-1999), Francis Delpérée member of the Belgian Senate and constitutional law Professor) and Larry Taman (Senior constitutional lawyer and expert). The full report is accessible here:

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FUTURE ACTIVITIES

In the coming months, UNDP will focus on providing support to the Constitutional process and the Constituent Assembly.

To this end, a program formulation mission was conducted in July 2011 and a second one is planned for September 2011, to assess the forthcoming needs of the Constituent Assembly and establish clear plans on how to provide support after the October 23 election,

Large-scale projects are also under implementation or formulation in the area of elections, women in politics, human rights, anti-corruption and security sector reform.

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