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Resilient nations.*

REGIONAL ELECTORAL SUPPORT FOR MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA



PHASE I REPORT DEC 2013 - FEB 2017



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About GPECS Arab States

The Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS) is UNDP's main contribution to the formulation and implementation of UN electoral assistance policy, the identification of lessons learned and best practices, and the production and dissemination of electoral knowledge. This innovative programme focuses on providing long-term support to improve and strengthen countries' electoral processes and institutions throughout all stages of the electoral cycle. The GPECS has four inter-dependent and mutually reinforcing pillars: 1) global: provides leadership, advocacy and capacity development in the field of electoral cycle support at the global level; 2) regional: supports peer cooperation and the promotion of regional knowledge development, exchanges and capacity; 3) country: supports electoral cycle interventions and lessons learned at the national level; and 4) gender: supports gender mainstreaming in electoral assistance and promotes women's political participation.

In the Arab States, the GPECS Regional Component is implemented through the Regional Electoral Support Project for Middle East and North Africa, out of the Regional Hub in Amman, Jordan. From December 2013 to February 2017, the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) provided support to the Regional Project¹ with an overall objective to enhance the credibility, transparency, effectiveness and sustainability of electoral institutions and processes in the region. The Project's interventions were implemented under three key output results:

1. Strengthened Regional Capacity and Knowledge on Electoral Issues.
2. Increased Participation of Women Throughout the Electoral Cycle.

3. Formal and Informal Mechanisms in place to enable Youth Civil Society Organization's and Youth Civic Engagement in Government Led and other Political Processes.

To achieve these objectives, a small project team consisting of electoral experts and administrative officers based at the UNDP Regional Hub in Amman implemented the project in close collaboration with national electoral management bodies, regional organizations working on elections, civil society groups, UNDP country offices, and Sida's regional office in Cairo. The project facilitated regional cooperation and networking through the formation of networks and the exchange of best practices and lessons learned;

produced and disseminated electoral knowledge and know-how on electoral issues at the regional level; promoted the greater and more effective role of women and youth in the electoral process; built coherence in electoral support in the region and enhanced capacity of electoral authorities to play their role in the professional, transparent, and credible administration of elections.

This report provides an overview of these interventions and the resulting achievements made by the Regional Project, outlining highlights from Phase I during which the project implemented its activities with regards to its three key outputs.



¹ The initial Sida contribution covered the period from December 2013 to June 2016, and was later extended to March 2017.

Executive Summary

The Arab region has transformed since the wave of protests that swept the region in 2011 and the effects of which continue to impact the lives of ordinary citizens. Led by disgruntled youth which make up more than a third of the region's population, the protests reflected a deeply rooted quest for political participation and socio-economic equality. In the period since, some countries saw new national constitutions, the holding of fair and credible elections, and an expanding public sphere for previously excluded groups. Other countries, however, have not stabilized and continue to be plagued by increasingly complex protracted conflicts that not only have national but regional implications for the social, political and economic development of the region.

While the region's quest for securing human rights including political rights continues, the new wave of political awareness has since resulted in a greater number of electoral events taking place since 2011 and a growing interest in the field of elections. Even though there are still significant democratic governance challenges in the region, some progress has been made in the field of elections. These gains include increasing numbers of elections which has, through voter registration, mobilized and empowered the citizenry, particularly disadvantaged and often neglected groups like women; and enabled those citizens to express their political will, a practice that in itself is part of citizenship building and a necessary step in democratization.

With varying degrees of freedom and competitiveness, elections are now taking place in most of the 22 member states of the Arab League; apart from Libya, Syria, and Yemen which are immersed in deep armed conflict; and with a slower electoral calendar in the Gulf states. More than 20 electoral events occurred since the beginning of Phase I of the project, in the period between 2014- 2016, and a similar number is scheduled for the upcoming period between 2017-2020.

The past few years also saw the evolution of election management bodies, with the number of independent election commissions increasing since 2011. Five countries saw the establishment of electoral management bodies in the form of commissions separate from executive power: Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Somalia, and Tunisia. Moreover, in Algeria, Lebanon, and Morocco, where elections are managed by ministries, supervisory commissions have been created. There is also greater regional interest and commitment to professionalizing the field of elections as illustrated by the formation of the regional Arab EMB association (ArabEMBs), the League of Arab States' establishment of an elections department (Electoral Affairs Department) and the holding of the League's first ever forum on elections, and the growing numbers of Arab speaking election experts.



Key Achievements

Through its three-year implementation, SIDA's funded electoral support has had significant achievements that have resulted in greater regional cooperation, expanded access to electoral knowledge and information, strengthened collaboration between and among EMBs, and increased awareness on and promotion of women and youth participation. Below are some of the key results and achievements of the project from December 2013 to February 2017:

I. **The Formation of ArabEMBs:** A central focus of Phase I of the Regional Electoral Support for MENA has been to promote regional cooperation on elections. Through extensive advisory support and implementation of a wide range of initiatives, the project was successful in its efforts resulting in the formation of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs). Following a number of project-supported initiatives encouraging cooperation, Arab electoral management bodies recognized the value of cooperation and peer-to-peer exchanges on elections and the need for a regional body dedicated to facilitating and strengthening this cooperation. This resulted in the coming together of electoral management bodies from six Arab countries (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Yemen) on 8 June in Beirut to formally launch the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs). Since its launch, the new organization has made significant strides towards establishing itself as a regional body and promoting the sharing of information and practices on elections in the Arab region. As a result of its success thus far, the organization has grown in size with the addition of four new EMB members, it has been recognized globally and has entered into partnerships with other regional electoral bodies. The new organization has hosted a number of thematic workshops and conferences that have increased the awareness and understanding of the electoral landscape in the region, and the sharing of good practices and lessons learned in the administration of elections.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS of the Organization of ArabEMBs

- Expanding membership by additional countries (Sudan, Mauritania , Somalia and Tunisia)
- Establishing international cooperation through signing of memorandum of understanding with the Association of European Electoral Officials (ACEEEO), Venice Commission and AWEB)
- Organizing regional workshop on voter registration
- Organizing regional workshop on the role of EMBs in enhancing women's participation in Elections
- Organizing regional workshop on strengthening the independence of electoral management bodies
- Developing a fact-finding questionnaire on the status of women participation at all levels of the electoral process
- Developing a fact-finding questionnaire on the independency of EMBs and related indicators at all level of the electoral process
- Participating in the working group for creating International association for women in electoral management bodies (WEM-international)
- Holding its first and second general assembly meetings and ten executive board meetings
- Developing and adopting a comprehensive communication strategy



II. **Strengthened Capacity of the League of Arab States:** The project's partnership with the Electoral Affairs Department of the League of Arab States contributed significantly to the overall objective of strengthening regional capacity on elections. In collaboration with UN's Electoral Assistance Division, the project partnered with the League of Arab States to strengthen the capacity of the League's staff taking part in election observation missions across the region, supported the building of institutional memory tools for the new department, facilitated the hosting of the League's first regional forum on elections, promoted the League's exposure to other regional and global organizations working in the field of elections, and enabled the transfer of UN's knowledge and experience on providing electoral assistance to member states. As a result of these interventions, the League is better positioned in the field of elections with greater requests for assistance from its member states, a wider network of national, regional and global electoral stakeholders engaged with the Department, and a roster of 100 trained staff ready to be deployed to assist its member states on electoral matters. In addition to these achievements, the project's engagement with the League has also resulted in the Department having greater experience and expertise in preparing for and conducting election missions; conceptualizing, preparing and organizing trainings, workshops, and high-level conferences; and in collecting and compiling data and information from its member states, and using that information to develop knowledge products.



III. **Promoting BRIDGE Training Curriculum and Methodology:** The regional component has taken concerted efforts to promote internationally accepted electoral principles through support to main professional development course for election administrations worldwide, Building Resources for Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE). Through support to the holding of BRIDGE trainings at the national and regional levels, increasing the number of BRIDGE facilitators, and advocating for the use of BRIDGE by the Electoral Affairs Department of the League of Arab States, the project has contributed to the adoption of the award-winning training curriculum in the region. As a result of the project's efforts, more than 400 Arab speaking participants gained knowledge and expertise on the different BRIDGE modules among them those who became credited as semi and fully accredited BRIDGE facilitators, and in 2014 LAS took a policy decision to adopt the methodology for all its trainings.

IV. **Generating and Disseminating Knowledge:** With a strong focus on knowledge, the project contributed to enhancing the knowledge and expertise of the people and institutions engaged in the field of elections in the Arab States. With its primary stakeholders being electoral management bodies, civil society organizations including women and youth groups, and regional entities (i.e. LAS and Organization of ArabEMBs), the project's phase I interventions led to nearly 1,600 individuals and 108 organizations exposed to electoral information ², knowledge and expertise, nine electoral knowledge products produced and made available in the Arabic language ³, and the exposure of university students to courses on electoral topics.

V. **Promoting Human Rights in Elections:** Given the human rights environment in the context of transitioning and new democracies in the region, the regional project had a particular focus on strengthening the links between human rights and elections through bringing together the human rights and election communities; these initiatives aimed at raising the awareness of national human rights institutions on the electoral process and what national human rights institutions (NHRIs) can do to contribute towards creating an environment conducive to the holding of peaceful and inclusive elections. The support in this area resulted in a) greater awareness on the human rights in play during elections, b) the recognition by NHRIs of the need for greater clarity on what their role is within their mandate to promote inclusive and

² See Annex II: List of Organizations the Project Engaged with.

³ See Annex I: List of the knowledge products produced through the project

peaceful elections, and c) commitment of the Arab Network of NHRIs (ANNHRIs) to continue supporting activities that promote the role of NHRIs in elections.

VI. **Leveraging Regional and National Partnerships:** Through the implementation of phase I of the regional electoral support, the project established key partnerships at the national, regional and global levels; these partnerships have enabled the project to expand its reach within the region to a wide network of individuals and organizations engaged in the field of elections. Key partners include the Electoral Affairs Department of the League of Arab States with whom the project has engaged extensively, supporting initiatives that enhance the knowledge and capacity of its staff and member states. Another key partner has been the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) which the project supported from its inception in 2015 and continues to support in its establishment phase. The work with the Organization of ArabEMBs has focused on promoting regional cooperation and peer-to-peer learning, and support the organization to establish its own partnerships with other regional and international organizations engaged in similar work; this has led to greater awareness of the Arab electoral experience among the global electoral community. Others include the Mexico's National Electoral Institute (INE) with whom the project signed an MOU in 2014 and partnered with to enable Arab EMBs to be exposed to and learn from the Latin American experience which offers historical and political similarities, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) with whom the project engaged to enhance the cooperation between the different organizations engaged in electoral activities in the MENA region. These partnerships not only expanded the reach of the project and its interventions, but they also created learning opportunities that resulted from activities such as the Democracy Forum, the Latin American model that the League of Arab States adapted to the Arab context, and have fostered greater understanding between and networking among key electoral stakeholders in the region.

VII. The project was also able to successfully leverage its partnership with **UNDP country offices**, national electoral projects, and with other units within the UNDP Regional Hub in Amman, to contribute to a more coordinated and coherent approach to electoral assistance and ensure that all regional interventions prioritize the capacity building of national electoral stakeholders. Interventions that contributed towards this included the holding of annual chief technical advisory meetings in which regional trends were discussed, challenges and needs of electoral stakeholders were identified, and areas for collaboration and coordination were defined. These discussions led to collaboration on programmatic and operational levels including holding joint events, facilitating the sharing of staff across projects, and the deployment of consultants to national electoral projects. A total of four CTA meetings were held with over 65 participants taking part, with the events leading to several joint interventions between the regional and national electoral projects. Examples of effective collaboration included activities designed and implemented by the regional project in partnership with UNDP's national electoral projects in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, and Tunisia.



VIII. The regional component of GPECS also collaborates with **UNDP's Regional Programme for the Arab States**, particularly in implementing its gender and youth components. The project's gender interventions were implemented through the Regional Programme's Mosharka Project which provided access to a wide network of advocacy groups working on women's political participation, created greater opportunities for synergies with UN Women, Arab Women's Organization (AWO) and other Mosharka partners, and led to a more coordinated and strategic approach to promoting women's participation in the region.

IX. Promoting Women and

Youth in Electoral Processes: Over the three years, the project has prioritized the participation of women and youth throughout its interventions. Through various trainings, workshops, and forums, the project raised awareness on the role and importance of women and youth in electoral processes including as voters, candidates and representatives. These activities not only enhanced the capacity of participants taking part but they also encouraged the coming together of women and youth groups to identify the needs and strategies for taking forward the gender and youth agendas in the Arab States. These activities also produced recommendations that served as a guide to the project's interventions and laid the foundation for taking forward the gender and youth agenda in Phase II. In 2014, UNDP signed an agreement with the Arab Women's Organization on regional cooperation including on topics related

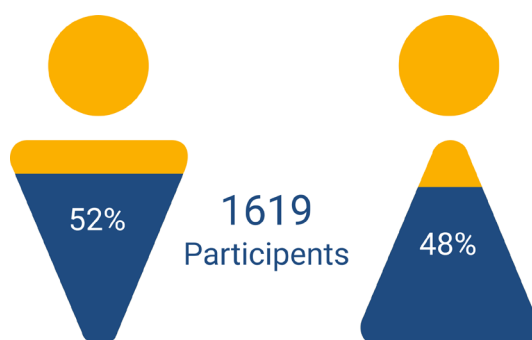
to women's political participation; the AWO, through the Mosharka project, served as one of the main beneficiaries of the project's gender interventions. Through conferences, workshops, and trainings, the project strengthened the capacity of the network of women in constitution making, created a database of more than 7,000 youth engaged and interested in civic and political participation, and imparted problem solving and leadership skills to 105 young men and women active in their communities. The Project carried out multiple BRIDGE trainings including BRIDGE workshops on Gender and Elections that were conducted in collaboration with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and included participants from 15 Arab countries belonging to institutions and organizations of different nature (LAS, parliaments, EMBs, CSOs, Media, political parties, the UN). In support of these efforts, the project disseminated and made available in Arabic a guidebook entitled 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation', which provide extensive guidance on how to mainstream gender throughout the electoral cycle from the point of view of electoral administrators. The project's efforts to ensure gender balance in all its interventions resulted in 45% women participation in all trainings, workshops, conference and other activities undertaken by the project.

X. Towards the objective of promoting youth participation in the Arab States, the project's achievements included a) an assessment of national youth policies that highlight the challenges youth face and the need for national counterparts to do more to provide youth with a platform for engagement in decision-making processes, b) a mapping of organizations promoting youth participation in the Arab region that serves as a database of partners the project can support and engage with for greater impact, and c) targeted activities that raised youth awareness, built their leadership skills and promoted civic engagement. Additionally, the project partnered with St. Joseph University in Lebanon to offer undergraduate and graduate students a course on electoral systems; the course was well received by both students and instructors, and resulted in the University deciding to include the course into its Masters of Democracy and Human Rights program.



Project Participants by Gender

Event/Activity	Date	Participants			Location
		Total	Male	Female	
OIC cooperation meeting	14-Feb	13	77%	23%	Jeddah
ArabEMBs preparatory committee meeting	14-Jun	18	83%	17%	Cordoba
Bridge Train the Facilitator (TtF) workshop	14-Sep	28	75%	64%	Beirut
Global conference: Reinforcing the credibility and acceptance of electoral processes	14-Apr	147	68%	32%	Dead sea
Lexicon Launch	14-Jan	60	67%	33%	Cairo
BRIDGE workshop "Introduction to Electoral Administration and Electoral Systems	15-May	24	50%	50%	Cairo
ArabEMBs Launch	15-Jun	145	60%	40%	Beirut
Joint Roundtable Discussion on The Role of Civil Society in Supporting Electoral Integrity through Domestic Elections Observation	15-Jul	13	77%	23%	Jeddah
BRIDGE "Train the Facilitator"	15-Aug	17	59%	41%	Casablanca
Regional Workshop on Voter Registration	15-Sep	37	78%	22%	Dead sea
Latin America Democracy Forum	15-Oct	13	69%	31%	Mexico
Regional Conference on Electoral Dispute Resolution	15-Oct	49	78%	22%	Beirut
RMS Workshop	15-Nov	15	80%	20%	Mexico
ArabEMBs Visioning Workshop	16-Feb	22	64%	36%	Aqaba
UN -League of Arab States Mission to the US	16-Feb	4	100%	0%	NY and Washington DC
Human Rights and Elections Workshop	16-Mar	56	79%	21%	Dead Sea
Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections	16-Apr	48	69%	31%	Dead Sea
Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States	16-May	102	77%	23%	Cairo
UNDP/LAS BRIDGE training 'introduction to electoral administration'	16-May	25	36%	64%	Cairo
General Assembly Meeting for Arab Network for National Human Rights Institution	16-Oct	1	100%	0	Muscat
ArabEMBs Executive Board Meeting	16-Oct	8	63%	38%	Amman
Global Elections Organization Conference (GEO-7)	16-Nov	4	50%	50%	Washington
BRIDGE workshops "Gender and Elections"	14-Feb	28	64%	36%	Cairo
Women's Full Participation in Constitution Making Process	15-Feb	23	0%	100%	Amman
BRIDGE Workshop: Increasing awareness on women's political representation and participation	15-Apr	44	0%	100%	Tunis
Women and SDGs Conference	15-Nov	350	20%	80%	Cairo
Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections	16-Apr	48	69%	31%	Dead Sea
Youth Forum	14-Apr	47	74%	26%	Morocco
First Youth Innovation Camp	15-Jun	74	45%	55%	Amman
Youth Leadership Forum	15-Oct	37	41%	59%	Amman
Course on Electoral Systems	16-Oct	29	45%	55%	Beirut
Youth Leadership Programme	16-Nov	90	56%	44%	Arab region



In Figures

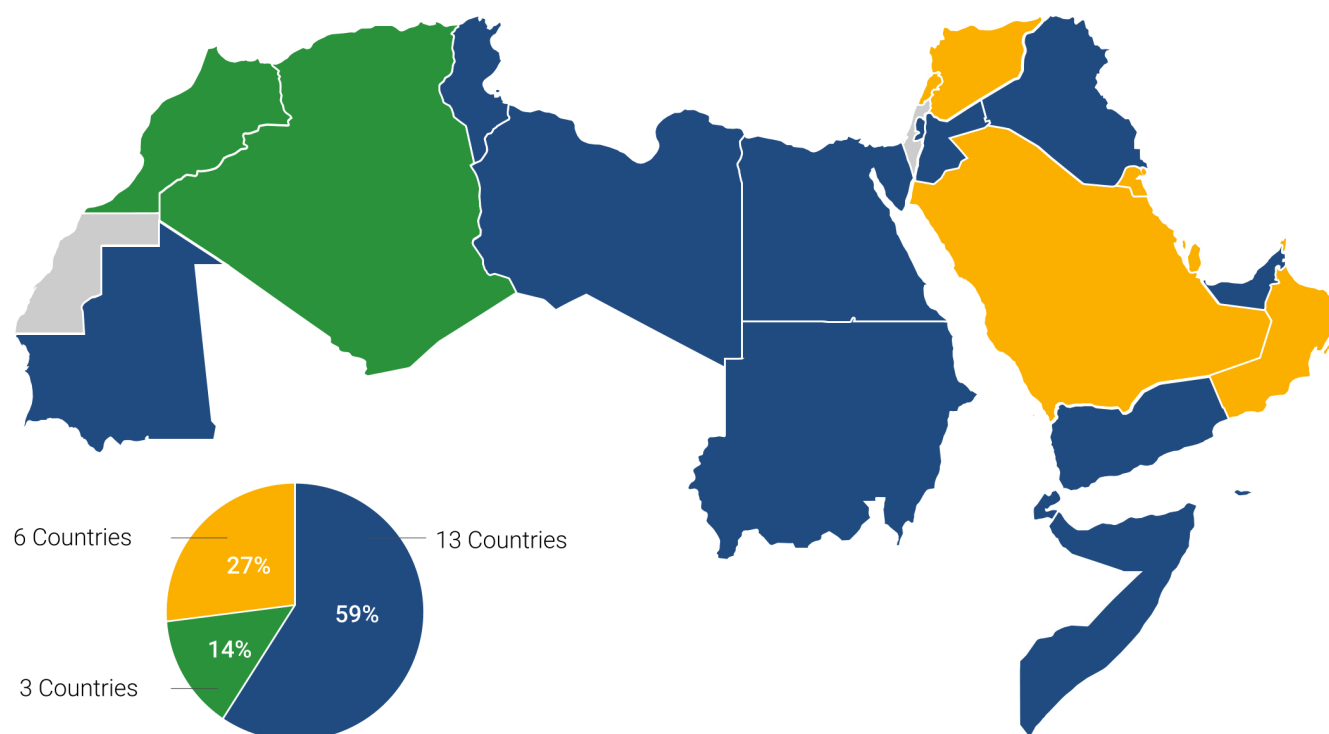
Type of EMBs in the Member States with an International Comparison

	World %	Middle East, Maghreb LAS States %	Western Europe, US, Canada %	Eastern Europe %	Sub-Saharan Africa %	Asia Pacific %	Latin America Caribbean %
Ministry of Gov.	19	32	42	-	9	20	16
Ministry supervised	21	9	46	5	30	10	21
Electoral Commission	60	59	12	95	61	70	63
Percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of countries	204	22	26	22	44	46	43

Elections In Member States Of Arab League, 2016-2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Presidential	2	1	3	2	2	10
Parliamentary	4	4	7	3	2	20
Local	4	3	4	3		14
Referendum	1					1
Total	11	8	14	8	4	45

Type of EMBs in the Member States of the League of Arab States



Ministry of government: Bahrein, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria

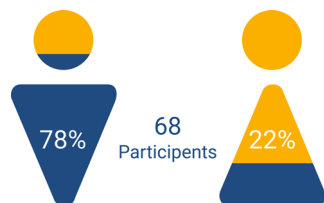
Ministry supervised by commission: Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco

Electoral Commission: Comoro Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

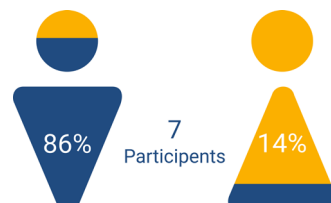
Women Representation in Electoral Management Bodies

Based on survey of 9 EMBs.

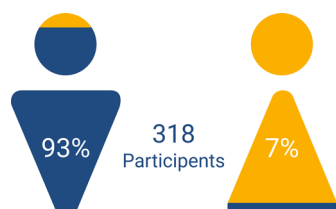
Members of EMB / Members of Board of Commissioners



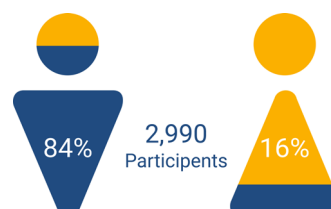
Head of EMB / Executive Director



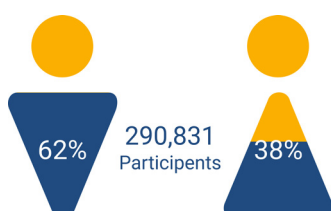
Head of Directorates



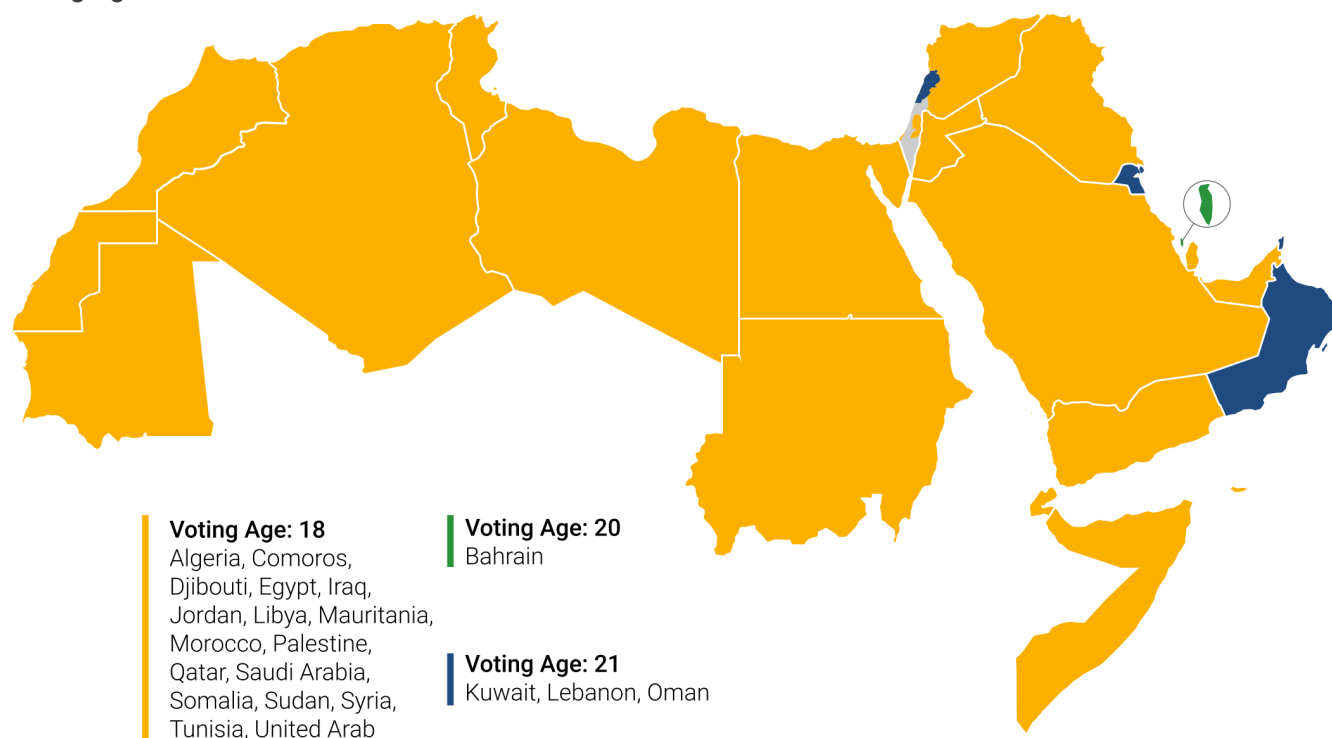
Full-time Staff



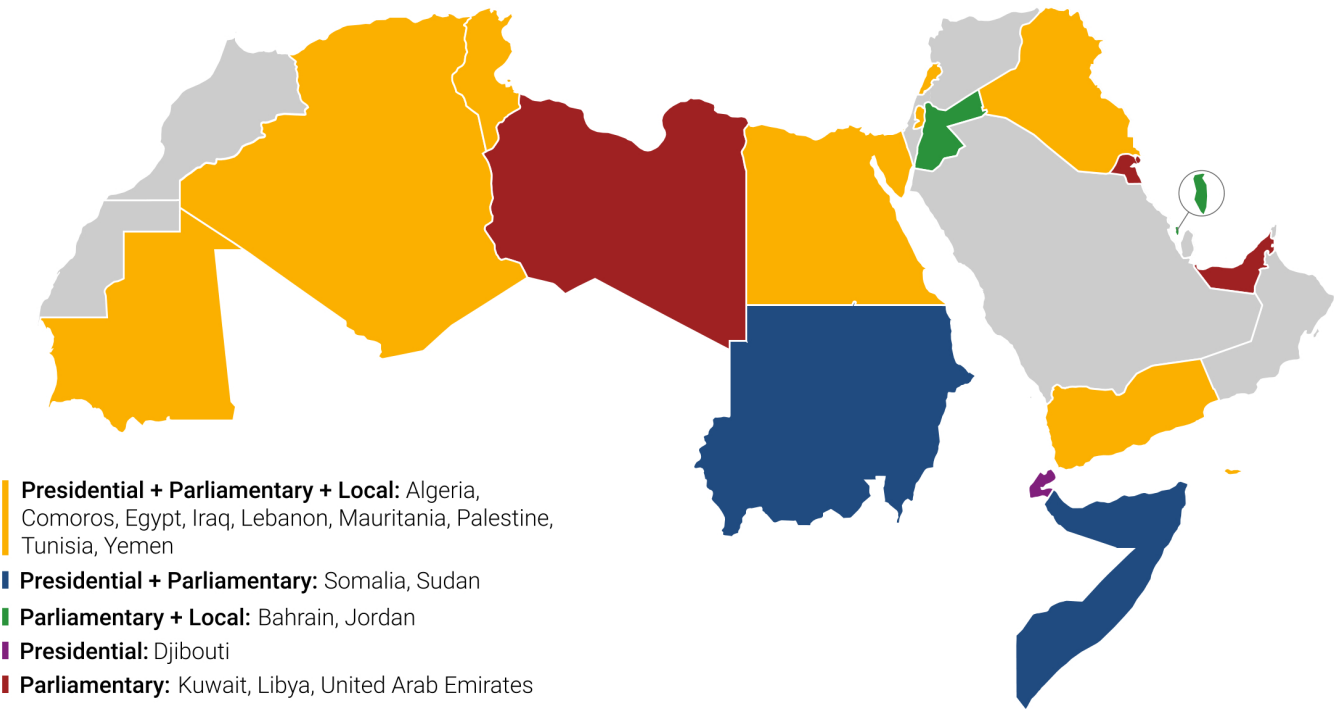
Part-time Staff in Voting and Sorting Committees



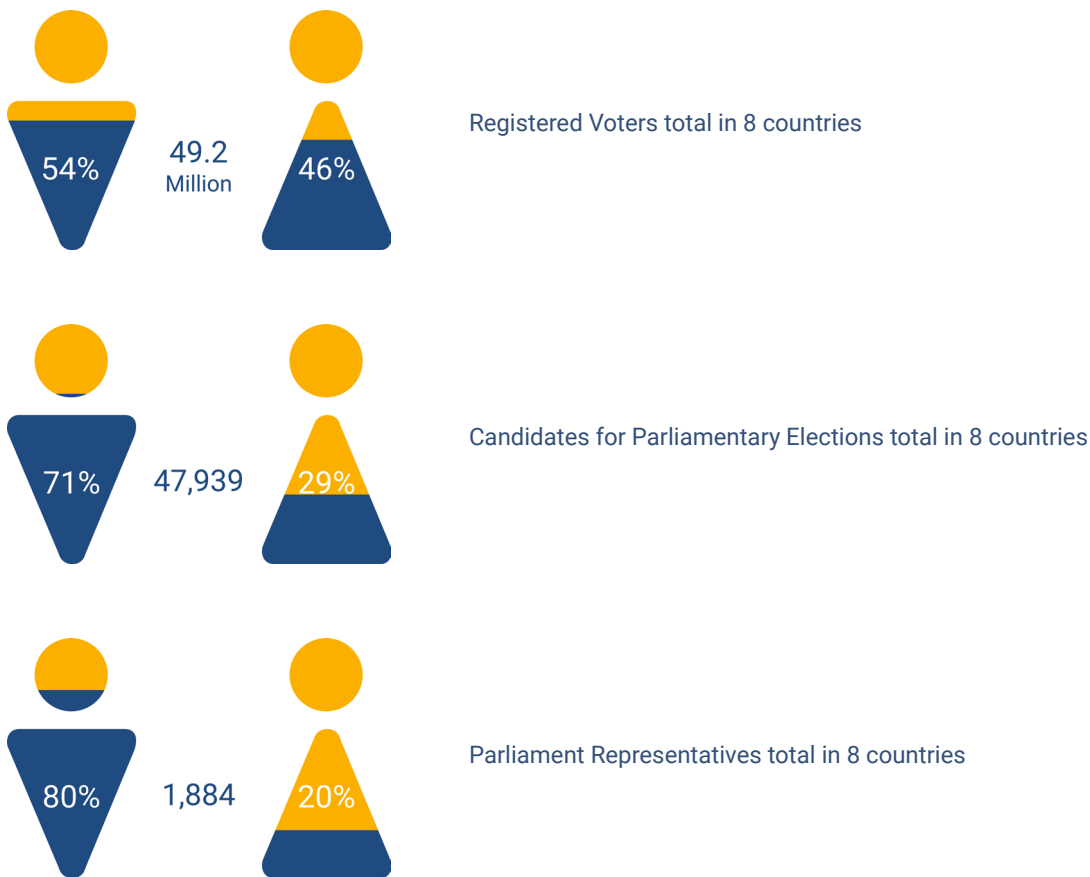
Voting Age



Type of Elections



Electoral Management Bodies Data by Gender for the Last Election





Results Matrix: Progress against output level indicators

Outcome	Output Result	Indicators
Outcome 1: Strengthened regional capacity and knowledge	Output 1.1: Strengthened regional exchanges among countries and enhanced South-south cooperation	No. of regional initiatives supported bringing together EMBs, CSOs, regional electoral stakeholders (Target: minimum of 3 regional initiatives)
		No. of countries involved in regional initiatives
		No. of formal agreement or exchanges between regional EMBs (resulted from UNDP support)
		No. of regional engagement by EMBs, CSOs and LAS on electoral issues
		No of regional CSOs supported in electoral cycle processes by small grants
	Output 1.2: knowledge generation and capacity enhancement of electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, MPs, constitutional experts, leaders) on parliament and electoral reform in the region	No. of organizations trained on electoral issues
		No. of trainings organized with electoral stakeholders
		No. of knowledge products finalized and disseminated to electoral stakeholders
		No. of trainers and trainees benefiting from electoral education
		No. of Arabic training materials/ guides produced and disseminated for regional consumption
Outcome 2: Increased participation of women throughout the electoral cycle	Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity of electoral bodies to mainstream gender in all its processes	No. of EMBs supported on gender mainstreaming in the area of electoral administration
		No. of regional women's networks supported
		No. of policies proposed or in place by EMBs that ensure gender-sensitive processes
	Output 2.2: Enhanced regional cooperation, partnership and knowledge for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in constitution and electoral processes among EMBs and Women's groups and political leaders.	No. of Regional policy recommendations shared by EMBs, parties, CSOs with electoral stakeholder's on women's participation in politics
		No. of women's groups trained/supported
	Output 2.3: Enhanced capacities of women as candidates in the electoral process	No. of women from the region that take part in trainings
		No. of women candidates for elections
		No. of Arabic material produced and disseminated on women and political participation

Target	Progress	
Minimum of 4 regional initiatives/ year	Accomplished	Total of 27 regional workshops
18 countries/year	Accomplished	21 countries (Algeria, Bahrein, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen)
2/year	Accomplished	13 engagements
5/year	Accomplished	20 engagements
Not less than 10		N/A
Minimum of 10 organizations trained on electoral issues	Accomplished	71 total organizations
Minimum of 5 trainings organized at regional level by the project	Accomplished	Total 24
Minimum of 3 knowledge products disseminated	Accomplished	
Target 20/year	Accomplished	
2/year	Accomplished	
7 EMBs	Accomplished	11 (Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Algeria and Yemen, Jordan, Egypt)
two per annum	Partially accomplished	Total 5
1	Accomplished	3 (Iraq, Jordan, Sudan)
2	Accomplished	Total 5
2/year	Partially accomplished	Total 2
40% of all participants	Accomplished	Total 48% of all project participants were women
	N/A	Date collection is still in progress
2	Accomplished	Total 3

Outcome 3: Formal and informal mechanisms in place to enable youth CSOs and youth's civic engagement in government led and other political processes	Output 3.1: Enhanced participation of youth in national political processes	No. of youth friendly policy initiatives targeting increased youth participation in politics implemented in the region by electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, youth ministries)
		Formulation of regional policy on engagement of youth in the political process
		No. of events/dialogue initiatives between youth/CSO/government supported
		No. of trainings/events/networks supported
	Output 3.2: Increased awareness on the role of youth in the electoral process	No. of youth that take part in regional initiatives
		No. of regional initiatives support for youth (Target: 2 regional initiatives)



	N/A	In progress
	Not achieved	Regional strategic plan on engagement of youth was developed
2	Accomplished	Total 4 events
5	Accomplished	Total 5 events
		Total 305
2	Accomplished	Total 5



Financial Overview

Outcome	Budget	Expenditure/Year			
		2014	2015	2016	2017
Outcome 1: Strengthened Regional Capacity and Knowledge on Electoral Issues	\$2,938,552	\$1,078,625	\$1,215,568	\$644,359	
Outcome 2: Increased Participation of Women throughout the Electoral Cycle	\$573,227	\$123,351	\$228,604	\$221,272	
Outcome 3: Formal and Informal Mechanisms in place to enable Youth CSO's and Youth Civic Engagement in Government Led and Other Political Processes	\$603,384	\$117,417	\$279,371	\$206,596	
Outcome 4: Project management and advisory support	\$1,814,673	\$442,451	\$740,039	\$605,305	\$26,878
GMS	\$455,683	\$132,612	\$185,431	\$135,303	\$2,337
Total	\$6,385,518	\$1,894,456	\$2,649,012	\$1,812,835	\$29,215



Lessons Learned and Best Practices

The regional approach to electoral assistance has enabled the charting of new territories on electoral assistance and creating innovative ways of addressing the challenges that face the region's democratic transition. Given the complex and fluid context in which the project operates, the project has taken significant efforts to ensure flexibility in implementation, responsiveness to the ever-changing needs of the region, and promoting the building of trust with and among its stakeholders. Some of the lessons and best practices of the past three years are captured below and will guide the implementation of phase II of the regional support:

- **Success in flexibility:** the project's success has been due in large part to its flexibility in planning and implementing interventions that speak to the changing dynamics in the region, taking advantage of opportunities that build on and expand the project's partnerships, and quickly adapting implementation modalities as the political and security environment dictates.

- **Continued focus on sustainability:** sustainability of support has been an important consideration in the design and planning of interventions; this is particularly critical for the newly established Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) which will continue to require strategic advice and guidance as it operationalizes its secretariat and establishes itself as a sustainable long-term organization.

- **Continued collaboration with the Regional Programme:** the project's cooperation and partnership with the Regional Programme for Arab States proved effective, particularly the engagement with Mosharka, the regional project for gender support. This partnership can be further leveraged through cooperation and collaboration with the other projects under the Regional Programme (i.e. on Anti-Corruption).

- **Continued collaboration with Regional Hub advisors:** the project's access to advisers within the Governance Cluster of the Regional Hub resulted in a greater pool of expertise that the project was able to draw on in the planning an implementation of activities, it led to the building of new linkages and synergies such as the work on human rights and elections, and contributed to a more coherent approach to electoral assistance in the region.

- **Greater monitoring of activity impacts at national level:** key beneficiaries of the regional project are at the national level, primarily national electoral management bodies. Regional interventions supported by the project are aimed at enhancing the knowledge, expertise and know-how of these national partners. While the project was effective in achieving these objectives, there is need for closer liaison and follow-up with national projects to monitor the impact of these interventions at the national level.

- **Activate country window support:** due to the continued political, social and economic instability facing the region, there has been greater numbers of electoral assistance projects that are closing. These closures have led to a vacuum in assistance to EMBs and the electoral process. As a result, there is increased demand for assistance from the GPECS country window support component which remained inactive in phase I.

- **Focus on prevention of electoral violence:** With the next five years expected to see an equally challenging environment with insecurity, violent extremism and political volatility affecting many of the countries in the region, there is need for greater focus in phase II on electoral conflict prevention and what EMBs and other stakeholders can do to promote inclusive and peaceful electoral processes.

- **Need for innovative approaches to working with media:** With the changing nature of media in the region, particularly with the increasing use of social media, the lack of strong regional media networks, and the sensitivities in targeting select national media, the project's progress in the area of media and elections has been limited. Phase II will require the identification of more innovative approaches and strategies to engaging with the media, starting with a media mapping exercise to be completed in 2017.



Looking Ahead

As a result of the continued need for electoral assistance in the region and the success of the regional project, Sida requested to continue its partnership with UNDP on Phase II of the Regional Support to Middle East and North Africa to be implemented from June 2017 to June 2020. Phase II will be implemented following a similar approach and strategy, and will take forward and build on the activities and achievements detailed in this report.

With the overall aim to improve accountability, participation and representation, Phase II will contribute towards enhancing knowledge, awareness and capacity on electoral processes and regional cooperation among electoral stakeholders. Through regional partnerships, linkages and south-south cooperation, the Phase II strategy is designed to strengthen ties between and among networks and organizations promoting democratic principles in the region.

Phase II support will fall under the following four outputs:

- Regional electoral capacity and knowledge enhanced;
- Profession of electoral administration strengthened through regional cooperation;
- Civic and political participation of women enhanced;
- Role of youth in the electoral cycle promoted.



Annex I: List of Knowledge Products

Name	Description	Utilization
Results Management Systems Manual	This manual provides a technical overview on the systems for managing election results, challenges faced by EMBs and solutions identified at the regional and global level. An e-learning tool has also been developed, enabling those interested in the subject matter to take the online course to enhance their knowledge and awareness of results management systems.	The results management systems manual was distributed and disseminated to all Arab EMBs and is being used as a reference tool to train staff on results management systems as well as a comparative learning tool. In addition, the e-learning course is being used to train users online on RMS.
Women guidebook entitled 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation'.	Made available in Arabic. This is a highly useful publication for EMBs with practical recommendations on how to promote the participation of women within EMBs as well as throughout the electoral cycle.	The guidebook, as a practical tool, has been used as a reference by electoral assistance projects supporting EMBs on gender; the guidebook was also instrumental in serving as a base for the ArabEMBs workshop on promoting women in elections, with much of the agenda and workshop content coming from the guidebook.
ACE Arabic Knowledge Material	The ACE Project is an online electoral knowledge repository and is available in five languages. The project is engaged in the ongoing development of the ACE Arabic site in which it provides electoral material, updates country comparative data for the Arab region, updates the network of Arab Electoral experts and interacts with Arab users, produces electoral material to publish on ACE, and promotes the database across the region.	The ACE project is used by various electoral stakeholders around the world. More specifically, it reaches Arab electoral experts, EMBs, and practitioners in the region with election information on various topics. The Arabic site is active on social media platforms and newsletters are distributed to users on a bi-annual basis.
Lexicon for Electoral Terminology	The tri-lingual (Arabic, English and French) lexicon provides clear and accurate explanations of key concepts and terms in the field of elections. The lexicon accounts for Arabic language variations across the region in eight countries: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Tunisia and Yemen.	The lexicon has become an instrumental tool in developing, adapting and translating electoral information for the Arab region. It is widely used by EMBs including by the founding members of the ArabEMBs during the drafting of the Organization's charter. It has also been widely disseminated by the League of Arab States among its members and staff, and serves as a primary tool for election experts and practitioners.
BRIDGE modules translated to Arabic	Through the implementation of BRIDGE workshops, the project has supported the translation of BRIDGE modules (introductory and gender modules in particular).	These modules have been used across the region, and are available online for public access.
Publication on Reinforcing the Credibility of Electoral Processes	This publication is the product of a global conference on the credibility of electoral processes, which more than 100 countries participated in. The publication is accompanied by an e-learning tool that allows a broader target audience to benefit from the publication through a user-friendly format.	The publication as well as the e-learning course on reinforcing the credibility of electoral process is used by EMBs as a guide on working with political parties, candidates, state institutions, civil society, media, election observers, and other electoral stakeholders on enhancing and reinforcing the credibility and acceptance of the electoral process.

Video: "Irreversible- Women's full participation in Constitution-Making Processes: Testimonies from the frontlines"	This video was developed as part of the project's support to building networks among women involved in constitutional drafting processes.	The video is available on YouTube and has been widely circulated on social media. It has been positively received and continues to be used in various meetings and forums.
League of Arab States Forum Report on Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States	Report of the League's first forum that brought together its members around the topic of elections. The report is not only a summary of the discussions of the workshop but provides previously unavailable data and information on elections in each of the member states.	The report has been widely circulated. It has been used by ArabEMBs, UNDP and others as a reference for information on electoral systems and processes of countries covered by the report.
Human Rights and Elections: the Role of National Human Rights Institutions	This report highlights the outcomes and recommendations of a regional workshop convened in partnership with the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ANNHRI). The report is aimed to share information and raise awareness on human rights and elections, and the role of NHRIs in monitoring, protecting and promoting those rights during the electoral cycle.	The report is to serve as the basis of an e-course on human rights in elections, to be developed in Phase II. The report was used in the design of a follow-up workshop on the role of NHRIs in election monitoring. The follow-up built on the recommendations and results outlined in the report. The report is also being used by EMBs and NHRIs to raise awareness on the role of human rights in the electoral cycle.



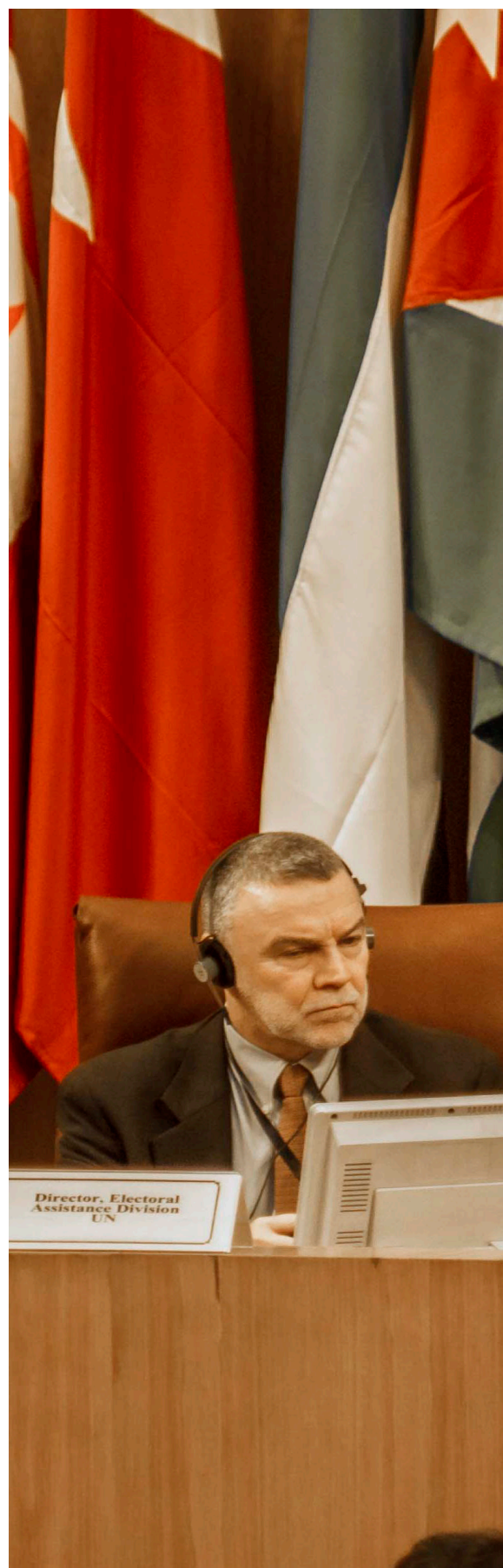
Annex II: List of Organizations the Project Engaged with

List of Organizations- Regional Electoral Support Project - Phase I

7iber Civil Society Organization
Academy for Peace and Development (Somaliland)
ActionAid
African Union
Ahel Civil Society Organization
Alalag press center / Leading member of SHAMS Platform
Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, ACHRS
Arab EMB Organization
Arab Network for Election Observation and Human Rights Center
Arab Network for the Monitoring of Elections (ANDE)
Arab Parliament
Arab Women Organization (AWO)
Arab world Democracy and Electoral monitor (Al Marsad)
ATED / Mourakiboun
Bahrain Transparency
Bahrain Woman Society
Carter Center
Center for Continuous Electoral Training and Research (CCET), Moldova
Central Election Commission Georgia
Central Electoral Commission in Moldova
Centre for Democracy (Morocco)
CNDHL- Union of the Comoros
Coalition Contre La Corruption En Mauritanie (3CM)
Combating torture Unit in Egypt
Committees for the defense of democracy freedoms and Human Rights in Syria(C.D.F)
Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement
EISA
Election Network in the Arab Region (ENAR)
Electoral Affairs Department-LAS
Elshraq Centre / Leading Member of SHAMS Platform
European Union
Hammurabi Organization for Human Rights and Democracy Monitoring
High Commission for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Tunisia
Human Rights Department, LAS
Identity Center for Human Development/Integrity Coalition for Election Observation

IFES
Iraqi Election Information Network
Jordan National Center for Human Rights
Kenya National Human Rights Institutions
LADE
Leaders of Tomorrow Diwanieh
Lebanese Movement for Transitional Justice
Libyan Academy Organization
Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights
Mauritanian Network for Election Monitoring
Moroccan Observatory of Parliamentary Work
National Democratic Institute
National Advisory Commission on promotion of Human Rights-Algeria
National Civic Forum Sudan
National Coordinator of Algerian Nation Observatory
National Observatory of Voters Rights
National Society for Human Rights
Nazra for Feminist Studies
NHRI Algeria
NHRI Bahrain
NHRI Egypt
NHRI Iraq
NHRI Sudan
NHRI Djibouti
NHRI Jordan
NHRI Mauritania
NHRI Morocco
NHRI Oman
NHRI Palestine
NHRI Qatar
OCHR
Office of the High Commission of Human Rights
Organization Diversity
Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)
Palmyra center against discrimination in Syria(PDAMSY)
Shams Network for Monitoring Election
South Youth Organization (SYO)

St. Joseph University
Student Association for Youth Development
Syrian Federation for Human Rights Organizations and Bodies (F.HR.SY)
Tech Tribes
The Mediterranean Forum for Youth- Morocco
Venice Commission
Yemen for Democracy and Electoral Network (YDEN)
Yemeni coalition for elections
Youth Without Borders
Independent Election Commission (IEC)-Jordan
National Election Commission -UAE
Directorate of Election and Referendum, Ministry of Interior - Bahrain
Independent High Election Commission (ISIE)- Tunisia
Ministry of Interior and Local Authorities- Algeria
National Independent Electoral Commission - Djibouti
Ministry of Interior- Executive Committee for Elections- KSA
National Elections Commission (NEC)- Sudan
National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC)- Somalia
The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)- Iraq
Central Elections Commission (CEC) -Palestine
Elections Administration Department, Ministry of Interior- Qatar
Independent National Election Commission (CENI)- Comoros
Electoral Affairs Department- Ministry of Interior- Kuwait
High National Elections Commission (HNEC)- Libya
General Directorate for Political and Refugees Affairs, Ministry of Interior and Municipalities- Lebanon
Supreme Electoral Commission -Egypt
Ministry of Interior- Morocco
National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI)-Mauritania
Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum (SCER)- Yemen
UNEAD
DPA
Regional Programme
Mosharaka UNDP Regional Programme
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen
International Association for Women in Electoral Management (WEM-International)



Annex III

■ 2014 Annual Progress Report

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Background

The Middle East and North Africa region continues to witness new debates on electoral systems, electoral institutions and the practice of elections within the region's evolving political context. The Arab Spring and the subsequent events in the region continue to demonstrate that political developments have regional repercussions and point to the need for mutual understanding and discourse on electoral reform, democratic norms and principles, and institutions. The Regional Electoral Support Project for Middle East and North Africa, supported by a thirty month agreement and financial contribution from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), works to address this need by strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing regional knowledge and know-how on electoral issues, and promoting the greater and more effective role of women and youth in the electoral process.

The Regional Electoral Project, serving as the regional component of UNDP's Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), was signed into effect in December 2013 and the first year of implementation was focused on operational setup as well as progress against outputs. In its first year, the Project has made significant progress towards achieving its objectives, having undertaken a number of initiatives that have strengthened regional cooperation and networking among electoral stakeholders, enhanced regional capacity and knowledge on electoral issues and advocated for the increased participation of women and youth in the electoral process. Through its close engagement with electoral management bodies and other electoral stakeholders including regional associations such as

the League of Arab States, the Project has contributed to the overall goal of strengthening electoral management bodies to administer electoral processes that reflect the will of the people.

This report provides an overview and assesses the activities of the project for 2014 against the outputs and indicators established in the Project Document. The report also reviews the challenges and lessons of 2014 and provides a summary of expectations for 2015.



Key Annual Achievements

The regional electoral support project undertook a number of activities aimed at strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing capacity on elections and promoting inclusive electoral processes. These activities have led to the achievement of a number of key annual inputs, which also pave the way for attaining many of the project's overall expected results. The following are some of the key achievements of 2014:

- **Recognition of the importance of regional cooperation on elections:**

Electoral management bodies' recognition of the need for greater regional cooperation as demonstrated by the formation of a preparatory committee on the creation of a regional association of EMBs. Following a number of project supported initiatives aimed at encouraging regional cooperation, electoral management bodies from ten countries in the region came together to form a preparatory committee to review and provide recommendations on the formation of a regional association which would systematize cooperation on electoral matters across the Arab States; they have expressed commitment and are leading the efforts to form an association.

- **Enhanced regional capacity on elections:**

through trainings, conferences and workshops, the project enhanced the capacity of electoral stakeholders on internationally accepted principles of democracy and good electoral practice. Using the internationally recognized BRIDGE training curriculum, twenty three participants gained the confidence and necessary knowledge and skills to become semi-accredited facilitators. The project also contributed to enhancing the capacity of the League of Arab States, which took a policy decision to adopt the BRIDGE curriculum for its own programs. This growing pool of electoral expertise is expected to contribute to the building and maintaining of a sustainable elec

toral culture in the region. Following the BRIDGE Training of the Facilitators, the semi-accredited facilitators conducted subsequent trainings in their respective organizations using the BRIDGE modules. This cascade training method is designed to expand the knowledge base on elections among electoral stakeholders and to enable local trainers to use the participatory approach of the BRIDGE methodology and the international elections curriculum.

- **Greater electoral knowledge products introduced in the Arab States:**

the need for electoral knowledge products for the Arab region was identified during the project inception phase and through subsequent regional discussions on elections; these products are intended to enhance knowledge on electoral topics, bring coherence to how electoral topics are understood and discussed in the region, and to help generate discussion on elections. The project supports the development of knowledge products specifically for the region as well as making global knowledge products available to the region in Arabic. In 2014, the project developed the a) first lexicon of election terminology, b) results management systems, and 3) a report on inclusive political processes. Not only are these knowledge products now available to stakeholders in the Arab States in the Arabic language, but those disseminated are already being utilized. A number of EMBs in the region as well as the League of Arab States have uploaded

the Lexicon on their websites, making it available to greater numbers of stakeholders. In terms of its usage, a number of EMBs in the region have requested hard copies of the document for onward distribution to their constituencies and as of December 2014, the Lexicon was downloaded from the web nearly 825 times. It was also relied upon during the January meeting of EMBs in Beirut where the charter for an organization of Arab EMBs was being drafted, the Lexicon helped to clarify and reach consensus on the terminology that was being proposed for inclusion in the charter.

- **Partnerships established:**

Within its first year of implementation, the project established partnerships, together with the UN's Electoral Assistance Division (EAD), with the League of Arab States (LAS) to enhance its capacity in electoral assistance and to conduct joint programs in the region. LAS engages in electoral observation and is exploring providing technical assistance on elections in the region and is a natural partner of the Regional Project. Through this partnership, the Regional Project has supported LAS in carrying out BRIDGE trainings as well as taking part in regional and international conferences, as described in other sections of this report.

- The Regional Project also reached out to Mexico's National Electoral Institute (INE), a renowned electoral institute that brings together the experiences of Latin America on elections and engages with electoral management bodies from around the world to share experiences and impart knowledge on electoral topics. To enhance capacity on elections in the Arab States and promote south-south cooperation, the project has established an understanding with INE to provide opportunities for exchanges, experience sharing forums and trainings through a two year agreement; this MOU will enable the project to expose the region to the experiences, challenges and best practices of other regions, particularly of Latin America. Latin America offers historical and political similarities with the Arab world that can benefit from study and consideration. The two regions have similar sizeable number of countries sharing strong historical ties and commonalities such as the same/similar language, a culture deeply rooted in religion, similar political saga in becoming modern independent states and facing development challenges - economic, social and cultural). In addition there are also similarities between the two region in changing authoritarian regimes and challenges to more open political systems.

- Finally, the Project together with EAD engaged with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) on developing a partnership for the benefit of the Arab States. The OIC provides another platform for engagement on electoral matters in the region and in 2015, the Regional Project will explore this partnership further and areas of mutual engagement. In 2014, the Regional Project supported OIC in taking part in election observation in Panama

as part of the Organization Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) delegation.

- Promotion of the participation of women and youth in electoral processes: in 2014, the project initiated its activities aimed at promoting the participation of women and youth in electoral processes; it laid the foundation through initiating activities and establishing partnerships designed to promote a regional strategy on enhancing women and youth participation throughout the electoral cycle. In its first year of operation, through trainings, workshops and forums, the project raised awareness on the role and importance of women and youth in electoral processes including as voters, candidates and representatives. These activities not only enhanced capacity of participants taking part but it also encouraged the coming together of women and youth groups to identify the needs and strategies for taking forward the gender and youth agendas in the Arab States; these activities have led to a set of recommendations that will guide the project's implementation in 2015. Also in 2014, UNDP signed an agreement with the Arab Women's Organization of LAS on regional cooperation including on topics related to wom

en's political participation; the AWO will be one of the main beneficiaries of the regional project's initiatives focusing on enhancing women's political participation in the MENA region. The project is also putting in place a gender quota, to be implemented in 2015, throughout all its activities, ensuring at least 30% representation of women in all trainings, workshops, conference and other activities undertaken by the project.

Activity Results

The following section provides a more comprehensive review of the results achieved through implementation of some of the key activities in 2014. Many of these activities have benefited from direct collaboration and/or coordination with country based UNDP electoral projects as well as a number of regional and global organizations including the League of Arab States, United Nations Electoral Assistance Division, UNWomen, Mexico's National Electoral Institute and the OIC. These partnerships have not only contributed to the success of these activities but also help pave the way for their sustainability.



Output Result 1: Strengthened regional cooperation and networking

Formation of regional association of electoral authorities in the Arab States

One of the three main outcomes of the regional project is to strengthen regional capacity and knowledge on electoral issues through the strengthening of regional cooperation and networking among electoral administration and experts from the Arab World; the project contributed to this outcome by advocating for the formation of a network of electoral management bodies (EMBs) from the region. The objective of such a network would be to enable the EMBs to share experiences, identify solutions to common challenges and improve regional coordination and dissemination of information and advice; this would lead to a stronger professional body of EMBs in the region, better equipped with the skills and tools to organize professional, credible and transparent elections. In its first year, the project achieved the following milestones towards the formation of such an association of EMBs in the Arab States:

- The initiative was voiced and widely supported among Arab participants at a regional session within a global conference organized by EC-UNDP Joint Task Force and held on 10 April at the Dead Sea. The EMBs from the region expressed their interest in the formation of such a network for cooperation and the need for a set of standards and best practices to be adopted as indicators to measure the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of EMBs in the region;
- The EMBs formed a Preparatory Committee consisting of members from each of the EMBs present at a meeting held in Cordoba, Spain in June; the meeting was organized to advocate for and encourage discussion on how the region can strengthen engagement and cooperation, with members from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan and Tunisia. Libya and Yemen intended to attend but were unable to due to security problems in their respective countries.
- Online communication tool was developed by the electoral commission of Jordan following a meeting of the Preparatory Committee, which identified the need for a platform that would allow the members to engage regularly in discussions on substantive electoral topics as well as on the operational aspects of the formation of a regional association.

at least, in the first year. The network would encourage member state contributions as well establishing the secretariat hosted by a member state; these would ensure the network remains active and is sustainable in the long-term.

Agreed Roadmap

- › March 2015 – Prep Committee meeting for finalization of Charter and Secretariat structure
- › April 2015 – Prep Committee meeting on preparation for the launch of the Organization
- › May 2015 - Launch of the Organization of Arab EMB and first meeting of the Executive Board

**roadmap agreed at preparatory committee meeting in Beirut in Jan 2015*

In 2015, the Project will support the Preparatory Committee to create recommendations on the formation of a forum of cooperation and present it to the presidents of the EMBs who are expected to define the parameters of such a network. Should there be agreement and an association is formed, the Project will provide advisory support throughout the process as well as initially to the operational setup of the association's secretariat and its activities,



Agreement with International Center for Training and Research of Mexican National Electoral Institute (INE, Instituto Nacional Electoral)

The Regional Project also envisions building regional capacity on electoral issues by propelling south-south cooperation; towards this end, in 2014, the Project formalized an agreement with the International Center for Training and Research of Mexican National Electoral Institute (INE) which is highly experienced at providing electoral capacity building assistance to countries in different regions of the world; it ensures that its contribution is tailored to the needs of the MENA region in its entirety, or of a more limited number of countries within the region, depending on the identified needs. Their main field of expertise has to do with the design, preparation and implementation of programs for exchange of knowledge and experience on electoral matters from an international comparative perspective. The agreement with INE, to be signed in December, follows a number of meetings and exchange programs and covers a two year period during which a number of activities are envisioned including an exchange of experiences between LAS and the OAS on electoral observation and

technical assistance, as well as seminar/course on results transmission for EMB officials, and exposing Arab States to Latin America's successful experience with youth engagement in civic and political life. The agreement builds on the work of INE with transition countries such as Libya, Tunisia and Egypt in 2011-13 on electoral dispute resolution; these exchanges were found valuable to Arab EMBs looking at ways to enhance their own EDR mechanisms, offering lessons learnt and best practices from the experience of countries in Latin America.

This agreement paves the way for cross regional exchanges and capacity building initiatives that would bring together electoral stakeholders from across the world; the specific activities to be supported under this agreement will be finalized through close consultation with EMBs and regional actors including the League of Arab States. Four activities, one per trimester, are envisaged in 2015 under the framework of the agreement.

Global conference: reinforcing the credibility and acceptance of electoral processes

Bringing together electoral stakeholders to share experiences, identify best practices and solutions to common challenges, the Regional Project, in collaboration with the European Commission (through the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force), organized a global conference entitled "Reinforcing the credibility and acceptance of electoral processes" from 7 to 11 April 2014 at the Dead Sea, Jordan. The conference brought together nearly one hundred representatives from all EMBs in the region, along with other relevant stakeholders and interlocutors. The conference created the opportunity to enhance the visibility of the Arab Region within the international electoral administration scene and provided a forum for networking among EMBs from across the globe. On the sidelines of this global conference, the EMBs from the Arab region met to discuss and come to agreement on the next steps towards the formation of a regional network or association of EMBs.



Enhancing capacity of the League of Arab States on electoral issues

One of the areas of intervention of the Project is support to the League of Arab States in the form of technical advisory assistance as well as exposure to electoral processes and organizations engaged on electoral matters, both within and outside the region. In its initial phase the Project formalized an agreement between UNDP/EAD and LAS on areas of intervention as well as a calendar of activities for 2014. It was agreed that UNDP jointly with the UN's Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) would provide support to LAS. These activities are designed to enhance the capacities of LAS to play a prominent and active role in electoral needs assessment missions, election observation and in deploying electoral experts. Following the agreement, the Project undertook a number of initiatives with LAS to enhance its capacity on electoral issues including:

- Eleven LAS representatives semi-accredited as BRIDGE facilitators: LAS and UNDP conducted a "Train the Facilitator" (TtF) workshop in Beirut, Lebanon between 1st till 12th of September 2014; the aim of the TtF workshop was to accredit a high-quality group of facilitators for developing the LAS's long-term training and professional development program. Eleven LAS representatives took part in the 10 day participatory training workshop that covered sessions on the background of BRIDGE, the teaching methodology behind it and the Learning Outcomes of the TtF Program.
- As a result of their experience at the BRIDGE TtF, LAS adopted BRIDGE as the main methodology to be employed by the organization in training election observers;
- Scoping mission took place in January 2014 to review the capacities and needs of LAS with regard to establishing an Electoral Expert Roster; the mission concluded that LAS requires further expert advisory support in the establishment of the roster. Consultants are being deployed in December to support in the actual establishment of the database

Expanding cooperation to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)

In an effort to encourage the harmonization of electoral knowledge and understanding across key regional organizations engaged in the field of elections, the Project initiated contact with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). With membership from all the countries forming the League of Arab States, the OIC provides another platform for engagement on electoral mat

ters in the region. The Project explored avenues for cooperation with the OIC at a first meeting held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in February 2014 which brought together the League of Arab States, Organization of American States (OAS), African Union and the European Union; during the meeting the Project also delivered a BRIDGE showcase module to raise awareness and expose the OIC

and other participants to the BRIDGE methodology and the training modules available on electoral processes. This meeting has set the stage for follow-up discussions with the OIC on potential engagement on electoral matters. As a follow-up, the Regional Project sponsored OIC participation in the OAS observation of elections in Panama.



Regional Lexicon

Also contributing towards the outcome of strengthened regional capacity and knowledge on electoral issues, the project developed a reference tool that brings consistency and harmonization in the use of electoral terminology in the region where electoral practice and experience vary widely with different terms used in different countries to refer to the same concept or activity in the electoral process. The project developed the first of its kind Regional Lexicon in Arabic French and English of electoral terminology that includes nearly five hundred entries; this tri-lingual work of reference consists of nearly 500 entries of electoral terms, providing a clear and accurate explana-

tion of the terms and capturing regional language variations across the countries. The reference document is built on and complements existing glossaries that have been published within the UN system and in the various countries in the region. The cross-country comparative dimension contributes to the emergence of standardized terms, on the one hand, and enhance appreciation and understanding of differences on the other; the Lexicon was developed in partnership with 8 participating countries and extensively discussed and debated in workshops with election experts and electoral authorities in Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Tunisia, Palestine and Jordan. More than one hundred

national and international electoral experts systemically contributed to the document, participating in the drafting, editing and reviewing of the content of the Lexicon. All these processes were complemented via a collaborative on-line writing tool, designed for the needs of the project. The writing tool, now owned by UNDP, could be made available for building collectively different knowledge tools in the future. Following its launch in November, over 12,200 copies have been printed for distribution to stakeholders in the region including EMBs of the participating countries. As of 27 January 2015, the Lexicon has already been downloaded from the UNDP website 825 times.



One of the means of enhancing regional capacity and knowledge on electoral issues is through trainings and the Regional Project relied on the BRIDGE—Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections - curriculum which has been designed by and for election administrators to better understand the electoral process. It is a partnership between 5 leading organizations; International IDEA, UNDP, the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD), IFES and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC).

With the goal of building regional capacity through cooperation and partnership with regional groups, UNDP and the League of Arab States (LAS) conducted a “Train the Facilitator” (TtF) to develop a pool of regional electoral ex-

perts as training facilitators. The workshop was held in Beirut, Lebanon between 1st till 12th of September 2014. With the aim of accrediting a high-quality group of facilitators for developing the LAS's long-term training and professional development program. Twenty-four participants joined the training workshop; eleven from LAS, nine from UNDP, two from SCER Yemen, one from HEC Egypt and one from Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Eleven of the participants were females.

The training resulted in the semi-accreditation of 23 participants, including 11 from LAS, who successfully completed the extensive training program and subsequent evaluation. The Project will facilitate the full accreditation of these participants through the organizing of further BRIDGE trainings to ensure the availability of a pool of regional electoral experts that can be called upon across the different countries to support capacity building initiatives on electoral issues.



Output Result 3: Increased political participation of youth and women

First Youth Forum on Engagement

The Regional Project places a particular emphasis on inclusive political engagement, supporting the establishment of formal and informal mechanisms to enable disadvantaged groups including women and youth to play an active role in political processes. In line with this objective, the Project in 2014 prioritized youth and capitalized on the United Nations Volunteer programme to engage with youth; replying on UNV's expertise and lessons learned from across the region, the Project collaborated with UNV to organize the first Regional Youth Forum in Morocco in April 2014. The main objective of the forum was to convene three key stakeholders (governments, CSOs and youth), media and other notable guests to engage in dialogue regarding the participation of youth including in political processes. Through a participatory approach, the youth established a common understanding of the current regional situation, shared lessons learned, and convened a dialogue on recommendations on how to encourage youth civic engagement for development. The participatory format of the sessions encouraged regional cooperation through the promotion of regional exchanges of ideas and best practices on youth civic engagement. The concrete examples of youth engagement presented during the Forum promoted political inclusion and civic engagement of youth through volunteering for development. The recommendations generated during the Forum concentrated on how to encourage youth civic engagement and establish a supportive environment for youth civic engagement. The following is a summary of the key recommendations:

- Facilitate annual youth engagement dialogues to strengthen networks to promote regional youth engagement and awareness on key political engagement issues;
- Promote regional youth forums and debates on civic and voter participation to facilitate partnerships with youth as key actors;
- Advocate for the development of coherent youth policies and strategies that promote diversity in volunteering opportunities to enable a diverse youth presence in broader democratic processes;
- Formally recognize the contribution of youth volunteers to the changing political climate and development agendas

in the region, recognizing their roles as agents of change;

- Encourage and provide capacity development opportunities for youth and CSOs to support establish formal structures to promote formal and informal mechanisms to engage youth in political processes.

The diversity among the participants and interventions, further demonstrated the potential of the active participation of youth. Navigating through the historic transformational times in the Arab region, the new avenues for participatory governance bring about opportunities for more inclusive dialogue and decision-making. However, challenges remain to ensure that these opportunities are truly inclusive and respect the diversity, dynamism, resiliency, and power of youth that was evident through the calls for political transformations in the region. In the coming year, 2015, the Project will engage actively with youth groups to work towards a youth strategy for the region with an action plan that guides the support provided and the activities implemented by the Project. The diversity among the participants and interventions, further demonstrated the potential of the active participation of youth. Navigating through the historic transformational times in the Arab region, the new avenues for participatory governance bring about opportunities for more inclusive dialogue and decision-making. However, challenges remain to ensure that these opportunities are truly inclusive and respect the diversity, dynamism, resiliency, and power of youth that was evident through the calls for political transformations in the region. In the coming year, 2015, the Project will engage actively with youth

groups to work towards a youth strategy for the region with an action plan that guides the support provided and the activities implemented by the Project.

Gender and elections: BRIDGE trainings

To enhance awareness on the role of women in elections, the Project, in collaboration with UN Women, organized two BRIDGE workshops on "Gender and Elections" in Cairo. A second BRIDGE module was held from 23-27 February in Cairo, Egypt. These BRIDGE trainings helped in reaching out to interlocutors such as civil society counterparts, EMBs and UNDP staff; and in increasing the Arab networks in the region by accrediting Arab-speaking facilitators and expanding the facilitator roster in the Arab world within the UNDP.

Regional participation in the International conference on 'Participation of Women in Electoral Processes and Public Life'

To enhance awareness on the role of women in elections, the Project, in collaboration with UN Women, organized two BRIDGE workshops on "Gender and Elections" in Cairo. A second BRIDGE module was held from 23-27 February in Cairo, Egypt. These BRIDGE trainings helped in reaching out to interlocutors such as civil society counterparts, EMBs and UNDP staff; and in increasing the Arab networks in the region by accrediting Arab-speaking facilitators and expanding the facilitator roster in the Arab world within the UNDP.

The Project supported the participation of Arab States at the 23rd Annual Conference of the Association which focused on two topics: 'Participation of Women in Electoral Processes and Public Life' and the "Planning of a General Election". The event provided an ideal opportunity to expose EMBs from the Arab region to the activities of a successful regional association such as the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO). The event offered opportunities for regional and cross-regional consultations and networking, as well as for learning about recent developments in election technology.

Challenges

The following lessons learnt and challenges have been identified through the implementation of the 2014 work plan:

- Continuous coordination and collaboration required with country level electoral projects with varying modalities of engagement depending on country circumstances
- Greater need for Arab speaking electoral experts
- Country level project needs include operational support from the regional project
- Operational setup and recruitment were key challenges to implementation of activities in 2014

Key Partnerships

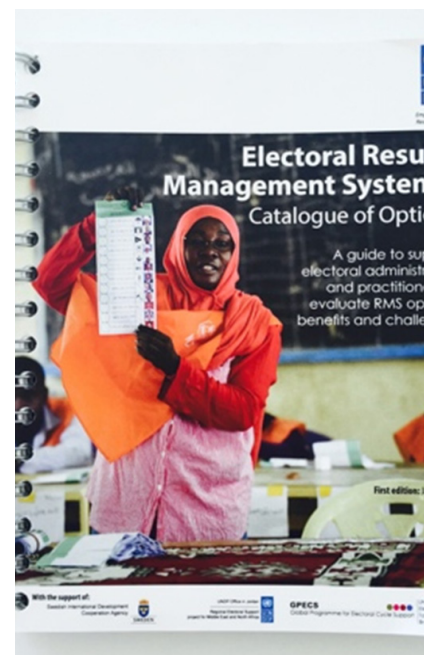
The project worked closely with a number of regional and global organizations through either direct collaboration in the implementation of activities or through coordination of efforts. These organizations included:

- Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs)
- League of Arab States (LAS)
- Arab Women Organization
- Office of Islamic Conference (OIC)
- Mexico's National Electoral Institute (INE)
- UNWomen
- United Nations Volunteers (UNV)
- United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (EAD)

Knowledge Products

In line with its planned activities, the project produced a number of knowledge products designed to strengthen knowledge and awareness on electoral issues in the region. These products include:

- **Arabic Lexicon of Electoral Terminology:** in addition to uploading the document online on the websites of UNDP, ACE, League of Arab States and several EMBs from the region, a total of 12,250 hard copies of the document were printed and being distributed to stakeholders across the region. The Lexicon is already being used as a reference document, during discussions on the drafting of a charter for an Arab organization of EMBs the Lexicon was relied upon for the selection of the right terminology for the preamble and other sections of the charter.
- **Publication on Results Management Systems** that provides a technical overview on the systems for managing election results, challenges faced by EMBs and solutions identified at the regional and global level; an e-learning tool has also been developed, enabling those interested in the subject matter to take the online course to enhance their knowledge and awareness on Results Management Systems. A total of 600 copies of the publication are being printed for distribution in 2015.
- **Publication on the Credibility of Electoral Processes;** this publication is a product of a global conference on the credibility of electoral processes with more than 100 countries taking part. This publication is accompanied by an e-learning tool that allows a broader target audience to benefit from the content of the publication through a user friendly format;
- **BRIDGE modules translated and customized to Arabic** and to the Arabic context.



Financial Status

The below table provides provisional 2014 expenditure data for each of the three outcomes as well as the project management costs.

Outcome description	2014 Budget	2014 Expenses (as of 17 Feb. 2015)
Outcome 1: Strengthened Regional Capacity and Knowledge on Electoral Issues	\$1,661,000	\$1,078,625
Outcome 2: Increased Participation of Women throughout the Electoral Cycle	\$221,250	\$99,039
Outcome 3: Formal and Informal Mechanisms in place to enable Youth CSO's and Youth Civic Engagement in Government Led and Other Political Processes	\$190,000	\$117,417
Project management and advisory support	\$901,718	\$442,451
Totals	\$2,973,968	\$1,737,532

Future Direction

The current context provides a window of opportunity to promote national and regional initiatives that build from the experiences of one country to try to influence change in a positive direction for other countries in the region. Continuing to support the meaningful inclusion of youth in electoral processes and political frameworks through volunteerism, will contribute to promoting the socio-economic development in the region. The Regional Project will build on the Forum and continue to prioritize the engagement of youth in the current and second phase of the project; in particular, in 2015 the Project will follow-up with the youth groups on their recommendations from the Morocco Forum and support the development of regional youth engagement policies that can be advocated for and facilitated at the country level.



Results Matrix: Progress Against Output Level Indicators

In its first year of operation, the Regional Electoral Support Project made progress towards the achievement of its overall intended results. The table below provides indicator level reporting for 2014 activities undertaken.

Output Result 1	Indicator	Progress in 2014
Output 1.1: Strengthened regional exchanges among countries and enhanced South-south cooperation	- No. of regional initiatives supported bringing together EMBs, CSOs, regional electoral stakeholders (Target: minimum of 3 regional initiatives)	4 regional initiatives: a) Dead Sea Conference on Credible Electoral Processes; b) EMB Cordoba meeting; c) Youth Forum; d) Women's Political Participation Conference
	- No. of countries involved in regional initiatives	8 countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Libya, Tunisia, Iraq)
	- No. of formal agreement or exchanges between regional EMBs (resulted from UNDP support)	2 : a) first meeting of EMBs at the Dead Sea; b) second meeting in Cordoba leading to formation of preparatory committee
	- No. of regional engagement by EMBs, CSOs and LAS on electoral issues	1 BRIDGE training by LAS; 1 Global conference on credibility electoral processes at the Dead Sea
	- No. of organizations trained on electoral issues (Target: Minimum of 10 organizations trained on electoral issues)	5: LAS, OIC, EMBs from 10 countries, Youth Forum, LAS' Arab Women's Organization
Output 1.2: knowledge generation and capacity enhancement of electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, MPs, constitutional experts, leaders) on parliament and electoral reform in the region	- No. of trainings organized with electoral stakeholders (Target: Minimum of 5 trainings organized at regional level by the project)	3 BRIDGE trainings: one TtF with LAS; two gender BRIDGE events
	- No. of knowledge products finalized and disseminated to electoral stakeholders (Target: Minimum of 3 knowledge products disseminated)	3 knowledge products produced (Arabic Lexicon of Electoral Terminology; Results Management System; Credible Electoral Processes)
	- No. of trainers and trainees benefiting from electoral education	24 through BRIDGE TtF
	- No. of Arabic training materials/ guides produced and disseminated for regional consumption	3 knowledge products produced in Arabic (Arabic Lexicon of Electoral Terminology; Results Management System; Credible Electoral Processes)
Output Result 2	Indicator	Progress in 2014
Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity of electoral bodies to mainstream gender in all its processes	- No. of EMBs supported on gender mainstreaming in the area of electoral administration	8 EMBs (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Libya, Tunisia, Iraq)
	- No. of regional women's networks supported (two per annum)	1: Arab Women's Organization of LAS
	- No. of policies proposed or in place by EMBs that ensure gender-sensitive processes	Gender policy assessments currently underway to inform this indicator
Output 2.2: Enhanced regional cooperation, partnership and knowledge for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in constitution and electoral processes among EMBs and Women's groups and political leaders.	- No. of Regional policy recommendations shared by EMBs, parties, CSOs with electoral stakeholder's on women's participation in politics	Gender policy assessment and mapping currently underway to inform this indicator
	- No. of women's groups trained/supported	1: Arab Women's Organization of LAS

Output 2.3: Enhanced capacities of women as candidates in the electoral process	- No. of women from the region that take part in trainings	11 women took part in BRIDGE TtF
	- No. of Arabic material produced and disseminated on women and political participation	Guide on Gender Mainstreaming in EMBs, translated.
Output Result 3	Indicator	Progress in 2014
Output 3.1: Enhanced participation of youth in national political processes	- No. of youth friendly policy initiatives targeting increased youth participation in politics implemented in the region by electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, youth ministries)	Youth policy assessment and mapping to be undertaken in 2015 inform this indicator
	- Formulation of regional policy on engagement of youth in the political process	First regional youth forum held in Marrakesh
	- No. of events/dialogue initiatives between youth/CSO/government supported	1 event: First Youth Forum
	- No. of trainings/events/networks supported.	1 event: youth forum
Output 3.2: Increased awareness on the role of youth in the electoral process	- No. of youth that take part in regional initiatives	97 at youth forum

References

The following documents were consulted in the preparation of the annual progress report:

- Report on Reinforcing Credibility and Acceptance of Electoral Processes, Dead Sea Conference, April 2014
- Meeting Report, Arab EMBs on Regional Cooperation, June 2014, Cordoba, Spain
- Report, BRIDGE Training of Facilitators, September 2014 in Beirut, Lebanon
- Report, First Regional Youth Forum, April 2014, Morocco



Annex III

■ 2015 Annual Progress Report

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Background

The Middle East and North Africa region continues to face grave challenges in protecting human rights including the right to civic and political participation. The optimism following the revolutions and “Arab Spring” of 2011 which forced the region into a period of political reform, has been overshadowed in recent years by conflict, violence and backsliding on public space for voice and participation. Today the region is plagued by an unprecedented migration crisis with a record number of internally displaced persons and refugees fleeing war and conflict, many of whom are denied basic rights; spaces for voice, participation and civil society are shrinking and the falling oil prices are placing even further stress on the economies; all of which puts the region’s transition to democracy at a disadvantage.

Despite these challenges and the disillusionment with the 2010 and 2011 revolutions, there are rays of hope for the region and for the expansion of democracy; instances of progress and achievement that reflect the continued determination of the people not to give up but to continue their fight for the protection and promotion of human rights in the Arab region, including the right to self-determination. The Tunisia case is far from perfect but it does illustrate what is possible in the region such as credible elections taking place and women being elected to parliament. Tunisia gives hope to those who want to see the region and its people live in peace and stability, with human rights protected by the state including the right to democratically elect leaders

and systems of governance. Even in these difficult times, there are agents of change determined to realize the hopes and dreams of all those that lost their lives during the 2011 revolutions, to bring and consolidate democracy and strengthen institutions that promote and protect human rights.

There is greater public awareness today for the need to protect and promote civic and political rights as well as greater recognition by governments of the ramifications of denying and violating those rights. The positive steps and achievements realized by Arab institutions and organizations on democracy-related issues in the past few years cannot be ignored, nor can the strong commitment of societies in carrying out the process of political reform be ignored. In a number of states, electoral institutions and the practice of elections have become an important part of the political agenda, as have electoral and political participation become a main goal in civil society organizations’ programs. From a regional perspective, this commitment is expressed through regional cooperation, the desire for mutual understanding of electoral and democratic norms, principles and institutions, and through the exchange of experiences and lessons learnt.

It is within this context that the Regional Electoral Support Project for Middle East and North Africa, the Arab States component of UNDP’s Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS)⁴, implemented its activities in 2015, engaging and supporting entities and

initiatives that promote democratic institutions, raise public awareness and knowledge on democratic policies and practices and strengthen regional cooperation in these areas. With support from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the project continued to focus on the following main outputs: strengthening regional cooperation by enhancing regional knowledge and know-how on electoral issues, and promoting the greater and more effective role of women and youth in the electoral process. The Project saw significant achievements and contributions towards the enhancement of credibility, inclusivity, effectiveness and sustainability of electoral processes and institutions in the MENA region. This report documents those achievements, highlighting the Project’s interventions in 2015 and the challenges and lessons learnt as well as reporting against the outputs and indicators established in the project document.



⁴ http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/inclusive-political-processes/electoral-systems-and-processes/global_programmeforelectoralcyclesupport/

Key Annual Achievements

In 2015, the Regional Electoral Support Project made significant progress towards its goals and objectives with the following key successes to report for the year:

Launch of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)

Following more than a year of consultations including the formation of a preparatory committee in 2014 to look into the creation of a regional entity dedicated to strengthening regional cooperation on electoral matters, the Project supported the coming together of electoral management bodies from six Arab countries (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Yemen) on 8 June in Beirut to formally launch the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs). The organization also held its first general assembly on the sidelines of the launch event. The general assembly took the following decisions at its first meeting:

- Activation of an interim period of six months during which the secretariat and executive board would work on operationalizing the new organization
- Appointment of executive board members
- Appointment of an interim secretary general
- Confirmation of Amman, Jordan as the headquarters of the new organization

Within six months of the launch event and with the support of the Regional Electoral Project, the newly established organization expanded its membership to include Sudan as its seventh founding member as well as positive discussions underway with other EMBs in the region. The new organization also pursued cooperation with other similar networks resulting in the signing of a memorandum of agreements with the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) and the Venice Commission. In addition, ArabEMBs also focused on enhancing regional exchange of information and knowledge by hosting a regional workshop on voter registration; the workshop brought together, and for the first time, voter registration experts from nine Arab EMBs to share experiences and lessons learnt on voter registration and to identify areas of possible regional cooperation. In December 2015, the organization also developed a comprehensive communication strategy covering all aspects of the organization and its future programs and public outreach activities. The secretariat continues to focus on finalizing the registration of the organization to obtain a legal status in Jordan.

Key Achievements Of ArabEMBs

- Expanding membership by an additional country (Sudan)
- Establishing international cooperation through signing of memorandum of understanding with the Association of European Electoral Officials (ACEEEO) and Venice Commission
- Organizing regional workshop on voter registration
- Holding its first general assembly and three executive board meetings
- Developing and adopting a comprehensive communication strategy



Strengthened collaboration and partnership with the League of Arab States on promoting the professionalization of elections in the region

Regional and south-south cooperation continued to be a key priority and one of the main pillars of the project in 2015. The year witnessed the consolidation and reinforcement of partnerships with the League of Arab States, Mexico National Elections Institute (INE), ArabEMBs as well as other national and regional initiatives working on strengthening democracy and the field of elections. The League of Arab States was a key partner of the Project in 2015. A number of initiatives took place, in collaboration with UN's Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) in the Department of Political Affairs that consolidated the

partnership with the League of Arab States, promoted mutual goals and objectives, and paved the way for broader engagement and impact on elections in the region. Among the key objectives was the advocacy for and endorsement by LAS Council of the holding of LAS's first ever conference on elections. The Security Council endorsement of the proposal by the Election Department of the League of Arab States represents a major achievement by the Department which has worked extensively over the past year to promote the professionalization of elections in the region. The conference, which will take place in

May 2016, will be the first time electoral bodies of 22 Arab countries come together to exchange experiences on the practice of elections in their respective countries; this dialogue is an important step towards expanding the dialogue on elections and democracy in the region. The Project also partnered with LAS on the holding of a regional capacity development initiative through BRIDGE⁵, participating in regional and international conferences including Latin America's Democracy Forum, and assessing the UN-LAS BRIDGE programme to review impact and future needs.

Promotion of regional south-south cooperation on elections and democratic practices (with Mexico's INE, OIC, and others)

The Project applies south-south cooperation as a cross-cutting strategy with all key interventions having a component of south-south cooperation where the exchange of experiences and ideas from other countries in the south is promoted through the Project's various activities and initiatives. A particular priority has been placed on the Latin American experience given the similarities that the two regions have. Under the framework of an MOU signed in 2014 between the Project and Mexico's National Electoral Institute (INE⁶), in 2015 the Project carried out joint initiatives to promote the sharing of ideas, experiences and lessons learnt between Latin America and the Arab States. In an effort to promote and advocate for broader discussions in Arab States on elections and democracy, the Project supported the participation of

an Arab delegation (LAS, ArabEMBs, civil society, media and youth groups) at the 6th Latin America Democracy Forum held in Mexico from 21-23 October 2015. The event encouraged the League of Arab States and ArabEMBs to look into the feasibility of organizing and institutionalizing a similar practice for the Arab region. As a first step forward in this direction, the League of Arab States will hold the organization's first conference on elections. In addition to the Democracy Forum, the Project also collaborated with INE on the holding of a regional training on results management system (RMS) and the importance of a strong RMS to the professionalism and credibility of an electoral process, as well as to the prevention and mitigation of electoral violence. The training brought together Latin American experts to share

the different aspects of RMS and how Latin American EMBs tackled some of the same challenges currently faced by their Arab counterparts.

In addition to its partnerships with INE, the Project continued to work with and support EAD in strengthening its engagement with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). In 2015, the Project extended its support to the OIC-UN Jeddah Roundtable Discussion on the Role of Civil Society in supporting Electoral Integrity through domestic election observation. The discussions, held in Jeddah, were aimed at bringing together regional and international civil society organizations engaged in election observation to review their role in improving the field of elections through observation and to identify good practices that can benefit the Arab region.

⁵ BRIDGE stands for Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections. It is a modular professional development program with a particular focus on electoral processes. See: <http://www.bridge-project.org/en/>

⁶ INE is a renowned electoral institute that brings together the experiences of Latin America on elections and engages with electoral management bodies from all around the world to share experiences and impart knowledge on electoral topics

Enhanced regional capacity and knowledge on elections through trainings, conferences and workshops

A key pillar of the Project is to strengthen electoral knowledge among stakeholders in the region through trainings, conferences and workshops on electoral topics. The Project contributed to enhancing the knowledge and know-how of the people and institutions engaged in the field of elections. Reaching nearly 900 persons directly through its activities in 2015, the primary stakeholders

of the Project in 2015 were electoral management bodies, civil society organizations, youth and women groups and networks, and regional entities including LAS and ArabEMBs. Interventions included bringing together over 100 civil society representatives from sixteen Arab countries to raise their awareness on good practices in electoral dispute resolution, and the role

that CSOs can play in making dispute resolution more effective and helping prevent and mitigate electoral violence. The Project also facilitated the first gathering of Arab voter registration experts from 9 countries, to share experiences and form a committee to share information and tools in VR and develop guidelines and good practices of voter registration in the region.

Promotion of the participation of women and youth in political and electoral processes

The Project, in collaboration with UNDP's regional gender unit, designed and implemented activities that promoted networking among women groups, and enhanced awareness and knowledge on civic and political participation of women and youth and their role throughout the electoral cycle. Through conferences, workshops and trainings, the Project strengthened the capacity of the network of women in constitution making, created a database of

more than 7,000 youth engaged and interested in civic and political participation and imparted problem solving and leadership skills to 105 young men and women active in their communities. The Project carried out BRIDGE trainings including BRIDGE workshops on Gender and Elections that were conducted in collaboration with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) in April 2015. The regional workshops were attended by

22 women coming from 15 Arab countries and belonging to institutions and organizations of different nature (LAS, parliaments, EMBs, CSOs, Media, political parties, the UN). Through these initiatives, women and men including youth came together to identify challenges they face in the region and strategies and solutions for enhancing youth and women's participation in civic and political life.

Women and Youth

- Wide dissemination of information on youth initiatives led to more than 7,000 youth expressing interest in taking part in regional, civic and political participation initiatives
- More than 100 youth trained on leadership and problem solving skills
- 350 officials from 18 Arab Countries discussed and agreed on SDGs and gender
- More than 4 million impressions and tweets posted on SDGs and gender in the Arab States
- Representatives from government, civil society and regional organizations from 22 Arab countries benefited from BRIDGE trainings
- Awareness raised within the League of Arab States and the Arab Women Organization on the importance of and strategies for enhancing women's political participation
- Networking encouraged among women constitution makers



Development and distribution of electoral knowledge products in the Arab States

The need for and development of electoral knowledge products adapted to the Arab region and to Arabic-speaking users was identified at the start of the project and has remained an important focus area during implementation. The Regional Project, in cooperation with regional and international organizations and other UN agencies, continued to work in the design, development and distribution of electoral knowledge products as part of its technical support to electoral stakeholders.

In 2015, the Project enhanced stakeholder access to electoral knowledge products and tools. The project completed the development and dissemination

of an online course on the 2014 Results Management Systems Manual and made available in Arabic the UNDP/ UN Women guidebook entitled 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation'. This is a highly useful publication for EMBs with practical recommendations on how to promote the participation of women within EMBs as well as throughout the electoral cycle. In 2015, the Project also continued the distribution and dissemination of knowledge products produced in 2014 including a) the first lexicon of election terminology which was uploaded to

UNITERM, promoted at the annual conference of JIAMCATT, the main international terminology forum, and distributed extensively b) results management systems manual, and 3) a report on inclusive political processes. The demand for these resources, particularly the Lexicon, has been great within civil society organizations as well as EMBs requesting additional copies of the publication. The Project also required the electoral staff from the different EMBs to take the online e-course on RMS, as part of the training on the topic. During 2015, more than one third of the users of the e-courses were from the Arab states.

Support to and partnerships with UNDP country offices, national projects and Regional Hub

UNDP country offices and national electoral projects continued to be an important partner for the Regional Project in ensuring coherence in electoral assistance among the Arab States as well as in designing, developing and implementing regional initiatives that are of relevance to national stakeholders. The Regional Project engaged with national projects in reviewing and planning regional initiatives at its annual chief technical advisors meeting, holding joint interventions including collaboration on substantive and operational aspects of events, and providing advisory services through missions by Project staff as well as the deployment of consultants to national electoral projects and country offices. In addition, the Project worked extensively with the UNDP Arab States Regional Programme in the implementation of its activities, particularly the gender output which is led by the Regional Programme's Mosharka Project. The Mosharka Project supports the design and implementation of all of the Project's gender initiatives and some of its youth activities; the Regional Project provides Mosharka with a staff member that is shared between the Regional Project and Mosharka in the implementation of its gender and youth activities. In 2015, the Project also implemented initiatives jointly with the Regional Hub Amman, in particular the holding of the first Youth Innovation Forum which was a partnership between the Arab States Regional Programme, the Regional Elections Project, and UNDP Egypt.

Activity Results

This section of the document showcases the results and interventions of the Project in 2015 in line with the work plan and the output areas as defined in the project document. It provides a comprehensive review of the activities supported and undertaken, and highlights where relevant the collaboration with national, regional, and/or global organizations in carrying out that support. In 2015, the Project continued to work with key institutional partners including the newly established ArabEMBs, the League of Arab States, Mexico's National Electoral Institute, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, United Nations Electoral Assistance Division, UN Women and UNDP offices at the country level. These partnerships have not only contributed to the success of these activities but also helped pave the way for their sustainability.

Launch and establishment of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)

A key achievement of the project in 2015 was the formal launch and establishment of the ArabEMBs, representing the first such professional organization dedicated to promoting cooperation on all aspects of election management in the region. The new organization seeks to enhance professional development

and exchange on elections administration to ensure integrity and transparency. The work of the preparatory committee, formed in June 2014 and tasked with reviewing the feasibility of a network of EMBs in the region, resulted in the formal launch of the new organization exactly one year later, in

June 2015. Electoral management bodies from six Arab countries (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Yemen) formally signed the charter in a launch event in Beirut in June 2015, establishing the new organization with its secretariat in Amman, Jordan.



The Regional Project supported ArabEMBs throughout this period, providing technical advisory services as well as operational support in carrying out the organization's meetings and activities. Within six months of the launch event and with UNDP support, the newly established organization expanded its membership base with the addition of Sudan as its seventh founding member and with positive discussions underway with other EMBs in the region;

in addition to working on expanding its membership, the new organization also focused on enhancing regional exchange of information and knowledge through a jointly organized regional workshop on voter registration held in October 2014. The workshop brought together, for the first time, voter registration experts from nine Arab EMBs to share experiences and lessons learnt on voter registration and to identify areas for regional cooperation. In Decem-

ber 2015, the organization also developed a comprehensive communication strategy covering all aspects of the organization and its future programs and public outreach activities. The secretariat continues to focus on finalizing the registration of the organization to have its legal status in Jordan. Key results and achievements of ArabEMBs and the Regional Project include:

- Confirming Sudan's membership in ArabEMBs
- Establishing international cooperation through signing of memorandum of understanding with the Association of European Electoral Officials (ACEEEO) and Venice Commission
- Organizing regional workshop on voter registration (VR) resulting in the formation of a regional committee of Arab VR experts committed to enhancing knowledge, information and cooperation on VR in the region
- Holding its first general assembly and three executive board meetings
- Developing and adopting a comprehensive communication strategy
- Participating in the Sixth Latin America Democracy Forum in Mexico City
- Participating in the Regional Workshop on Results Management Systems in Mexico City
- Participating in the 24th Annual Conference of ACEEEO in Moldova
- Working on operational matters of the Secretariat including developing human resources plan and procedures, budget forecasts, and continuous engagement with Jordan government machinery for the legal establishment of the regional organization in Jordan

ArabEMBs Interim Period Arrangements

PRESIDENT: Dr. Emad Alshadly Alsayah, Chairman - High National Election Commission Libya

EXECUTIVE BOARD PRESIDENT: Safaa Al Musawi, Commissioner, Independent Higher Election Commission Iraq

MEMBERS: Hesham Kuhail, Chief Electoral Officer, Central Election Commission Palestine; Abdullhakim Chaab, Commissioner, High National Election Commission Libya; Badrieh Al Bilisi, Assistant Secretary General, Independent Election Commission Jordan

ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL: Badrieh Al Bilisi, Assistant Secretary General, Independent Election Commission Jordan



Reinforcing partnership with the League of Arab States

Under the framework of an agreement signed between LAS and UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD), the Project continued to partner with LAS's election department to promote the professionalization of elections in the region and strengthen the knowledge and capacity of LAS staff engaged in election observation and technical assistance. In 2015, the Project implemented the following interventions with LAS:

- **Train the Facilitators- BRIDGE training, Casablanca, 16 – 25 August**

The regional project and LAS partnered to strengthen the field of elections in the Arab States through the training of facilitators using the internationally recognized BRIDGE electoral curriculum program; the Train the Facilitators event (Casablanca, Aug 2015) resulted in the training of LAS staff (7 of the 17 participants were women) to become facilitators of the BRIDGE election training curriculum. This training is part of the Hub's broader partnership with the League of Arab States' Electoral Affairs Department, supporting their efforts to enhance knowledge and capacity on elections, as well as to increase the number of electoral experts in the Arab States.

- **BRIDGE workshop on "Introduction to Electoral Administration and Electoral Systems", Cairo, 24-28 May**

A five-day workshop on electoral administration offered the opportunity for twenty-four (24) participants, including (12) twelve women, coming from nine Arab countries, to increase their knowledge, improve their skills on topics related to electoral process management as well as promote their knowledge and develop their skills in preparation for future elections related missions, projects and activities. Specifically, the workshop allowed participants to:

- o Share experiences and knowledge in relation to electoral process management and electoral systems from the observation point of view;
- o Learn more about the best practices, failures and problems relating to such topics in the world;
- o Strengthen skills of LAS staff;
- o Facilitate and encourage co-operation among stakeholders (electoral bodies, observers, voters and partners) in electoral process management;
- o Develop appropriate recommendations for LAS for the next stages;

- o Present the electoral system of their countries and its impact; and
- o Select qualified facilitators for the TtF workshop, which will take place later this year.

- **LAS participation at the 6th Latin America Democracy Forum, Mexico City, 21-23 October**

As part of its efforts to expose Arab States to the experiences of other regions, the Regional Project supported a delegation of LAS representatives to take part in the 6th Latin America Democracy Forum held in Mexico City. The Forum was organized by the Mexican Electoral Institute (INE) and co-sponsored by UNDP, OAS, IFES, and IDEA to create space for reflection, analysis and open discussion on new configurations and challenges facing democracy in Latin America. The feedback from the event was very positive with the Arab delegation recognizing the value of a broad forum where the views and perspectives of different sections of society are discussed and debated in a positive atmosphere, with the overall goal of generating ideas and ways of strengthening electoral **de**

mocracy; there was a consensus among the group on the need for a similar forum in the Arab States, the delegation requested UNDP to further explore the possibility. The event was a learning opportunity for LAS' Election Department who will be organizing their first ever conference on elections in the Arab States in May 2016.

Reinforcing collaboration with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

In 2015, the Project together with EAD continued to engage with the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). In particular, the project supported the UN and the OIC Joint Roundtable Discussion on 'The Role of Civil Society in Supporting Electoral Integrity through Domestic Elections Observation' held from 26-29 July in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. This Joint Roundtable was an opportunity for civil society organizations engaged in monitoring elections to exchange views and lessons learned on the topic, as well as to share good practices within and outside the region through networking with other international entities working in the field of elections.

Strengthening south-south cooperation with Latin America through Mexico National Electoral Institute (INE)

The Project continued to prioritize south-south cooperation as a means to encourage democratic practice through mutual support and encouragement between countries facing similar challenges. Under the framework of the MOU signed in 2014 between the regional project and INE, the Project implemented the following initiatives that enabled south-south knowledge exchange, best practice information sharing and collaboration on election management between Latin America and the Arab States:

- **Training on Results Management System, Mexico City, 23-27 November**

The training on results management systems (RMS) brought together experiences from Latin America and the Arab States on the principles of a strong RMS impact on the credibility and acceptance of an electoral process. Discussions focused on how measures at various points in the electoral results collection, processing and dissemination process can enhance transparency and help mitigate electoral violence. National examples from Tunisia, Lebanon, Guatemala, Panama and Mexico were exchanged and participants held interactive discussions on voting and counting procedures in the different countries, how and when results are aggregated and disseminated and their impact on the credibility and acceptance of the election, the role of political actors, civil society, media and other stakeholders and determining at what stage of the process they should engage in discussions on RMS. The training also covered exit polling and quick count as measures to enhance transparency and confidence in elections and how the elections administration could make the best possible use of these tools, as well as the role of ICT in RMS including issues of cost, outsourcing, sustainability and risks. The training also included representatives from IFES and CAPEL.

- **Arab Session at the 6th Latin America Democracy Forum, Mexico City, 21-23 October**

An Arab delegation including representatives from the League of Arab States (LAS), the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), civil society, media and youth groups took part in the 6th Latin America Democracy Forum held in Mexico City. The Forum was organized by the INE and co-sponsored by UNDP, OAS, IFES, IDEA to create space for reflection, analysis and open discussion on new configurations and challenges of democracy in Latin America; the high-level event included a session on the Arab States where Arab panelists from a cross section of society presented an overview of the challenges and opportunities for democracy in the Arab States including a discussion on enhancing the values of citizenship and representative government. Each panelist focused on the realm of experience where he or she exercise his/her professional activity. The feedback from the event was very positive with the Arab delegation recognizing the value of a broad forum where the views and perspectives of different sections of society are discussed and debated in a positive atmosphere, with the overall goal of generating ideas and ways of strengthening electoral democracy; there was a consensus among the group on the need for a similar forum in the Arab States and they requested UNDP to further explore the possibility.

Output Result 2: Knowledge generation and capacity enhancement of electoral stakeholders

As part of the Regional Project's efforts to strengthen electoral knowledge and capacity within the region, a number of initiatives were undertaken in 2015 to enhance the capacity of electoral stakeholders and increase their access to electoral knowledge and the information available to them in Arabic. The 2015 initiatives included workshops, conferences, BRIDGE trainings, the annual meeting of chief/technical advisors (CTAs) for the Arab region, and the production and dissemination of knowledge tools, further described below.

Targeted thematic workshops on topics of priority to the region

- **Voter Registration:** In partnership with the ArabEMBs, the Regional Electoral Support Project organized a workshop for the voter registration staff of EMBs which took place from 29 September - 1 October in the Dead Sea, Jordan. The workshop focused on the status of voter registration within the Arab region and on international voter registration practices and principles. It was the first of its kind, bringing together EMB staff from nine Arab countries on a topic of high importance to the region to share experiences, knowledge and lessons learnt on voter registration. The workshop was attended by fifty-one (51) participants; among them, staff members from the electoral bodies of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Sudan, and Tunisia, electoral experts coming from a number of international organizations, representatives of the Electoral Department of LAS, and the Commissioner of the Central Electoral Commission and member of ACEEEO. A key outcome of the workshop was the formation of a regional committee of EMB voter registration staff tasked with strengthening

regional knowledge and capacity on voter registration through cooperation and collaboration.

- **Electoral Dispute Resolution And Civil Society:** Recognizing the important role civil society plays in democratic participation and political development, the Project organized a workshop for civil society organizations on electoral dispute resolution (EDR). The Electoral Dispute Resolution Conference, held between the 5-7 October 2015 in Beirut, Lebanon, was a great opportunity to raise awareness on the importance of EDR and the role of CSOs and media in strengthening and making more effective national EDR systems and mechanisms. The conference also included presentations and discussions on international good practices and mechanisms of EDR, the utility of Alternative Electoral Dispute Resolution, country case analysis, and the challenges the region faces when it comes to EDR. Finally, this conference was also an occasion for the two Arab regional election observer networks, Arab Network for the Moni-

toring of Elections (ANDE) and Election Network in the Arab Region (ENAR and other CSOs to come together, share experiences, and establish or reinforce cooperation and networking. The participants included more than 100 representatives of civil society organizations coming from sixteen (16) Arab states: Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. Among the CSOs, women and youth organizations were also represented.

- Results Management

System: In partnership with Mexico's INE, the Regional Project organized a workshop on Results Management Systems in Mexico City from 23-27 November. The workshop brought together electoral administrators from the Middle East and North Africa as well as Latin America to share knowledge and raise awareness on RMS practices all over the world, with a particular focus on the two regions, adopting a comparative approach.



Enhancing Electoral Capacity Through Bridge Trainings And Workshops

In order to respond to the need of developing regional capacity and deepening knowledge on electoral issues, the Regional Project continues in its efforts to promote the BRIDGE –Building Resources in Democracy, Governance, and Elections– curriculum which is made by and for election administrators to better understand the electoral process. BRIDGE curriculum and trainings are a result of a partnership between five (5) leading organizations: International IDEA, UNDP, the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD), IFES and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). In 2014, LAS adopted the BRIDGE curriculum as part of its capacity building programme and continued its partnership with the regional project to carry out BRIDGE trainings and workshops in 2015.

- **“Train the Facilitator” (TtF) Training:** As part of its continuing efforts to develop a pool of electoral experts that can act as electoral trainers for the region, UNDP, in partnership with LAS conducted the second “Train the Facilitator” (TtF) training from 16-27 August in Casablanca, Morocco. The ten-day training aimed to accredit another group of highly qualified facilitators and assess the participants’ capacities to be able to develop new BRIDGE materials as well as run long-term trainings and professional programs in the region. Seventeen (17) participants coming from nine countries attended the workshop, thirteen (13) of them belonging to LAS staff and four (4) to UNDP. All of the seventeen participants received semi-accreditation as facilitators.

- **Workshop on Introduction to Electoral Administration and Electoral Systems:** The BRIDGE workshop “Introduction to Electoral Administration and Electoral Systems” was the first to be held in May 2015 in Cairo, Egypt. The objective of this five-day workshop was, on the one hand, to build and enhance the capacities of LAS staff from different departments in selected areas of electoral process management and electoral observation, and on the other, to identify among the participants the candidates for the following TtF training. The workshop saw the participation of twenty-four (24) individuals, including twelve (12) women, coming from nine Arab countries, namely Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Kuwait, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia. This workshop was also the occasion for two semi-accredited facilitators to become workshop facilitators.

Production and promotion of knowledge products and online tools

In 2015, the Regional Project continued to produce and disseminate knowledge products accessible to the Arabic speaking population. In particular, the following initiatives were supported as part of the project’s effort to ensure that electoral knowledge and information is available in the region and in the most commonly shared language:

- **A guide for electoral management bodies on promoting gender equality and women's participation:** The Project supported the translation and dissemination of a new publication, jointly produced by UNDP and UN Women, on the role of electoral management bodies in encouraging the participation of women across various points in the electoral cycle. The Guide offers concrete examples of steps that can be taken to remove remaining barriers that continue to affect women’s participation in electoral processes. Divided into two parts, the Guide first presents strategies to mainstream gender equality within the organizational structure of EMBs such as ensuring ensure that women participate at all levels of decision-making, that the data collected is disaggregated by sex, and that the organization formalizes its commitment to gender equality through a gender policy. Second, the guide offers strategies for the organization and administration of the election by the EMB (voter education and outreach and candidate and voter registration processes; ensuring that all voters are able to securely access a polling station).

- **Results Management System online course:** A Results Management Systems e-learning course was launched in early 2015, following the EC–UNDP RMS Manual developed in 2014. The Project partnered with the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force to develop the e-learning course which consists of e-learning modules on results management systems in use around the world. The course offers a global overview of RMS practices, provides an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each system, and helps users in considering which is the more appropriate option for their country and that is most likely to be accepted on the ground taking into consideration both the political context and the social and cultural backgrounds. According to user data, 30% of visitors who attended the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force’s e-learning course were from the Arab States.

- **Lexicon of Electoral Terminology:** The Lexicon, launched in 2014, has been an important resource tool at the national, regional and global level. It has been invaluable for translators and interpreters working to enhance regional access to electoral information, knowledge and experiences. At the national level, Somalia has recognized the need and value of an electoral Lexicon given the recent spread of electoral topics in the country; UNDP Somalia is supporting the electoral body to adapt the Lexicon to the local language and context. There was also an increased interest in the Lexicon at the global level, with the publication making it on the agenda of the annual conference of JIAMCATT ⁷, the main international terminology forum held in New York in March 2015, where a presentation and discussion was held on the Electoral Lexicon and the prospects of the reference tool for other regions and thematic areas. The tri-lingual Lexicon (Arabic, English, French) was also discussed at

the 2015 NATO Conference on Terminology Management held in November 2015 in Brussels where participants recognized the Lexicon's collaborative data collection process (especially among NATO terminologists who cover 28 countries) and the fact that all the terms were vetted and approved by specialists and were producer-driven, an intersection of terminology and phraseology.

In 2015, the Project supported further dissemination and promotion of the Lexicon through the uploading of the lexicon onto the Global UNTERM Portal ⁸, as well as the distribution of additional hard copies through workshops and conferences taking place at the national, regional and global level; an additional 500 copies were requested by the League of Arab States for dissemination to its members.

- **Interactive report on Credibility of Electoral Processes:** This e-learning tool allows electoral administrators,

practitioners and stakeholders to still benefit from the content of the "Reinforcing Credibility and Acceptance of Electoral Processes" 2014 publication, through a more user friendly format.

- **ACE Arabic Electoral Knowledge Network – Arabic Page and Knowledge:** With UNDP's a partnership with the ACE online electoral knowledge platform, the Regional Project works to strengthen the Arabic section of the ACE website. The publications and knowledge products supported by the Project are uploaded and made available through the ACE site. Furthermore, the Project supported ACE partners to identify the needs of the Arabic ACE website ⁹ and developed terms of reference for the recruitment of an expert to manage the Arabic site and promote dialogue among Arab-speaking electoral practitioners and experts; this will be undertaken by the Project in 2016.

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS	LINKS
Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation	http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/electoral_systemsandprocesses/guide-for-electoral-management-bodies-on-promoting-gender-equali.html
ACE Electoral Knowledge Network - Arabic Site	http://aceproject.org/ero-ar
Lexicon for Electoral Terminology	http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/DemGov/Arabic-Lexicon-of-Electoral-Terminology-UNDP-2014.pdf OR http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=147&Itemid=103
BRIDGE modules translated and customized in Arabic	http://bridge-project.org/en/curriculum/curriculum-files/category/5-modules.html (link to the BRIDGE modules) http://bridge-project.org/en/curriculum/how-to-download-curriculum-files.html (link to Curriculum files download)
Written Report on Reinforcing the Credibility of Electoral Processes (AR,EN,FR) Interactive Summary Report on Credibility of Electoral Processes (AR,EN, FR)	http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=147&Itemid=103 http://elearning.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/
E-course on Results Management Systems (AR,EN) Publication on Results Management Systems: Catalogue of Options (AR,EN)	http://elearning.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/ http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=147&Itemid=103
Video: "Irreversible – Women's full participation in Constitution-Making processes: Testimonies from the frontlines" (AR/EN)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS1n08eFRUQ&feature=youtu.be

⁷ Joint Inter-Agency Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology

⁸ www.unterm.un.org An online database compiled to support the diverse and wide-ranging demands of United Nations language staff for terminology and nomenclature. It is on the Internet to facilitate the efforts of people around the world who participate in the work of the United Nations but do not have access to the Secretariat's intranet.

⁹ See: ACE Electoral Knowledge Network: <http://aceproject.org/>

Partnership and collaboration with UNDP country offices, national electoral projects and Regional Hub

Coherence in electoral assistance - UNDP country offices and national electoral projects continued to be an important partner for the Regional Project, as well as an effective vehicle for reaching and engaging with stakeholders. The Project recognizes that both the connection between electoral projects at the national level and the regional exchange and initiatives produce longer term results. On the regional level, the support UNDP provides to country offices and national electoral projects includes:

- Technical assistance and promotion of the exchange of knowledge and lessons learned among national projects;
- Quality assurance;
- Support to electoral assessments and project development;
- Additional programming support and providing trouble shoot to projects when needed.

In 2015, the Project worked closely with all UNDP electoral projects in designing and implementing its regional initiatives; the annual Regional Chief Technical Advisors meeting facilitated vibrant discussion on electoral assistance in the region as well as finding strategies for more effective engagement between the national and the regional projects. National projects also helped to identify thematic topics that should be highlighted at the regional level. For instance, the UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance Project identified electoral dispute resolution as an important thematic area and partnered with the Regional Project on organizing the EDR conference 'Raising Awareness on Electoral Dispute Resolution' held in October in Beirut. Similarly, the electoral team in Libya led the design and development of a regional initiative on voter registration, which included the first regional workshop bringing together electoral experts from Arab EMBs, as well as the development of a mapping of voter registration systems and practices in the Arab States.

- Annual CTA meeting: definition of best practices and recommendations for enhancing the field of elections in the Arab region

During the Annual Regional CTA Meeting held in January 2015 in Beirut, Lebanon, the chief technical electoral advisors, electoral experts and select country office governance focal points met together with the electoral experts from the Project and representatives from UNEAD and GPECS in order to review the electoral initiatives of 2014 and set priorities for 2015. In particular, the meeting came up with the following activities and initiatives to promote in 2015: a) identify and strengthen the capacity of electoral experts from around the region through specialized capacity building initiatives through exposure to regional and national best practices; b) support the UNDP country offices and national electoral projects in exposing their electoral experts to regional initiatives; c) promote networking and linkage of experts within existing organizations in the region such as the League of Arab States, the Organization of Arab EMBs, the electoral management bodies and other governmental institutions, the UNEAD roster, and UNDP offices; and d) facilitate experience and transfer of knowledge within the region. The meeting included UN/UNDP advisors and experts from Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen.

Operational support – In 2015, the Regional Project participated in the exchange of operational support with national projects and country offices. There was strong commitment from national projects and country offices as demonstrated by the extensive operational support received in the holding of regional events, as well as in facilitating the participation of national stakeholders in regional activities. The Regional Project also provided operational support to national projects, mainly facilitating recruitment and procurement services that benefited both the regional and national electoral projects.

Advisory services – Through the Regional Project team as well as its specialized consultants, the Project provided advisory services to country offices and national electoral projects. Support provided by the Project's team of experts included participation in Needs Assessment Missions (NAMs), strategic review and recommendations on electoral assistance at the national level, development and review of terms of references, and identification and recommendation of experts for national staff and consultancy posts. In addition, the Project also deployed its specialized consultants to support national projects in the areas of voter registration (Jordan), voter education (Egypt), communication (Jordan), and strategic planning (Libya).

Regional Hub – in addition to national projects and country offices, the Regional Project collaborated with the UNDP Arab States Regional Programme. The key partnership was with the Regional Programme's Mosharka Project which led to the implementation of the Project's gender output; this included collaboration on the design and implementation of all gender activities under the project, as well as in sharing the staff costs (i.e. a national gender analyst recruited by the Regional Electoral Project supports Mosharka in the implementation of electoral gender activities). Other collaboration with the Regional Hub included the holding of the Youth Innovation Forum which was a partnership between the Arab States Regional Programme, the Regional Elections Project, and UNDP Egypt.

Output Result 3: Increased political participation of women and youth

The Regional Project contributes to the outcome of increased participation of youth and women through three main strategies: a) enhancing regional knowledge and awareness on the importance of women and youth participation in electoral and political processes in the Arab States, b) promoting networking among individuals and groups actively engaged and working on enhancing women and youth participation, and c) mainstreaming women throughout project activities. Below are further details on the activities and initiatives undertaken in 2015 that contributed to this outcome.

Enhancing regional knowledge and awareness on the importance of women and youth participation in electoral and political processes

Women and constitution making: Conference on Women's Full Participation in Constitution-Making and Legislative Reform Process, Amman 10-12 February

Focusing on constitution making and legislative reform processes, the Regional Project, jointly with UNDP's regional Mosharka project, organized a conference on the role of women and their full participation in constitution making and legislative reform. The event was the first of its kind, organized in collaboration with the network of women in constitution making and legislative reform in the Arab States. It enabled the sharing of strategies, experiences, good practices, and lessons learned of the role of women in constitution making and legislative reform processes in the Arab States. The conference was focused on the process of constitution-making, with discussions on the entry points for women to play an active role in the constitution making process. The conference saw the participation of 23 women leaders from 12 countries who led the constitution making processes in their countries, in addition to representatives from the Arab Women Organization (AWO), and the Inter-Peace Network. The workshop outcomes included:

- A short guidance tool that highlights the importance of women and girls' full participation in every aspect of constitutional reform and the precedent that establishes their full participation in the latter stages of the transition and beyond.
- Documentation (video) on the vital roles women and girls played in the process of constitutional reform, including pushing for the reforms.
- Distillation and documentation of the lessons learned of which strategies led to greater participation or results.
- Strengthened networks for sharing knowledge, strategies and tools.
- A workshop report distilling the lessons learned for dissemination at the country, regional and global levels.

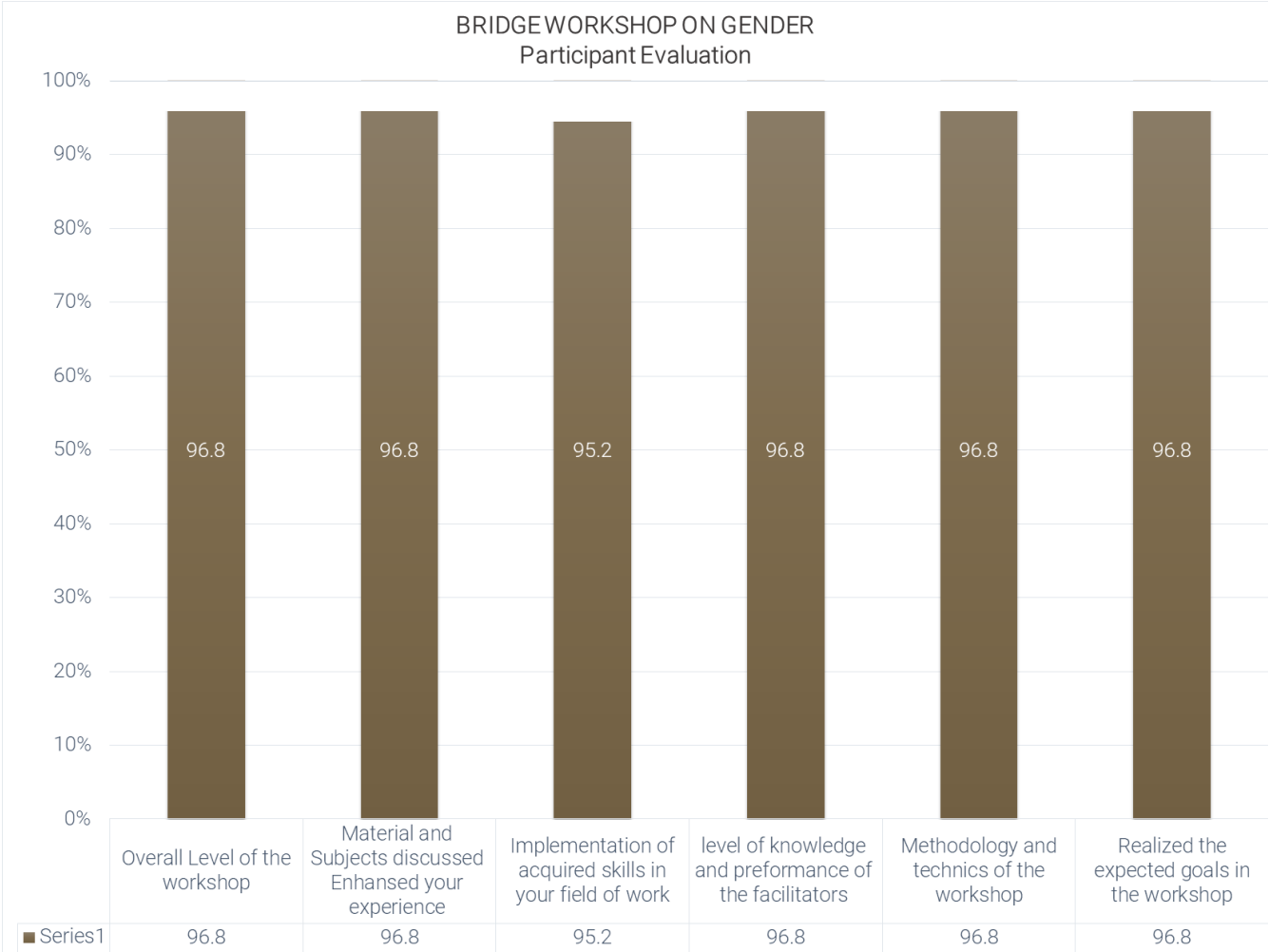
Women and SDGs: Conference on Women in the Arab region and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, Cairo 29 – 1 December

The Regional Electoral Project supported UNDP's regional Mosharka project to convene a high level conference on women and SDGs in partnership with the Arab Women Organization, UN Women, and League of Arab States. The conference focused on the implementation of the post 2015 SDGs with respect to the important issues of gender equality and women's empowerment. The conference served as a platform to facilitate thematic, policy and technical discussions on the endorsed SDGs and how they impact the key areas of gender equality and women's empowerment. The conference was guided by more than 20 expert papers commissioned on each of the 17 SDGs and resulted in a) a set of guiding recommendations for the 17 SDGs highlighting strategic interventions to promote women's roles in each of the goals; and b) the creation of a Platform for Action to implement the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 with recommendations for governments, regional and national women machineries and women organizations to guide coordinated collective actions and efficient mobilization of resources to ensure that that gender

equality, equity and justice are central in national planning processes aiming to achieve the SDGs. The Arab Women Organization will lead in advocating for the recommendations as an integral part of the implementation of SDGs in the Arab Region. The conference saw the participation of nearly 350 individuals (80% women) from 18 countries including representatives from NGOs, governments and academia.

- **BRIDGE Gender and Elections: Increasing awareness on women's political representation and participation 19 – 30 April**

To raise awareness on the role of women in elections, two BRIDGE regional workshops on Gender and Elections were conducted in collaboration with IFES and LAS in April 2015 in Tunis, Tunisia. The two regional workshops, that took place between 19 and 23 and 26 and 30 of April, saw the participation of twenty-two women coming from twelve Arab countries and belonging to institutions and organizations of different nature (LAS, Parliaments, CSOs, Journalist and Media, Women Governmental Ministries and departments, Observers, and Potential Candidates). The trainings followed the BRIDGE curriculum on gender and elections, and examined ways of increasing women’s participation; the participants came out with a set of recommendations targeting three categories of stakeholders: civil society and media organizations, political parties and legislative authority and EMBs. The workshop was highly appreciated by the participants, especially the BRIDGE methodology with its emphasis on transferring knowledge in a highly participatory manner The workshop facilitation consisted of three main facilitators and four semi accredited facilitators.



Youth present their solutions at the First Youth Innovation Forum held in June (Amman)

- Youth and Innovation: First Social Innovation Camp, 13 - 15 of June 2015 in Amman, Jordan

As part of its youth engagement strategy, the Regional Project offered its support for an initiative by the Regional Hub in partnership with UNDP Egypt, that brought together 65 young men and women from 19 Arab countries to discuss key development challenges facing the region. Through social innovation methodologies —namely design thinking— participants were divided into groups to identify the challenges of development in the areas of education, employment, entrepreneurship, health, conflict and peace building, religion and identity, young women leadership and participation in public space, and civic engagement. After the discussion, participants came up with concrete solutions (campaigns, projects, ICT tools, caravans) to fill the gaps existing in the mentioned areas. Through the Innovation Camp, UNDP provided a platform for Arab youth to exchange ideas and to think creatively, as well as to empower themselves in being the ‘designers’ of their own future. The camp was a collaborative space of co-design and direct civic engagement. Moreover, thanks to a series of follow-up activities with the teams, the consolidation of the ideas of some of the participants was possible. Among the tools and projects designed by the teams to address development challenges in the region, the most successful were the followings:

- o **My Keyboard:** This team created a first prototype of an application that connects students to teachers using technology, and are currently testing it. They are also developing a game focusing on Arabic language, putting into practice the lessons learnt during the “Games for Social Change Workshop” organized in Cairo.
- o **Learn and Take off:** This project was carried out by a young woman from Iraq. The Project, which is functioning with success, consists of the establishment of small caravans in remote rural areas, with the help of the private sector and volunteers, to educate the children of those communities.
- o **Contribute for Change:** This team is working on an application that connects volunteers of organizations, the private sector and governments of the Arab states interested in carrying out activities oriented towards sustainable development.
- o **Her voice:** A Facebook page aimed at raising awareness by sharing women’s success stories from around the world.
- o **Light:** A game focused on entrepreneurship and risk-taking that is being finalized by two young participants who, after the Innovation Camp, attended the “Games for Social Change” workshop held in Cairo.
- o **Afkar:** A business incubator created by a Syrian participant who is extremely active in the field of youth entrepreneurship and startups, and is now looking forward to developing a network of young entrepreneurs in the region.

Youth taking part in human centered design activities at the First Youth Innovation Forum held in June (Amman)

- Youth and Leadership: Youth Leadership Forum, Amman 8-15 October

To enhance the capacity of youth to engage more effectively as leaders in their communities, the Project, in partnership with UNDP’s regional Mosharka, held a youth leadership forum targeting 40 young Arab women and men between the ages of 18-30 from 18 countries. The event was held in collaboration with MBC TV, a popular channel in the region, and co-sponsored by AL Amal MBC Foundation with an overall goal of teaching key leaderships, enabling the exchange of knowledge and experience on the different fields of youth leadership, and providing a platform for discussions on how youth can contribute to sustainable development. The leadership forum lead to the creation of a database of young men and women eager to play leadership roles in their respective fields, and to network and work together with their peers from other Arab countries. Twenty of the forty participants were selected to attend the first week of the Arab Knowledge Forum, which was held in Dubai, UAE.

Promoting networking among individuals and groups actively engaged and working on enhancing participation

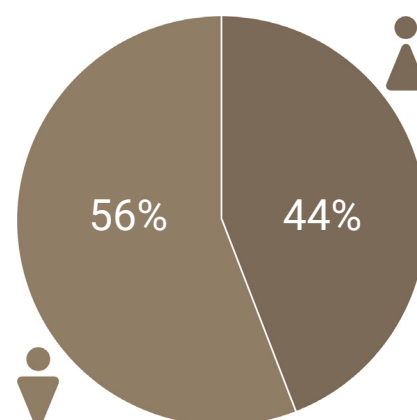
One of the strategies of the Project is to establish and strengthen regional networks and networking among stakeholders working to enhance women and youth participation. To this end, the Project (in partnership with Mosharka) continued to support the Network of Women Constitution Makers which was established through project initiatives in 2014. Bringing together the women constitution makers helped to further the relationships amongst female leaders as well as provided an opportunity to further advise them on the importance of networking on this particular topic and the value of women working together to achieve common goals. In addition to promoting the network of Women Constitution Makers, the Project also implemented initiatives with

the Arab Women Organization which it recognizes as another key regional player in furthering the cause of women in the Arab States. Initiatives undertaken jointly with the AWO included BRIDGE workshops, a Women and SDG conference as well as the workshop bringing together women constitution makers.

Furthermore, with more than 500 persons taking part in its regional women and youth initiatives, the Project strengthened relationships and networking between individuals and organizations committed to enhancing women and youth participation in civic and political life in the Arab States.

Mainstreaming women throughout project activities

In 2015, the Project made concerted efforts to include women in its activities as part of its gender mainstreaming strategy. The table below illustrates the gender breakdown of participants taking part in project activities in 2015.



Event	Total Participants	Males %	Female %
ArabEMBs Launch, June 2015 – Beirut (Lebanon)	145	60%	40%
Joint Roundtable Discussion on The Role of Civil Society in Supporting Electoral Integrity through Domestic Elections Observation, June 2015 – Jeddah	13	77%	23%
VI Latin America Democracy Forum, October 2015 – Mexico City	13	70%	30%
Regional Workshop on Voter Registration, September 2015 – the Dead Sea	37	86%	14%
Regional Conference on Electoral Dispute Resolution, October 2015 – Beirut	49	78%	22%
RMS Workshop, November 2015 – Mexico City	15	80%	20%
BRIDGE workshop "Introduction to Electoral Administration and Electoral Systems" with LAS, May 2015 – Cairo	24	50%	50%
BRIDGE "Train the Facilitator" with LAS, August 2015 – Casablanca	17	59%	41%
BRIDGE Workshop "Gender and Elections", 19-23 April 2015 – Tunis	22	0%	100%
BRIDGE Workshop "Gender and Elections", 26-30 April 2015 – Tunis	22	1%	99%
Workshop on Women's Full Participation in Constitution Making Process, February 2015 – Amman	23	0%	100%
First Social Innovation Camp for Arab Youth, June 2015 – Amman	74	55%	45%
Youth Leadership Program, October 2015 – Amman	37	40%	60%
CTA Annual Regional Meeting in the Arab States, January 2015 – Beirut	32	60%	40%
Arab Women in the SDG– December 2015, Cairo	350	30%	70%

Challenges

The following lessons learnt and challenges have been identified through the implementation of the 2015 work plan:

- Shrinking space for civic and political life continues to make the inclusion of civil society organizations, women and youth increasingly difficult;
- Limited availability of Arab speaking electoral experts;
- Need for collecting of data on youth participation in project activities and initiatives;
- Required continuous coordination and collaboration with country offices and national electoral projects with varying modalities of engagement depending on country circumstances; this continues to require flexibility and close coordination throughout project implementation;
- Establishment and operationalization for the new Regional Hub Amman, which posed some challenges through the moving of offices and transitioning to new operating procedures;
- Security conditions in certain countries of the region (especially Iraq, Libya, Yemen) continued to pose a major challenge to the project both in terms of limiting locations for regional events, and making travel and visa processes more complex and cumbersome; and
- Closure of national electoral projects in Iraq, Egypt and Yemen limited access to certain electoral stakeholders; while a challenge, it is important to note that this also opened additional engagement opportunities between the Regional Project and country offices on electoral assistance.

Financial Status

In 2015, the Project delivered a total of USD 2,328,798.39 with the following breakdown of expenditure by the three key output areas.

Outcome Area	Total Expenditure in USD
Outcome 1: Strengthened Regional Capacity and Knowledge on Electoral Issues	1,215,567.68
Outcome 2: Increased Participation of Women throughout the Electoral Cycle	228,603.51
Outcome 3: Formal and Informal Mechanisms in place to enable Youth CSO's and Youth Civic Engagement in Government Led and Other Political Processes	279,370.78
Outcome 4. Electoral Advisory Support and Project Management	1,049,745.98
Total	2,773,287.95

Future Direction

There is continued need and desire for regional cooperation, sharing of knowledge and experiences and the promotion of democratic principles and practices in the Arab States. Whether it's EMBs or women and youth active in their communities, it is clear from the Project's interventions in 2015 that people in the Arab States are continuing to look for space and platforms to engage regionally on the ways and means to more effectively engage in civic and political life, and have an impact on the future direction of their countries and societies. It is under this context that the Regional Electoral Project identifies the following as key areas of focus in 2016:

- Promoting continued regional cooperation on electoral and broader democratic practices through partnership and collaboration with the Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), the Election Department of the League of Arab States (LAS), Arab Women Organization (AWO), Network of Women Constitution Makers, and Network Women Judges
- Providing continued capacity building support to ArabEMBs as it establishes itself, and operationalizes its secretariat
- Enhancing electoral knowledge through partnerships with Arab universities interested in incorporating electoral topics into its programs and curriculum, including running courses on electoral topics

- Developing a pool of Arab speaking electoral experts
- Facilitating cooperation and information sharing among national electoral information and training centers
- Strengthening coherence of electoral assistance in the region through wider engagement with national, regional and international technical assistance providers
- Prompting synergies between national initiatives in the region, including between EMBs, CSOs as well as UNDP projects
- Promoting networking and cooperation between youth organizations engaged in enhancing civic and political participation

Results Matrix: Progress Against Output Level Indicators

Output Result 1	Indicator	Progress in 2015
Output 1.1: Strengthened regional exchanges among countries and enhanced South-south cooperation	- No. of regional initiatives supported bringing together EMBs, CSOs, regional electoral stakeholders (Target: minimum of 4 regional initiatives)	7 regional initiatives were held: 1) Launch and first General Assembly of the Organization of Arab EMBs; 2) Regional Voter Registration Workshop; 3) Regional Conference on Electoral Dispute Resolution; 4) Annual Regional Electoral Meeting in the Arab States; 5) Regional Workshop on Results Management Systems; 6) Four BRIDGE workshop and trainings
	- No. of countries involved in regional initiatives (Target: 18 countries)	21 countries (Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen)
	- No. of formal agreement or exchanges between regional EMBs that resulted from UNDP support (Target: 2)	3 : 1) Launch of Arab EMBs; 2) Regional workshop of EMB experts on voter registration; 3) Regional training of EMBs on results management systems;
	- No. of regional engagement by EMBs, CSOs and LAS on electoral issues (Target: 5)	Total 8: -2 BRIDGE trainings with LAS (Train the Facilitators (TtF) and Introduction to Electoral Administration) -1 Regional conference on EDR with CSOs -1 Regional Workshop on Voter Registration with Arab EMBs - 2 BRIDGE workshop with Arab Women Organization - 1 regional conference on SDGs with Arab Women Organization - 1 Regional workshop on women and constitution making with Arab Women Organization (AWO)

Output 1.2: Knowledge generation and capacity enhancement of electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, MPs, constitutional experts, leaders) on parliament and electoral reform in the region	No. of organizations trained on electoral issues (Target: Minimum of 15 organizations trained on electoral issues)	38 total organizations. See attached annex for list of names.
	- No. of trainings organized with electoral stakeholders (Target: Minimum of 6 trainings organized at regional level by the project)	Total 7: - 4 BRIDGE trainings: TtF; Electoral Administration; two gender and elections BRIDGE trainings - 1 regional workshop on VR organized with the Organization of ArabEMBs - 1 regional workshop on electoral dispute resolution - 1 regional training on results management systems
	- No. of knowledge products finalized and disseminated to electoral stakeholders (Target: Minimum of 3 knowledge products disseminated)	2 new knowledge products: Guide on Gender and Elections; e-learning course on Results Management System; and distribution and dissemination of the Lexicon, RMS manual and Dead Sea Conference report.
	- No. of trainers and trainees benefiting from electoral education (Target 20)	Total 41: - 17 through BRIDGE TtF - 24 through BRIDGE "Introduction to Electoral Administration and Electoral Systems"
	- No. of Arabic training materials/guides produced and disseminated for regional consumption (Target: 2)	Total 5: 2 new products produced in Arabic: e-learning course on RMS, Guide on Gender and EMBs 3 knowledge products distributed in Arabic (Arabic Lexicon of Electoral Terminology; Results Management System manual; Credible Electoral Processes Conference Report)
Output Result 2	Indicator	Progress in 2015
Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity of electoral bodies to mainstream gender in all its processes	- No. of EMBs supported on gender mainstreaming in the area of electoral administration (Target: 7 EMBs)	Total 8 EMBs: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen, Libya, Tunisia, Iraq
	- No. of regional women's networks supported (Target: 2)	Total 2: - Arab Women's Organization (AWO) - Network of Women Constitution Making
	- No. of policies proposed or in place by EMBs that ensure gender-sensitive processes (Target: 1)	

Output 2.2: Enhanced regional cooperation, partnership and knowledge for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in constitution and electoral processes among EMBs and Women's groups and political leaders.	- No. of Regional policy recommendations shared by EMBs, parties, CSOs with electoral stakeholders on women's participation in politics (Target: 2)	Total 4: - Recommendations from Gender and Elections BRIDGE Training - Recommendations from SDG and Women Conference - Recommendations from Youth Leadership Forum - Recommendations from Workshop on Women and Constitution Making
	- No. of women's groups trained/ supported (Target: 2)	Total 2 - Arab Women's Organization - Network of Women Constitution Makers
Output 2.3: Enhanced capacities of women as candidates in the electoral process	- No. of women from the region that take part in trainings (40% of all participants)	Total 49% of all project participants were women – see table on gender breakdown in the document for further details
	-No. of women candidates for elections	Data not collected
	- No. of Arabic material produced and disseminated on women and political participation (Target: 2)	Total 2: - Guide on Gender and EMBs, translated and disseminated -video on best practices in women's role in constitution making (see list of project publications)
Output Result 3	Indicator	Progress in 2014
Output 3.1: Enhanced participation of youth in national political processes	- No. of youth friendly policy initiatives targeting increased youth participation in politics implemented in the region by electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, youth ministries) (Target: tbd)	Data not yet available
	- Formulation of regional policy on engagement of youth in the political process	Arab States action plan on youth engagement still under development
	- No. of events/dialogue initiatives between youth/CSO/government supported (Target: 2)	Total 2 events: -Youth Leadership Forum in Amman; -- First Youth Innovation Camp in Amman
	- No. of trainings/events/networks supported. (Target 5)	Total 12 events with youth participation
Output 3.2: Increased awareness on the role of youth in the electoral process	- No. of youth that take part in regional initiatives -No. of regional initiatives support for youth (Target: 2 regional initiatives)	-2 youth organizations at the EDR conference -1 youth organization at the VI Latin American Democracy Forum -65 youth at the Youth Innovation Camp -40 youth at the Youth Leadership Forum -10 youth at the SDGs conference

References

The following documents were consulted in the preparation of the annual progress report:

- Brochure, Establishment of the Organization of the Arab Electoral Management Bodies, June 2015, Beirut, Lebanon
- Joint BRIDGE Assessment Report, UNDP-LAS, March 2015, Cairo, Egypt
- Meeting Report, Annual Regional Electoral Meeting in the Arab States, January 2015, Beirut, Lebanon
- Report, Regional Workshop on Voter Registration - Arab States, September-October 2015, Dead Sea, Jordan
- Report, Regional Conference on Raising Awareness on Electoral Dispute Resolution, October 2015, Beirut, Lebanon
- Report, BRIDGE Introduction to Electoral Administration and Electoral Systems, May 2015, Cairo, Egypt
- Report, BRIDGE Gender and Elections, April 2015, Tunis, Tunisia
- Report, BRIDGE Training of Facilitators, August 2015, Casablanca, Morocco
- Report, Regional Workshop on Women's full participation in Constitution-Making processes, February 2015, Amman, Jordan
- Report, First Social Innovation Camp for Arab Youth, June 2015, Amman, Jordan
- Report, Regional Training on Results Management Systems, November 2015, Mexico City, Mexico
- Report, Women and SDG implementation in the Arab States, December 2015, Cairo, Egypt

List Of Organizations The Project Engaged With In 2015	
Regional Organizations	
Arab Women Organization (AWO)	
League of Arab States	
Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies	
Regional and National Civil Society Organizations	
Academy for Peace and Development (Somaliland)	
Alalag press center / Leading member of SHAMS Platform	
Arab Network for the Monitoring of Elections (ANDE)	
Arab world Democracy and Electoral monitor (Al Marsad)	
ATED / Mourakiboun	
Bahrain Transparency	
Bahrain Woman Society	
Centre for Democracy (Morocco)	
Coalition Contre La Corruption En Mauritanie (3CM)	
Committees for the defense of democracy freedoms and Human Rights in Syria(C.D.F)	
Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement	
Election Network in the Arab Region (ENAR)	
Elshraq Centre / Leading Member of SHAMS Platform	
Hammurabi Organization for Human Rights and Democracy Monitoring	
Identity Center for Human Development/Integrity Coalition for Election Observation	
Iraqi Election Information Network	
Lebanese Movement for Transitional Justice	
Libyan Academy Organization	
Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights	
Mauritanian Network for Election Monitoring	
Moroccan Observatory of Parliamentary Work	
National Civic Forum Sudan	
National Coordinator of Algerian Nation Observatory	
National Observatory of Voters Rights	
National Society for Human Rights	
Nazra for Feminist Studies	
Organization Diversity	
Palmyra center against discrimination in Syria(PDAMSY)	
Shams Network for Monitoring Election	
South Youth Organization (SYO)	
Student Association for Youth Development	
Syrian Federation for Human Rights Organizations and Bodie(F.HR.SY)	
Yemen for Democracy and Electoral Network (YDEN)	
Yemeni coalition for elections	
Youth Without Borders	

Annex III

■ 2016 Annual Progress Report

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Executive Summary

In 2016, the regional electoral support project focused on consolidating its achievements and interventions as it paved the way for a second phase of electoral support to the region. The year saw the extension of the project by six months and the development of phase II support expected to commence in March 2017. This report provides a narrative of the interventions and achievements of the project in 2016, as well as the challenges and best practices identified through implementation. The project continued to focus on strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing the capacities of the Organization of Arab EMBs and the League of Arab States, and promoting the inclusion of women and youth in electoral processes.

Towards this end, some of the key achievements of 2016 include:

- Further consolidating the newly established regional Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (**ArabEMBs**) with the addition of two new members, the development of its strategic goals and objectives, and the holding of thematic workshops and regular executive board meetings
- Supporting and partnering with the **League of Arab States** in hosting its first Forum of Electoral Management Bodies that brought together its 21 member states around the topic of elections
- Reaching out to youth through partnership with **St. Joseph University** in Lebanon on an electoral systems course for students and practitioners
- Advocating for enhanced understanding and awareness of **human rights** in elections through collaboration with the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ANNHRIs) and its member NHRIs
- Continued support to UNDP country offices, national projects and Amman Regional Hub in coordinating, collaborating and ensuring **coherence on electoral assistance** in the MENA region
- Promoting gender mainstreaming in electoral processes through the launch and dissemination of the guidebook entitled 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation' in Arabic, and the development of recommendations by EMBs on what they can do to increase and enhance the role of women in elections.

Through these interventions, the project further consolidated its partnerships with national and regional organizations including the League of Arab States, Organization of Arab EMBs, Office of Islamic Cooperation, Arab Women's Organization, and academic institutions such as St. Joseph University. Through its activities, in 2016 the project reached out to various organizations and individuals in the region, promoting a culture of knowledge and expertise on elections.

Activity Results

Output 1: Strengthened regional knowledge and experience sharing

Following yearlong advocacy with the League of Arab States on the need for greater regional knowledge sharing and cooperation among their member states, the project supported the holding of the first LAS forum on elections. Following a decision by the Ministerial Council, the League convened the high level forum with the overall aim of facilitating knowledge and experience sharing, promoting networking among

EMBs in the region, and providing platform for future collaboration on elections.

The Forum brought together representatives of electoral management bodies (EMBs) from nineteen Arab countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, and United Arab

Emirates. In addition, Comoro Islands, Jordan, Morocco and Yemen were also represented by their respective missions to Egypt. Also represented at the event were the European Union (EU), African Union (AU), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Arab Parliament, the Organization of Arab EMBs (ArabEMBs), the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA), and the International

Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

The high-level Forum enabled each country delegation to share its experience on elections through country presentations followed by in-depth discussions and debate on relevant issues including women's participation and the use of technology in elections; it also enabled networking among the EMBs, many of them meeting one another for the first time. The country presentations were a unique learning opportunity for all, providing an overview of the electoral landscape of the region; it demonstrated the wide array of electoral experiences that exist, and the diversity in the types of laws, structures, and systems that define elections across the region. Several delegations showcased multimedia presentations, illustrating their national experience and good practices on elections.

The Forum was well received by all participants with an overall rating of 4.1 on a 1-5 scale where 5 was excellent and 1 insufficient; it was seen as a positive development by the League with unanimous agreement on the need to formalize the holding of such a forum on a regular basis. The participants also expressed that such events could lead to a regional declaration of principles with minimum requirements to be met by all electoral authorities. The event resulted in the a) exchange of knowledge and information on elections in each of the 21 countries, b) compiling and dissemination of this information in a publication, c) strengthening of LAS capacity to plan and organize regional electoral initiatives, d) stronger networks among electoral authorities in the region, and e) greater interaction between electoral authorities and international organizations working in the field of elections.

The event also enabled the newly established Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) to present itself and seek the support of its peers in the region; the new organization was well received by the EMBs, with a number of countries expressing interest and submitting membership applications.

1.1 Strengthened capacity of newly established ArabEMBs

In 2016, the project continued to support the ArabEMBs to consolidate itself as a new organization including in developing and implementing annual workplans in line with its defined goals and objectives, carrying out regular executive board meetings and expanding membership with three new members. Specific initiatives demonstrating the continued strengthening of the ArabEMBs include:

- **Defining the vision, mission, values and objectives of the new organization:** the project supported the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) to draft and agree on the Organization's vision, mission, values, and objectives at a workshop held from 10-13 February in Aqaba, Jordan. The workshop brought together members of the newly established organization which includes the electoral management bodies of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Sudan and Yemen. The discussions reflected a realistic understanding of the challenges facing the region, and what a regional organization like ArabEMBs can bring to its members and to improving the overall electoral environment in the region. Through active discussion and debate on the overall goals and objectives of the organization, including a stakeholder analysis of its partners and beneficiaries, the workshop participants came to agreement on the final document, later approved by the executive board. The workshop participants also heard from the election commission of Somalia which was recently established and can benefit greatly from the support of its peers in the ArabEMBs; the chairwoman requested support of ArabEMBs and appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the discussions on the Organization's vision, mission and objectives. The workshop participants also included an expert facilitator and UNDP electoral advisors.
- **Mauritania, Somalia and Tunisia join as new members:** following the launch of ArabEMBs in June 2015, several initiatives were carried out with support of the project to promote the new organization. Additionally, the project promoted the new organization in all its other activities including with its other partners such as the League of Arab States and the Arab Network of NHRIs. As a result of these joint efforts by ArabEMBs and the regional project, there is growing interest among EMBs in the region to join the organization. The ArabEMBs took opportunity of various forums including the joint LAS-UN Forum of EMBs where it presented the new organization and called on the 21 attending electoral authorities to join the new organization. As a result of these efforts, 2016 saw the addition of three new members with the joining of Mauritania, Somalia and Tunisia as members.

- **Increased promotion and visibility through use of social media:** the ArabEMBs developed and actively maintains a Facebook page which has seen a significant increase in the number of followers over the one year period. The Facebook page is being used as a platform to showcase the activities of the organization, to disseminate information on elections taking place in the region, and to instigate debate and dialogue on key electoral topics. The organization is also working on the development of its website, expected to be operational in 2017.
- **Regular holding of executive board meetings:** in 2016, with support of the regional project, ArabEMBs held three executive board meetings. The meetings served as decision-making forums where the members followed up on decisions of the general assembly, guided the development and implementation of its activities for the year, and prepared for the holding of the organizations second general assembly and regional conference to be held in February 2017. These meetings contributed to the consolidation of the new organization and its operationalization and the strengthening of ties between the participating EMBs.

1.2 Strengthened capacities of the electoral department of the League of Arab States

- UNDP/LAS BRIDGE training- Introduction to electoral administration
- **League of Arab States mission to Washington and New York - February 29 – 4 March, 2016**

Since the 1990s, the LAS' Electoral Affairs Department has fielded more than 800 observers covering 62 electoral events. On October 21, 2015, the Department joined the international community of observers by becoming a signatory to the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers. In February, the project supported a delegation for the League of Arab States to interact with other signatories of the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers and engage with Electoral Affairs Department.

As part of UNDP's assistance to LAS, the mission was organized to raise awareness among the Electoral Department of LAS on the principles and obligations of signatories, and learn from the experience of other international observation groups on internalizing and applying the principles within its election observation missions. The mission members from LAS included Ambassador Alaa Al Zouhairi, Director Ahmed Amim, and Aly Emam of the Department of Electoral Affairs. From UNDP, mission members included UNDP Regional Electoral Advisor Luis Martinez Betanzos and senior advisor Rafael Lopez Pintor.

The mission led to strengthened ties between the signatories to the international principles, and strategies for how the department can enhance its capacity to balance its mandates of election observation and technical assistance.

- Trip to USA- support in enhancement, inclusion and involvement of Arab electoral professionals in the international network.
 - Enhancing and expanding electoral knowledge in the region
- o *Arabization of ACE/ newsletter:* The project is supporting the Arabization of ACE project, ACE project is an online knowledge repository that provides comprehensive information and customized advice on electoral processes. The website contains in-depth articles, global statistics and data, an Encyclopedia of Elections, information on electoral assistance, observation and professional development, region and country-specific resources, daily electoral news, an election calendar, quizzes, expert networks and much more. The project contributed through supporting ACE Arabic outreach within electoral practitioners in the Arab world (EMBs, EMB Association, interested CSOs, Academia, electoral practitioners, etc.), developing ACE Arabic newsletter for the first time, in addition to gathering electoral materials to be uploaded on ACE being developed by EMBs or ACE partners in the Arab States region and more..
 - o *Human Rights workshop*

1.3 Promoting Human Rights through Elections (13-15 March, Dead Sea)

National Human Rights Institutions and Electoral Management Bodies from 13 countries came together to discuss how to promote and protect human rights in elections in the Arab States. The regional workshop, organized between the UNDP Regional Electoral Support Project and the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ANNHRIs), brought together NHRIs from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Bahrain, Qatar, Sudan, Oman, Mauritania and Comoros together with electoral management bodies from Jordan, Libya, Palestine and Somalia to raise awareness among NHRIs on the electoral cycle, discuss the human rights linked to elections and identify entry points for NHRIs to promote and protect human rights during elections. Senior international experts on elections and human rights contributed to the discussion and to the recommendations that will guide future engagement between UNDP and the ANNHRIs.



This was the first meeting of its kind globally, bringing the human rights and electoral communities together to discuss ways to promote and protect rights such as freedom of association and assembly and freedom of speech and expression among others. The three day workshop, with participants from 19 countries, was characterized by an active and vibrant discussion among participating NHRIs and EMBs, the sharing of country experiences and senior experts on elections and human rights sharing regional and global experiences. The event concluded with a set of recommendations of practical interventions that will be reflected in a comprehensive report which will also serve as a knowledge product on the linkages between human rights and elections, and the role of NHRIs in the Arab region.

The event also included the participation of the League of Arab States with representatives from both the Human Rights and Electoral Affairs Departments actively taking part in the discussions, recognizing the need for collaboration between human rights and elections, and welcoming continued engagement with the League on the subject. Other organizations taking part included the UNOHCHR, Carter Center and the Arab regional election observation body, ENAR.



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Output 2: Increased Participation of Women throughout the Electoral Cycle

2.1 Advocating for gender mainstreaming among electoral management bodies

To advocate for and promote gender mainstreaming among EMBs, a regional workshop organized jointly with ArabEMBs and the regional Mosharka project brought together 42 representatives from 10 Arab EMBs (Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen) to discuss their role in enhancing women's participation in both the electoral process as well as within electoral administration. Further strengthening the discussions were the EMB representatives from Moldova and Georgia who have strong national programs supporting women in elections. During the event, held at the Dead Sea from 19-21 April, the UNDP-UNWomen guide entitled 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for EMBs on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation' was launched in Arabic; the guide, produced through the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), provided the basis for the workshop agenda and discussions, and enabled the sharing of specific and practical recommendations from across the globe on ways EMBs can enhance the role of women in elections. There were vibrant discussions including group work throughout the three day event, with participants recognizing the need for more specific action by EMBs to enhance the role of women, particularly the role of women within EMBs. The workshop concluded with recommendations on what EMBs can do to enhance the role of women taking part throughout the electoral cycle, and women organizing and managing elections; as well, the group recommended the need for a network to advocate for women in elections and share experiences and knowledge on ways to improve the status of women's political participation in the region. Prior to the workshop, the participating EMBs completed a questionnaire on the status of women in elections in their respective countries, data from which was shared in the event and will be available in a mapping document to be published in 2017.

2.2 Launch of Arabic guide on role of EMBs in promoting women's political participation

The guide entitled 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for EMBs on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation', developed through the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), was translated and launched in Arabic, and widely disseminated to Arab electoral authorities. The guide serves as a reference for global and regional experiences and examples of how EMBs can promote women's participation. With an electoral cycle approach, the guide reviews the different phases of the cycle and provides best practice examples of what can be done and what has worked in other regions. The publication served as the basis for the above mentioned regional workshop on promoting women's political participation and has been well received by the ArabEMBs and its member EMBs.

2.3 Supporting the collection, compiling and dissemination gender data

Enhancing the availability of statistics and data on women in elections in the Arab States, the project supported ArabEMBs to develop and disseminate a comprehensive gender questionnaire to electoral authorities in the region; support was also provided to the EMBs at the national level in completing the questionnaire. The exercise was undertaken as part of the preparations for the regional workshop on women's political participation (detailed above), and led to the development of a report detailing the information gathered, infographics and other visuals illustrating the state of women in elections, and individual profiles of women in elections. ArabEMBS has disseminated widely the data and information to its members, to the public through social media, and has been uploaded to the ACE network for greater public access.

Table 1.0 – Project Participation by Gender

Name of the Event	Female	Male
ArabEMBs Visioning Workshop 10-13 Feb 2016	8	14
Human Rights and Elections The Role of National Human Rights Institutions Jordan- Dead Sea, 13-15 March 2016	12	44
UN - League of Arab States Mission to New York and Washington DC February 29 – 4 March, 2016		4
Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections Apr 16	15	33
The 1st Forum of the Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States (Arab League, May 9-11, 2016)	23	79
General assembly Oct 16	5	5
Election programme and seventh global elections organization conference Nov 16	2	2
Electoral system Course in St. Joseph University	3	2
Total	68	183

Output 3: Promoting youth engagement in civic and political processes

3.1 Mapping of organizations promoting the civic and political participation of youth

While more than half of the region's population under the age of 25, youth exclusion in civic and political life poses a serious threat to peace and security in the region. Young people often find themselves on the margins of society both in terms of political as well as socio-economic participation, and this exclusion led to the uprisings of 2011 and continues to fuel instability in the region. To contribute to the promotion of youth participation, in 2016 the project conducted a mapping of civil society organizations working on civic and political participation of youth. The aim of the exercise was to better understand the organizations engaged in youth participation, the programs underway in the region and to ascertain the challenges and opportunities that may exist for interventions by the regional project. Through a comprehensive survey disseminated widely through various channels, the mapping resulted in a) the collection of information on organizations, their activities promoting youth participation, their experiences both in terms of challenges and best practices in engagement with youth, b) a database of nearly 90 organizations advocating youth participation, and c) compilation of success stories of interventions that have had an impact in the region. The mapping illustrated the wide variety of organizations working on youth participation, the limited resources that exist for youth interventions, and the need to consider longer-term programming targeting youth.

Using the data collected, the project plans to organize regional events in 2017 aimed at promoting the work of the civil society organizations, facilitating the sharing of experiences both in terms of challenges and best practices, and promoting networking and partnerships that can leverage the impact of their interventions at the regional level.

3.2 Enhanced youth access to electoral knowledge and expertise within academia

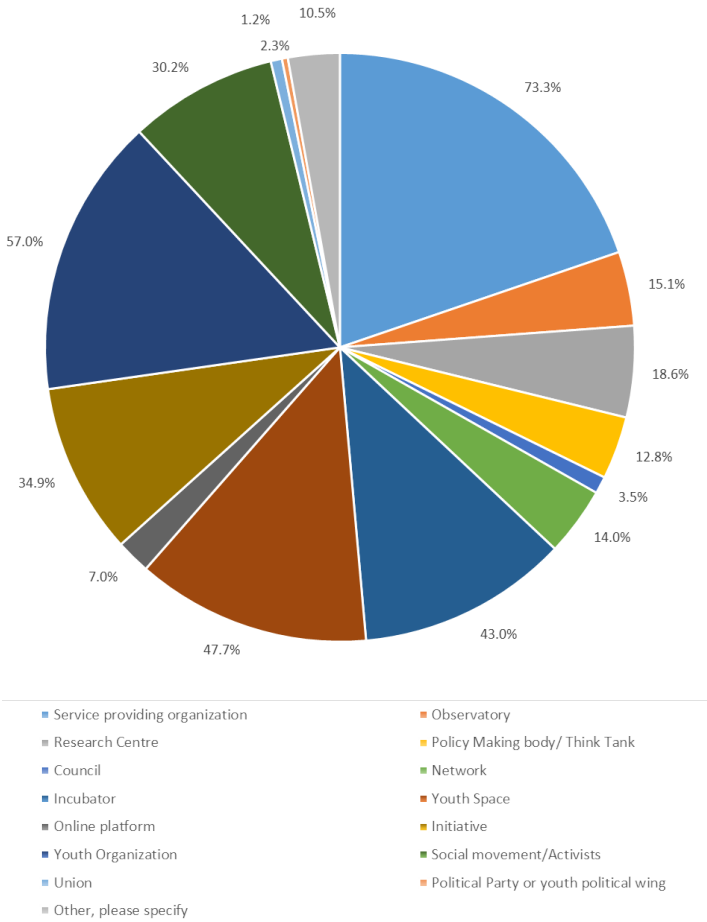
As part of its efforts to promote electoral knowledge and expertise among youth, the project partnered with St. Joseph University to offer a course on electoral systems to young university students as well as those working in the field of elections. The short intensive course, held from 19-21 October at St. Joseph University campus in Beirut, allowed participants to explore the essentials of the structure and functions of electoral systems from a comparative international perspective, enhance their understanding of the practical uses of electoral systems as instruments for inclusion, representation and delivery capacity of democratic governments. The twenty two participants (68% women) who attended the course were a mix of USJ graduate and undergraduate students and members of civil society organizations working on elections; the course was a pilot initiative designed to feed into the project’s longer-term initiative aimed at encouraging universities in the region to provide students with courses and research opportunities on election. The pilot course was a success with USJ deciding to incorporate the electoral systems course as well as electoral topics more broadly into its new masters of human rights and democracy program beginning in the fall of 2017.

3.3 Promoting youth leadership and activism through innovative solutions for sustainable development

Supporting youth to realize their potential to contribute to the social, political and economic development of their region, the regional electoral project together with the regional Mosharka project, conducted the second Youth Leadership Programme to support young men and women from across the region in exploring innovative approaches to addressing sustainable development challenges, with a specific focus on civic participation. Over the course of the year, participating youth received ongoing support, including technical advice and targeted mentoring to develop their skills in various social innovation approaches and methodologies and to bring their ideas and initiatives to fruition. The aim of the programme was to support and empower young women and men change-makers to design and implement innovative, impactful and sustainable development solutions, whether these be social enterprises, nonprofits, NGOs, initiatives, or campaigns.

Table: Number of organizations working on youth civic and political participation* (from mapping exercise)	
Country	Number
Jordan	10
Lebanon	1
Algeria	13
Libya	4
Morocco	14
Bahrain	1
Iraq	8
Yemen	12
Tunis	5
Palestine	14
Mauritania	1
Sudan	1
Somalia	2
Total	85

How Organizations Perceive their Role



Challenges

The enduring political volatility in the Arab region continues to pose challenges to the implementation of regional efforts and while regional coordination and dissemination of electoral knowledge remain steadfast goals, the following lessons learnt and challenges have been identified through the implementation of the 2016 work plan:

- Challenges in the sustainability of the Organization of ArabEMBS caused by a volatile region and the ambiguity of existing legal frameworks in potential host states;
- Security conditions in certain countries of the region continue to pose a major challenge to the project both in terms of limiting locations for regional events and making travel and visa processes more complex;
- Shrinking space for civil and political life continues to make the inclusion of civil society organizations, women and youth increasingly difficult;
- Continuously limited possibilities for coordination and collaboration with country offices as more national projects in the region close limiting access to certain electoral stakeholders;
- Increasingly restricted access to civil society organizations, preventing Re-media and youth engagement.

Financial Status

In 2016, the Project delivered a total of USD 1,658,806.00 with the following breakdown of expenditure by the three key output areas:

Outcome Area	Total Expenditure in USD
Outcome 1: Strengthened Regional Capacity and Knowledge on Electoral Issues	525,633.00
Outcome 2: Increased Participation of Women throughout the Electoral Cycle	221,272.00
Outcome 3: Formal and Informal Mechanisms in place to enable Youth CSOs and Youth Civic Engagement in Government Led and Other Political Processes	206,596.00
Management	705,305.00
Total	1,658,806.00

Future Direction

Increasing regional cooperation, promoting democratic principles and practices and sharing of knowledge and experiences across the Arab region continues to be the main focus of the Regional Electoral Project. All actors in the region, whether EMBs, youth or women continue in their search for the space and platforms for active participation in political and civic life. Through its activities, the project aims at providing meaningful ways for stakeholders in the Arab region to engage effectively in political life in general and the electoral cycle in particular.

It is under this context that the Project identifies the following as key areas of focus in the next phase:

- Promoting regional cooperation on electoral and broader democratic practices through partnership and collaboration with the Organization of ArabEMBs and the Electoral Assistance Department at LAS among others;
- Providing continued support and expert advisory to the Organization of ArabEMBs as it establishes itself and operationalizes its secretariat;
- Enhancing electoral knowledge through partnerships with Arab universities interested in incorporating topics related to elections and democracy into their programmes and curriculums;
- Continuing to develop a pool of Arabic-speaking electoral experts, enhancing the network of electoral practitioners as well as the process of the Arabization of electoral knowledge;
- Promoting networking and cooperation between youth organizations engaged in enhancing civic and political participation;
- Leveraging partnerships and resources through the collaboration with new initiatives within the Regional Programme such as anti-corruption and preventing violent extremism as it relates to electoral violence ;
- Increasing strategic efforts of monitoring the project's interventions at the national level despite the closure of national projects.

Results Matrix

Outcome	Output Results	Indicators	Progress in 2016
Outcome 1: Strengthened regional capacity and knowledge on electoral issues	Output 1.1: Strengthened regional exchanges among countries and enhanced South-south cooperation	No. of regional initiatives supported bringing together EMBs, CSOs, regional electoral stakeholders (Target: minimum of 3 regional initiatives)	Total of 9: 1) ArabEMBs Visioning Workshop, 2) Human Rights and Elections Workshop, 3) Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections, 4) Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States, 5) UNDP/LAS BRIDGE training, 6) Course on Electoral Systems, 7) General Assembly Meeting for Arab Network for National Human Rights Institution, 8) LAS/UN Technical assistance and needs assessment meeting, 9) GA and annual conference.
		No. of countries involved in regional initiatives (Target: 18 countries/year)	21 countries (Algeria, Bahrein, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen)
		No. of formal agreement or exchanges between regional EMBs (resulted from UNDP support) (Target: 2/year)	Total of 5: 1) ArabEMBs Visioning Workshop, 2) Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections, 3) (3) executive board meetings 2017, 4) 2nd General Assembly, Regional conference on independency of EMBs, 5) 1 executive board meeting
		No. of regional engagement by EMBs, CSOs and LAS on electoral issues (Target: 5/year)	Total of 5: 1) Human Rights and Elections Workshop, 2) Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States, 3) UNDP/LAS BRIDGE training 'introduction to electoral administration', 4) Course on Electoral Systems, 5) Youth Leadership Programme
		No of regional CSOs supported in electoral cycle processes by small grants (Target: No less than 10)	N/A

	Output 1.2: knowledge generation and capacity enhancement of electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, MPs, constitutional experts, leaders) on parliament and electoral reform in the region	No. of organizations trained on electoral issues (Target: Minimum of 10 organizations trained on electoral issues)	71 total organizations (see attached list of organizations that the project engaged with)
		No. of trainings organized with electoral stakeholders (Target: Minimum of 5 trainings organized at the regional level by the project)	Total of 7: 1) Human Rights and Elections Workshop, 2) Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States , 3) UNDP/ LAS BRIDGE training 'introduction to electoral administration', 4) Course on Electoral Systems , 5) Youth Leadership Programme 6) ArabEMBs Visioning Workshop, 7) Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections
		No. of knowledge products finalized and disseminated to electoral stakeholders (Target: Minimum of 3 knowledge products disseminated)	Total of 3: Report on Human Rights and Elections, Report on Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections, Report on Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States
		No. of trainers and trainees benefiting from electoral education (Target 20/year)	Total of 166 beneficiaries: ArabEMBs Visioning Workshop, UNDP/LAS BRIDGE training 'introduction to electoral administration', Course on Electoral Systems , Youth Leadership Programme
		No. of Arabic training materials/guides produced and disseminated for regional consumption (Target: 2/year)	Total of 2: Report on Role of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections, Report on Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab States

Outcome	Results	Indicators	Progress
Outcome 2: Increased participation of women throughout the electoral cycle	Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity of electoral bodies to mainstream gender in all its processes	No. of EMBs supported on gender mainstreaming in the area of electoral administration (Target: 7 EMBs)	11 (Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Algeria and Yemen, Jordan, Egypt)
		No. of regional women's networks supported (Target: 2 per annum)	Total of 2: Arab Network for Election Observation and Human Rights Center, International Association for Women in Electoral Management (WEM-International)
		No. of policies proposed or in place by EMBs that ensure gender-sensitive processes (Target: 1)	3 (Iraq, Jordan, Sudan)
	Output 2.2: Enhanced regional cooperation, partnership and knowledge for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in constitution and electoral processes among EMBs and Women's groups and political leaders.	No. of Regional policy recommendations shared by EMBs, parties, CSOs with electoral stakeholder's on women's participation in politics (Target: 2)	Total 4: Recommendations from Gender and Elections BRIDGE Training, Recommendations from SDG and Women Conference, Recommendations from Youth Leadership Forum, Recommendations from Workshop on Women and Constitution Making, Recommendations of EMBs in Enhancing Women's Participation in Elections.
		No. of women's groups trained/supported (Target: 2/ year)	Arab Women's Organization of LAS, Arab Women's Organization (AWO), Network of Women Constitution Making 2016 , Arab Network for Election Observation and Human Rights Center, International Association for Women in Electoral Management (WEM-International)
	Output 2.3: Enhanced capacities of women as candidates in the electoral process	No. of women from the region that take part in trainings (Target: 40% of all participants)	Total 48% of all project participants were women
		No. of women candidates for elections	Date collection is still in progress
		No. of Arabic material produced and disseminated on women and political participation (Target: 2)	Guide on Gender and EMBs translated and disseminated, video on best practices in women's role in constitution making, Guide on Gender Mainstreaming in EMBs, translated

Outcome	Results	Indicators	Progress
Outcome 3: Formal and informal mechanisms in place to enable youth CSOs and youth's civic engagement in government led and other political processes	Output 3.1: Enhanced participation of youth in national political processes	No. of youth friendly policy initiatives targeting increased youth participation in politics implemented in the region by electoral stakeholders (EMBs, CSOs, youth ministries)	In progress
		Formulation of regional policy on engagement of youth in the political process	Regional strategic plan on engagement of youth was developed
		No. of events/dialogue initiatives between youth/ CSO/government supported (Target: 2)	Youth Leadership Programme 2016
		No. of trainings/events/networks supported (Target: 5)	Youth Leadership Programme, Course on Electoral Systems
	Output 3.2: Increased awareness on the role of youth in the electoral process	No. of youth that take part in regional initiatives	Total 305
		No. of regional initiatives support for youth (Target: 2 regional initiatives)	Total 5

List of Organizations, Stakeholders and Partners the project engaged with in 2016

Bahrain	Economic, Social and cultural rights Committee
Bahrain	National IHRI
Algeria	NHRI
Algeria	National Advisory Commission on promotion of Human Rights
Sudan	National Commission for Human Rights
Iraq	IHCHR
Morocco	CNDH Morocco
Tunisia	High Commission for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
Union of the Comoros	CNDHL
Egypt	Civil society organizations support unit
Egypt	Combating torture Unit
Mauritania	National Human Rights Commission, Mauritania
Oman	National Human Rights Commission, Oman
Djibouti	National Human Rights Commission, Djibouti
Jordan	National Center for Human Rights, Jordan
QATAR	National Human Rights Committee, Qatar
QATAR	Arab Network for Human Rights Institution
Regional	Organization of ArabEMBs
Jordan	Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, ACHRS
Egypt	Electoral Affairs Department-LAS
Regional	Human Rights Department, LAS
Palestine	Carter Center
Lebanon	OCHR
Regional	Mosharaka UNDP Regional Programme
Palestine	PNHRI
	UNEAD
	European Union
	African Union
	OIC
	Arab Parliament
	IFES
	EISA
دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة	وزارة الدولة لشؤون المجلس الوطني الاتحاد
مملكة البحرين	إدارة الانتخاب والاستفتاء
الجمهورية التونسية	الهيئة العليا المستقلة للانتخابات
الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية	وزارة الداخلية والجماعات المحلية
جمهورية جيبوتي	اللجنة الوطنية المستقلة للانتخابات
المملكة العربية السعودية	اللجنة التنفيذية للانتخابات
دولة قطر	إدارة الانتخابات
دولة الكويت	إدارة شؤون الانتخابات
دولة ليبيا	المفوضية الوطنية العليا للانتخابات
جمهورية مصر العربية	للجنة العليا للانتخابات
الجمهورية الإسلامية الموريتانية	للجنة الوطنية المستقلة للانتخابات
Sudan	National Elections Commission
Libya	High National Election Commission
Iraq	Independent High Election Commission

Somalia	Somalia Federal RepublicNational Independent Electoral Commission
Mauritania	Election Commission
Jordan	Independent Election Commission
Palestine	Central Election Commission
Tunis	Ministry of Interior and Local Communities
Georgia	Central Election Commission Georgia
Moldova	Center for Continuous Electoral Training and Research (CCET)
Moldova	Central Electoral Commission
Jordan	Amman Center Human rights Studies
Egypt	Human Rights League of Arab States
Lebanon	St. Joseph University
Lebanon	LADE
Jordan	ActionAid
Europe	Venice Commission
Youth	The Mediterranean Forum for Youth- Morocco
Youth	Amman Center for Human Rights Studies
Youth	Action Aid
Youth	Ahel
Youth	Naitonal Democratic Institute
Youth	Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen
Youth	7iber
Youth	Leaders of Tomorrow Diwanieh
Youth	Tech Tribes
Youth	UNDP Hub- Olivier
Youth	Focus Group Discussion- Yemeni Youth
Youth	Focus Group Discussion- Jordanian Youth
Youth	Focus Group Discussion- Jordanian Youth Activists

References

The following documents were consulted in the preparation of the 2016 Annual Progress Report
Report, LAS Forum

Annual Report, Organizations of ArabEMBs

Consultatn on youth in the Middle East, Youth Mapping Report

Gender Report, Organization of ArabEMBs

REGIONAL ELECTORAL SUPPORT FOR MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

FINAL REPORT