



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

United Nations Development Programme

Proposal Title: **Regional Electoral Support for Middle East and North Africa Phase II (2017-2020)**, a Regional Component of the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support II

Strategic Plan Outcome Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance; In particular: SP Output 2.1. Parliaments, constitution making bodies and electoral institutions enabled to perform core functions for improved accountability, participation and representation, including for peaceful transitions

Expected Output(s)/ Targets: See Results and Resources Framework

Executing Entity: UNDP Direct Implementation (DIM)

Summary:

Phase II of SIDA support to the Regional Electoral Support for Middle East and North Africa (hereafter referred to as the GPECS Regional Component) aims to build and expand on the achievements of Phase I, taking forward initiatives that have potential for greater impact in the region. With the overall aim to improve accountability, participation and representation, the GPECS Regional Component 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 GPECS Regional Component strategy is designed to strengthen ties between and among networks and organizations promoting democratic principles in the region. Phase II is designed around four region-specific outputs:

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

Programme Period: 2017 - 2020

Key Result Area (Strategic Plan):

Democratic Governance

Atlas Award ID: _____

Start Date: Jan 2017

End Date: Jan 2020

Management Arrangements: Direct Exécution

Total Multiyear Budget: \$7,473,533

Total Required Resources: \$7,473,533

Total Allocated Resources:

Donor (SIDA): 65,800,000 Swedish Krona, million

Table of Contents

I. BACKGROUND.....	2
II. CONTEXT	5
III. GPECS STRATEGY	8
IV. REGIONAL COMPONENTS RESULTS AND OUTPUTS.....	17
Output 1: Regional Electoral Capacity and Knowledge Enhanced	18
Output 2: Profession of electoral administration strengthened through regional cooperation	21
Output 3: Civic and political participation of women enhanced	23
Output 4: Role of youth in the electoral cycle promoted.....	26
V. RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK.....	30
I. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT	34
II. MONITORING AND EVALUATION.....	37
III. LEGAL CONTEXT	38
IV. MULTIYEAR WORKPLAN.....	39
V. ANNUAL WORKPLAN: 2017	47
ANNEX I: ELECTORAL EVENTS CALENDAR	52
ANNEX II: RISK ANALYSIS.....	54
ANNEX III: ARABEMBS ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016.....	56

I. BACKGROUND

The United Nations has played a major role in providing international assistance to democratic transitions across the globe. In particular, UNDP, as the main implementer of UN electoral assistance in the field, provides support to 60-70 countries annually. In the Arab States region, UNDP has worked in recent years with national authorities and electoral stakeholders in Egypt, Libya, Jordan, Tunisia, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Djibouti and Palestine. Electoral assistance projects at country level are complemented and supported through the UNDP Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), which is UNDP's main tool to deliver electoral policy and programme support at the regional and global levels, with additional financial and back-up support services provided to country-level projects. From 2009 to 2015, GPECS provided about 930 advisory services focusing on electoral assistance to Election Management Bodies (EMBs), UNDP Country Offices, and other electoral stakeholders. Moreover, it has strengthened the capacities of approximately 4,000 electoral stakeholders worldwide and it has provided direct funding support to 18 country level electoral projects in Africa, the Arab states and Asia. Through GPECS, UNDP works closely with the UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD)¹ and other UN agencies involved in electoral assistance.

Phase II of the Regional Electoral Support for MENA (2017-2020) is a follow-on to Phase I (2014-2016) of the support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) to the GPECS Regional Component for Arab States. The GPECS Regional Component was conceived as a phased initiative to strengthen regional knowledge and cooperation, enhance coherence in electoral support and reinforce the participation of women and youth throughout the electoral cycle. The overarching development goal was to enhance the credibility, inclusivity, effectiveness and sustainability of electoral institutions and processes in the Middle East and North Africa region.²

The GPECS Regional Component is implemented by the GPECS team based in the Regional Hub in Amman, under the overall management of the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS II).³ 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. Each Regional Component of GPECS is developed in a manner that responds to each region's-specific need. Therefore, the GPECS Regional Component for the MENA region (both Phase I and now Phase II) are being developed and implemented based on the needs of the MENA region and developed in close consultation

¹ EAD, in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), supports the Under Secretary General for Political Affairs in its role as the UN's Focal Point for electoral assistance. As per the UN policy framework, following member state request for electoral assistance, a subsequent needs assessment needs to be conducted which would inform the Focal Point decision to recommend or not if UN electoral assistance should be provided and the parameters of such as support.

² For Sida the Middle East and North Africa region consists of the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, the West Bank/ Gaza and Yemen

³ http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/global_programmes/global_programmeforelectoral_cyclesupport/programme_scope_andstrategy.html

with key regional electoral stakeholders. Phase II aims to further strengthen regional knowledge and cooperation, establish and enhance capacities of regional actors engaged in the field of elections, and to reinforce inclusive political participation throughout the electoral cycle in the region. In line with the scope of GPECS, the UNDP Strategic Plan 2015-2017, Security Council Resolutions 2171 and 1325 on women, peace and security, and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as the recommendations emanating from the evaluation of Phase I of the GPECS Regional Component, Phase II takes forward many of the interventions initiated and found to be successful in Phase I. In summary the evaluation of Phase I found that the “project has delivered convincingly and consistently on its objectives. It has established strong linkages with key regional bodies; has facilitated the creation of a critically important new regional organization, and has contributed significantly to the deepening of knowledge and skills across the region.”

Since January 2014, Regional Component has achieved the following results:

- **Strengthened regional cooperation through the establishment of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs⁴),** as the region’s first network of electoral authorities. The charter was signed in June 2015 and the new organization is in the process of acquiring legal status and establishing a secretariat, possibly in Tunis as per the request of the EMB in Tunisia. In its first year, the organization has increased its members from 6 to 10 EMBs (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen), signed a number of partnership agreements with international organizations, and held thematic regional events for EMBs and other key stakeholders.
- **Enhanced the capacity of the League of Arab States** on internationally accepted principles of good electoral practice through the implementation of trainings using the internationally recognized electoral training curriculum, BRIDGE. The Electoral Affairs Department of the League of Arab States took a policy decision to adopt the BRIDGE curriculum for its training programs and has already incorporated the methodology. The LAS also adopted a Ministerial Council resolution to welcome the holding of a regional Forum on elections to discuss and review Arab electoral experiences, draw lessons learnt, and facilitate a discussion on elections and democratic practices among the 22 member countries. Additionally, EAD of UNDP, in cooperation with UNDP, supported the LAS in establishing its electoral database and institutional memory which has proved to be of great help to the League in the conduct of its election observation missions. EAD also provided advice to the League and supported its efforts in endorsing the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and its related Code of Conduct for International Election Observers.
- **Contributed to expanding the pool of Arab speaking electoral experts** in the region through BRIDGE trainings and the accreditation of facilitators.

⁴ See Annex I for the 2015-2016 Annual Report of ArabEMBs (including its charter)

- **Key knowledge products developed and introduced to bring coherence** on how electoral topics are understood and discussed in the region, and to help generate discussion on elections: a) first lexicon of election terminology, b) results management systems, c) report on inclusive political processes, and d) curriculum on electoral security.⁵

- **Promotion of the political participation of women** through support to and establishment of networks, including the Arab Network on Women, Constitution Making and Legislative Reforms which serves as a platform for members to share their countries experiences, exchange expertise and promote the full participation of women at every level and at every stage of the constitution-making and legislative reforms process.

- **Encouraging youth engagement in civic and political life** by bringing young women and men together with governments and civil society organizations at a regional youth forum to discuss and come up with strategies for more effective involvement of youth at the community level. In partnership with UN Women and UNDP country offices, the project supported two regional youth leadership camps to engage youth on leadership qualities and the key challenges and development solutions for their communities. These activities, along with advocacy with national electoral assistance projects to more actively target youth, helped to expand the GPECS regional network of active and motivated young women and men eager to participate in decisions that shape their future. The partnership with UN Women, other UNDP teams in the Regional Hub and civil society groups, ensured that the Regional Component of the GPECS project was leveraging existing initiatives focusing on youth, and coordinating and complimenting the work of other partners.

- **Expanding access to electoral information and knowledge** through the introduction of courses on electoral topics in academia; towards this objective, the Regional Component of the GPECS project supported St. Joseph University in Beirut to offer its first course on electoral systems to undergraduate and graduate students from the region. With global experts sharing their expertise and experiences, the pilot course was highly successful leading to the growing demand from students for further similar courses, and the university agreeing to incorporate the course into its existing master's degree program. The Regional Component will continue to support St. Joseph University in expanding its curriculum, supporting students to conduct research on electoral topics and reaching out to other universities in the region.

⁵ Publications can be found at: http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=147&Itemid=103

II. CONTEXT

In recent years, the Arab States region witnessed the rise of hopeful popular demands for political and economic reforms turn into increasingly severe and protracted conflicts. With youth and women at the forefront, the 2010-2012 transnational ‘Arab Spring’ protests unleashed long held grievances in national political arenas, led to the collapse of authoritarian regimes and subsequent tumultuous transitions, and resulted in ongoing local, national and regional conflicts. The protracted transitions in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria added to the pressures of ongoing crises in Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Israel and Palestine, and have had spillover effects into neighboring countries, exacerbating social tensions and undermining development prospects in the region.

Transitions and conflict trajectories in the region vary. The Syrian civil war entered its sixth year while extremists like the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), until recently, had made significant advances in Iraq and Syria. In Egypt, the military surged back into power after the ousting of Egypt's President Mohamed Morsi. Libya is disintegrating amidst the chaos of ongoing rivalry between different provincial militia-backed factions. In Yemen, Houthi militias and former President Ali Abdullah Saleh are fighting a government in exile and a Saudi-led military coalition. Lebanon is suffering from a transition in governmental and presidential power after a two-year vacuum, and is heavily impacted by the conflict in Syria. In addition, both Lebanon and Jordan are increasingly under strain to absorb the influx of refugees from neighboring countries. Only Tunisia and Morocco appear to have emerged from their transitions as improved. Tunisian Islamists of Ennahda and modernist parties found a way forward with a new constitution, national elections, and a new government, despite the fact that the country faces significant security threats through terrorism as well as entrenched governance and socioeconomic challenges. Similarly, Morocco has continued to accommodate between a powerful monarchy and a government led by the moderate Islamist PJD party. Saudi Arabia and Algeria maintained the status quo, postponing urgent political demands partly by providing economic stability.

Amidst these conflicts and contrary to the hopes and aspirations of those who took part in the uprisings, there is an increase in the number of countries adopting counterrevolutionary repressive laws and legislations including Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Libya where laws that take away the fundamental rights of civic engagement are being implemented. In many of these countries, the public faces greater risks in exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and other fundamental human rights. In Egypt for instance, laws introduced post-revolution put civil society at risk of detention and imprisonment for staging peaceful activities; these measures are curtailing civic activism, shrinking the critical voices of society and putting at risk the region's path to democracy. According to a report by the Carnegie Center for Middle East research, the objective behind such legislation is “to stop the support NGOs have been giving to syndicates, unions and labor activists struggling to preserve their freedom of association and the right to freely and peacefully express opposition to government policies.”⁶ Similarly, in a post-Arab Spring

⁶ <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/12/06/new-ngo-legislation-takes-egypt-down-dangerous-path-pub-66379> . The report also states that the bill restricts NGO activity to developmental and social work and introduces jail terms of up to five years for non-compliance. Furthermore, it bans NGOs from conducting fieldwork or polls without permission or "from cooperating in any way with any international body without the necessary approval". The bill also stipulates that foreign NGOs be overseen

Libya, and with a climate that has been shaken by the ongoing conflict, civil society has flourished only to find itself at the front line of violence and attacks in the struggle for freedom. In a report by Human Rights Watch, attacks against journalists and the offices and facilities of media outlets have been on the increase, including threats, assaults, kidnappings, and killings.⁷ In Saudi Arabia, which has avoided political strife and civic uprising, the government is still actively partaking in the repression of civil society through legal means, carefully crafting an environment where it is unsafe to freely express oneself; the Saudi Ministry of Interior has maintained its long-standing ban on all public protests, marches and sit-ins, and the government has redoubled its efforts since 2011.^{8 9} These trends are documented in a EuroMed Rights report which notes that the

“Counterrevolutionary trend of the regimes in place nowadays is clearly at work in order to maintain an illusory status quo. Human rights defenders and civil society face a growing arsenal of repressive measures in law, but above all in practice, and numerous violations, sometimes mounting to arbitrary imprisonment etc. In some countries, the failure of governments to respond to peaceful demands of civil society and to the aspirations of the people eventually turn into armed conflict.”¹⁰

The already frustrated youth, who led the uprisings and make up a third of the region’s population, are growing further disillusioned with the growing disconnect between them and their state institutions. The failures of the transitional governments, particularly in Yemen, Egypt, and Libya, have only compounded the initial problem with feelings of injustice and unequal treatment leading to increased resentment and dissatisfaction. Inequality in access to resources and opportunities, as well as relative deprivation has led to a context where the large youth population is extremely vulnerable to recruitment by various armed actors or further mobilization and protests.¹¹ The environment is ripe for the emergence of extremist militant groups, such as ISIS which has become the principle terrorist security threat in the region.

Horizontal inequalities and people’s political exclusion, and that of women and youth in particular, from decision-making processes is one of the underlying reasons for the 2011 uprisings and the subsequent ongoing conflicts in the region. Youth are almost entirely excluded in parliaments of more than half of the Arab countries, reaching a low of 7% in the parliaments of Bahrain and Lebanon.¹² Similarly, on the gender gap index, the region continues to be ranked the lowest with

by a regulating agency that includes representatives of Egypt's military, intelligence service and interior ministry; therefore, involving the government in a manner that deprives any organization from its independence and freedom as a civil society representative.

⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/02/09/war-media/journalists-under-attack-libya>

⁸ <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/12/17/challenging-red-lines/stories-rights-activists-saudi-arabia> (2013) Human Rights Watch report on Saudi Arabia “Challenging the Red Lines”

⁹ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/12/30/saudi-arabia-terrorism-law-targets-peaceful-speech>

¹⁰ The report, *Shackled Freedoms: What space for civil society in the EuroMed*, is from a EuroMed Rights workshop held in Brussels in April 2016, with its report available here: <http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Shackled-freedoms-EN-report-06092016.pdf>

¹¹ M. Chloe Mulderig, “An Uncertain Future: Youth Frustration and the Arab Spring,” Pardee Papers: No. 16 (Boston University, April 2013).

¹² <http://social.un.org/youthyear/docs/Regional%20Overview%20Youth%20in%20the%20Arab%20Region-Western%20Asia.pdf> (pg 5)

women underrepresented in parliament, political parties, and further into political life including in their engagement in political activities and voting.¹³ In the Gender Empowerment Measure¹⁴ the region is ranked second lowest in the world, and it is the lowest in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's (IPU)¹⁵ ranking on the percentage of women in parliaments.

As for voting, every country in the region is well below the global average among all age-groups, with a gap of about 20 percent.¹⁶ In several countries, voting is low among youth compared with the overall population,¹⁷ reflecting the continued lack of confidence of youth in democratic institutions. For instance, in Tunisia's recent elections (2014) young people represented the highest ratio of those to refrain from voting, with only 17 percent of Tunisians aged between 18 and 25 registering to vote. This however does not stem from a lack of youth support for democratic engagement; as Mercy Corps' report on Civic Engagement of Youth in MENA highlights, "[Youth] are more active politically, with Arab youth having nearly twice the average rates of involvement in protesting or demonstrating (28.9%) than the world average (15.2%)." Furthermore, as the Arab Human Development Report indicates, "in nearly all countries, youth have a greater preference for democracy; younger citizens support democratic values more than their elders in ways similar to global trends."¹⁸

Youth in the Arab region want democracy, they want change but with the increasingly repressive laws and shrinking space for civic participation, some are turning to violence and extremism as ways to channel their voice. Offering the space and tools to engage them in political processes is therefore not only critical to the region's path to democracy, to its development agenda but as well to its stability. With their numbers and their continued struggle and preference for democracy, women and youth remain to be an important catalyst for reforms in the region. It is precisely now that there is need for greater engagement on the promotion and protection of human rights and the fight against the evidently shrinking space. Increasingly citizens, particularly young people and women, are growing more aware of the importance of civic and political participation and the role they can play in the future of their countries. These developments suggest an interest in and need for reform and opportunities for democratic initiatives. Those favorable elements in the regional environment should be taken as an opportunity to support popular aspirations for inclusive systems that allow for broad political participation, and safeguard mechanisms of accountability. Aspirations for equitable representation and for meaningful citizen engagement in decision-making are also growing exponentially at the local level due to the deepening dissatisfaction with the unchecked performance of central and local governments. Promoting policies and legislation on women and youth participation in civic and political life must be prioritized.

The current crises and challenges the region faces can only be temporary as the social expectations for change and democratization are alive and moving in a direction which is against stagnating governments or continuing armed conflict. The continuing support to those elements and actors favorable to democratic development is critical. Advocacy elements continue demands for reform,

¹³ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/the-global-gender-gap-index-results-in-2015/>

¹⁴ Rojasdatabank.info

¹⁵ www.ipu.org/women in national parliaments

¹⁶ AHDR

¹⁷ Reference based on perception surveys, hard data not available

¹⁸ AHDR

civil society and academic and research communities remain active, and regional/international organizations continue in their activities on electoral political reform. The elements for change among these groups continue to push for social and political voice and participation, in a very pronounced manner; in the field of elections, positive steps have been taken to demonstrate continued regional commitment to electoral democracy in the region. Since the inception of Phase I, the region has witnessed the establishment of an Electoral Affairs Department under the League of Arab States, the creation of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs), and the holding of the region's first forum on elections, bringing together EMBs from all Arab States to strengthen regional knowledge and cooperation on elections.

It is against this background that the Phase II interventions are being proposed, taking into consideration the successes and lessons learned from Phase I. The backbone of the GPECS Regional Component, both Phase I and Phase II, remains regional cooperation, with a strong focus on partnership building and strengthening, making newly created institutions sustainable, enhancing knowledge and capacity on elections, and promoting the importance of youth and women engagement in political processes. These interventions will be implemented under the following four region-specific outputs:

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

III. GPECS STRATEGY

The 2014-2017 UNDP Strategic Plan has reprioritized UNDP's work under seven Outcomes, with governance matters at the heart, in particular, of Outcome 2: *“Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance.”*¹⁹ The objective of Outcome 2 is to assist in *“establishing or strengthening the framework for democratic governance and building resilience into the principles, rules of engagement, systems and core institutions of governance. This framework is the basis for inclusive, accountable, responsive and resilient state-society relations under the rule of law.”*²⁰ In essence, democratic governance is the process of creating and sustaining an environment for inclusive and responsive political processes. As the primary means through which people express their preferences and choose their representatives, elections are a powerful governance tool of voice, accountability and, ultimately, human development.

UNDP electoral assistance is delivered, at country level, by UNDP Country Offices, and backed up, at the HQ and regional level, via both the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support staff in Addis Ababa, Amman, Bangkok, Brussels, New York and Panama, working in close collaboration

¹⁹ UNDP Strategic Plan (2014 – 2017), http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/UNDP_strategic-plan_14-17_v9_web.pdf.

²⁰ Outcome 2 ‘Theory of Change.’

with DPA/EAD. Following the issuance of recommendations by the Focal Point, UNDP Country Offices receive assistance, in formulating and implementing their electoral assistance projects, from BPPS, as part of its overall mandate to “*provide technical advice to Country Offices.*” The support from BPPS is often critical at the project start-up phase, via BPPS’ personnel participation in the Needs Assessment Missions, and the drafting of the (usually) multi-year project document. The support to the country level projects is also provided through regional capacity development, technical advice during implementation, and the sharing of knowledge and lessons through regional exchanges and south-south cooperation.

Since the first phase, GPECS has become UNDP’s most important vehicle for the formulation and implementation of electoral policy. BPPS staff working on elections are all part of the GPECS team, both in the region and in HQs, since the project was designed to support their provision of policy and programming support to national projects and in turn, they support the implementation of the Global Project in its different components. BPPS electoral support and GPECS are one and the same, but as a flagship global project that brings together the global, regional, and country levels, and integrates gender throughout, GPECS helps to further enroot the electoral cycle approach as an overarching modus operandi of the UN system, while pointing to a number of challenges in implementing the approach, when the focus of many national and international partners still remains on the electoral event itself. Moreover, GPECS promotes an integrated approach to supporting the capacities for political processes and institutions in order to improve citizen participation, voice and accountability and rebuild a stronger and stronger social contract. In doing this, GPECS promotes electoral assistance that is programmatically linked to support to institutions such as parliaments and constitution making bodies and support to overall civic engagement in political processes. GPECS has innovated in new areas of demand, including youth political participation, political participation of migrants and refugees, and women in electoral administration, among others. GPECS has also ensured that all global electoral initiatives supported by UNDP – including the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network,²¹ BRIDGE,²² and various communities of practice – are brought under one umbrella to maximize programmatic linkages.

Although the linkages and synergies among the different GPECS components is promoted, Regional Components are implemented on a daily basis by the BPPS electoral teams based in the regional hubs. In the MENA region, the electoral team based in Amman leads in the implementation of the Regional Component of GPECS. There is a dual reporting line to the Governance and Peacebuilding Regional Team Leader and the BPPS Lead Electoral Advisor (Quality Assurance of GPECS) in New York, while they also operate under the guidance of the Regional Bureau for Arab States.

Working towards the same strategic plan outcome, the GPECS Regional Component complements and strengthens national country office projects through regional activities that promote the

²¹ Formerly known as the ‘Administration and Cost of Elections’ initiative, the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network is the joint endeavour of EISA (formerly the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa), the Instituto Nacional Electoral of Mexico (INE), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), International IDEA, UNDESA, UNDP and the UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD).

²² BRIDGE stands for Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections and is the most well-known and practitioner-developed modular professional development programme. See Section 3, Component 1 for more details. <http://www.bridge-project.org>.

sharing of experiences, networking and enhanced participation of key stakeholders including women and youth. Through annual planning meetings and continuous coordination between the Regional Hub and country offices, and their national electoral projects, UNDP ensures there are synergies and coherence in electoral assistance in the region. This level of collaboration also ensures that the interventions add value to the work underway at the national level, and avoids duplication and overlap in activities and partners. The Regional Hub undertakes annual workplan development exercises with country offices, and it is through these formal mechanisms of coordination and collaboration, as well as through less formal modes of interaction, that the MENA Regional Component shares its intervention ideas, solicits feedback and gains ideas from Country Offices on the electoral assistance support they see as most appropriate and beneficial to their context.

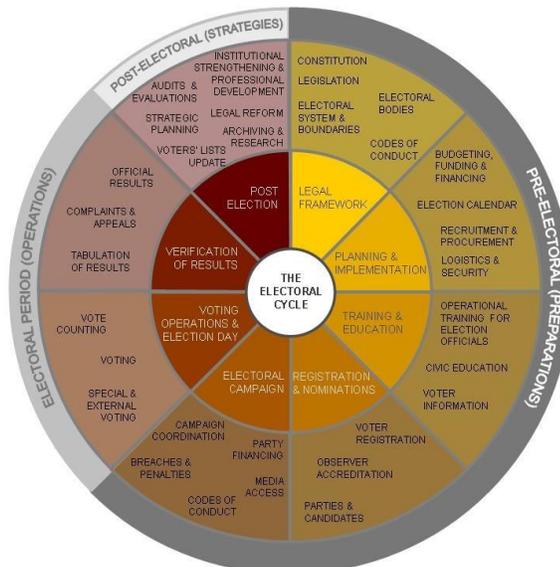
Since GPECS allows for earmarked and un-earmarked contributions and features a mechanism that allows donor contributions to be channeled to specific components and even countries, the MENA Regional Component will benefit from the knowledge and expertise of the whole GPECS team, but earmarked resources for the Middle East and North Africa Regional Component will be used solely for that region and under the parameters of the current proposal.

Electoral Cycle Approach

The international community has provided extensive electoral support over the past two decades which has helped countries conduct multiple elections; develop and promote key principles and standards; and experiment and apply different approaches, systems, technologies and innovative materials. However, despite the wealth of knowledge and experience acquired through past electoral assistance initiatives, these interventions were often guided more by isolated short-term policy objectives than by long-term, broad development cooperation strategies. In many cases, there was a widespread tendency to target elections as isolated events, not integrating them in the broader democratic governance agenda and, regrettably, not addressing them as part of an ongoing and cyclical process that re-occurs every few years, at regular intervals of time.

As a result and in order to provide a more sustainable approach to electoral assistance, UNDP, together with a number of international partners, adopted the **electoral cycle** approach. The electoral cycle approach looks at the electoral process over time and seeks to engage with different actors and entry points throughout the cycle, rather than channeling substantial resources and technical support uniquely towards the delivery of a given electoral event, at intermittent and disconnected points in time. The adoption of the electoral cycle helps implement electoral assistance within the broader framework of democratic governance with a pro-active and strategic approach.

The electoral cycle is divided into three broad phases – pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral – and at first glance it may seem that the post-electoral component is the shortest. In reality, this is the longest period of time and perhaps the ripest opportunity for addressing systemic issues that impact on the electoral process and wider democratic governance per se, including electoral system reform, electoral management design, boundary delimitation, political party charters, media training, and so forth.



The electoral cycle support needs to be properly anchored within the broader democratic governance support to have a lasting impact on democracy in any given country. Linkages have to be found and activities promoted in order to ensure that electoral support is not isolated from broader democratic governance support. Institutional support is as important as support to individual citizens, either directly or indirectly through representatives, advocates and educators. Rule of Law, accountable and transparent institutions, respect to human rights principles and anti-corruption are some of the important pivotal points in this regard.

Furthermore, the electoral cycle support integrates gender throughout the different phases of the electoral process, allowing for the integration of gender mainstreaming across the cycle and with all the electoral stakeholders including EMBs, voters, security agencies, civil society organizations, media and others. A comprehensive regional gender strategy on participation in electoral and political processes, to be developed²³ in consultation with key electoral stakeholders in the region, will guide the work of the project on areas such as advocacy for affirmative measures to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, the role of EMBs in enhancing women’s participation, media awareness on inclusive electoral reporting, coherence in interventions targeting women’s participation, among others.

Sustainable Development Goals

The GPECS Regional Component will directly respond to and align with the recently adopted universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),²⁴ with a focus on Goals 5 (gender equality) and

²³ The gender strategy is to be developed within the first year of the project.

²⁴ <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda/>

16 (peaceful societies, rule of law and institutions). Goal 16 aims to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies, and the Regional Component will work towards three specific targets of Goal 16: a) ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels; b) providing legal identity for all; and c) ensuring public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms. It will also contribute towards Goal 5 and its targets of a) ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life; and b) adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. In doing so the project will link with the work of the UN family including with UN Women, UNICEF, UNESCO and other agencies as well as inter-agency groups such as the Regional United Nations Development Group Interagency Technical Task Team on Young People, with the aim to promote efficiency, consistency and coherence in support and avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

Inclusive Approach to Programming

The GPECS Regional Component, through the implementation of Phase I, has conducted dialogues with the key electoral stakeholders to define areas and strategies for long-term electoral support in the second phase. The present proposal builds on the learning from the first phase, closely reflecting the identified needs, lessons learned and best practices for implementation of electoral and democratic governance support in the region. Some of these include a) continued support to regional organizations such as ArabEMBs and LAS as a way to strengthen regional capacity (but also national EMB capacity), b) leveraging other UN programmes underway in the region, such as the work with youth, as an effective strategy for greater impact, c) specific and targeted interventions separately for women and youth, and d) sustainability of new institutions, i.e. ArabEMBs, requires continued and long-term commitment.

The regional proposal also reflects the needs as identified by the electoral and democratic governance initiatives currently underway at the national level including those raised by electoral management bodies, chief technical advisors, regional hub advisers and governance team leaders from the region.

The GPECS Regional Component will pursue a gender inclusive approach considering regional as well as country specific contexts to identify structural constraints and ensure equal opportunities for women to participate in this Regional Component and its activities. As youth are one of the main drivers for reform in the region, the Regional Component will actively engage with youth organizations in order to increase their capacities and support activities envisioning increased youth participation in electoral processes. The GPECS Regional Component will work closely with the regional Mosharka project on its gender and youth activities, ensuring strong collaboration and coordination towards achievements of SDG goal 5.

The second phase of the GPECS Regional Component will build and strengthen synergies through existing global and regional electoral initiatives including online initiatives – such as the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, iKNOW Politics,²⁵ and BRIDGE. It will work in close

²⁵ The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (IKNOW Politics) is an online workspace designed to serve the needs of elected officials, candidates, political party leaders and members, researchers, students and practitioners interested in

collaboration with other regional and sub-regional electoral and democratic governance initiatives and target country interventions that might provide significant lessons learnt for regional policy and programming. It will be a key element of GPECS electoral support provided in conjunction with the wider UN family.

In this context, the GPECS' Regional Component will continue working closely with electoral stakeholders from different countries as well as with the recently created organization ArabEMBs as a new interlocutor at the regional level. The project will continue cooperating with civil society organizations, media groups, regional institutions such as the League of Arab States (LAS), and international organizations supporting democracy initiatives. This aims to enhance regional cooperation on broader issues of electoral democracy, increase regional knowledge and know-how on electoral and democratic issues, enhance capacities of regional stakeholders around issues of civic engagement and political participation, and promote policies and strategies for a greater and more effective role by women and youth in processes of social and political change.

South-south cooperation will remain a strong focus of the project, facilitating south-south and triangular cooperation and knowledge exchange through the dissemination of evidence-based results and experiences on elections, with the aim of achieving impact at the regional and national level. Because north-south aid is more effective when developing countries work together to find solutions to common challenges, the project will facilitate south-south and triangular cooperation among electoral management bodies, to enable analysis on the common challenges faced in managing and participating in elections, what has worked and what are the good practices from other regions and contexts that can be adopted in the Arab States; helping to foster innovation, and harmonize policies, legal frameworks and regulations that enhance citizen participation in electoral process.

Sustainable, Human Rights Centered, and Flexible Implementation

Sustainability

To ensure sustainability of the support provided, the regional component will continue to be guided by the concept of local ownership, which is made possible by designing and implementing activities and initiatives based on the local context and per the needs and demands of beneficiary partners. Support provided in the region, including to regional partners such as the League of Arab States and the organization of ArabEMBs, is based on the needs and demands as identified by these organizations, and in line with the broad objectives and principles of the project; this has contributed to the success of Phase I and to the sustainability of the support provided. This GPECS Regional Component recognizes and invests efforts in creating political will, building trust and leadership commitment for the support provided, helping to establish participants' ownership of the process and responsibility for its results. Given the political context in which the GPECS

advancing women in politics. It is a partnership between UNDP, UNIFEM, NDI, IPU and International IDEA. See <http://www.iknowpolitics.org/>.

Regional Component operates, engaging all stakeholders throughout the design and implementation process is even more critical to ensuring inclusive decision-making, stronger networks, a sense of empowerment and creating solutions acceptable to everyone. In addition to ensuring that support is locally owned, other strategies the regional component utilizes to contribute to sustainability include a) a strong focus on knowledge generation and knowledge sharing; b) facilitating networking among EMBs to plan common thematic activities, pooling their human and financial resources; c) promoting linkages between electoral stakeholders, such as between ArabEMB and LAS, between EMBs and human rights institutions, and between EMBs and youth; d) partnering with regional organizations and institutions including universities to plan and implement regional initiatives; e) advocating among ArabEMB members the need to focus on sustainability in their operational and programmatic design and planning; and e) remaining flexible and innovative in the design, planning and implementation of activities. These strategies are aimed at sustaining the impact of UNDP support beyond the end of the regional component, facilitating the continuation of ArabEMBs as an active organization advocating for professionalization of elections in the region, increasing the capacity of the electoral affairs department of the League of Arab States to professionalize its engagement on elections in the region, including courses on electoral topics into existing academic programs, and creating a pool of electoral experts that can shape the region's transition to democracy in line with international best practices.

Human Rights Centered

The GPECS Regional Component adheres to the human rights based approach, focusing on participation and inclusion and ensuring that all support is based on the needs and demands of partners, with national ownership contributing to the sustainability of the development efforts. Support is guided by the principle of meaningful participation, that all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy civil, economic, social, cultural and political development in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized. Of particular focus will be the mainstreaming of gender across all project outputs, and per the new UN SC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, the project will promote the role of women as peace agents, mediators and peacebuilders in conflict and post-conflict settings. To strengthen its impact in the area of human rights, the Regional Component will continue its engagement with UN OHCHR in advocating for and promoting human rights in elections as an important area of focus for the region.

Flexible Implementation

Furthermore, with the continually evolving political environment and shifting electoral calendar, the GPECS Regional Component is also designed with the necessary level of flexibility to allow it to shift activities and resources as required. This flexibility will also enable a rapid response to emerging democracies or hot spots in the region with an urgent need for electoral expertise.²⁶

²⁶ With clearance of the Focal Point for any country-level interventions.

Given this continually changing context, the activities are designed beyond the timeframe of any specific election event in any given country in the region and supports the building of norms, practices, mechanisms and institutions that can foster active civic engagement and democratic accountability in the region. It will establish and strengthen networks and processes as a contribution to the advancement of democratic norms. It will support citizens' engagement in order to be able to use in the best possible way their political rights and be the owners of their destiny. Throughout these and all its interventions, the GPECS Regional Component will be guided by the principles of gender mainstreaming and focus in particular on promoting the rights of women and other marginalized groups. The GPECS Regional Component recognizes that sustainable capacity to hold credible elections means creating robust mechanisms and norms that support genuine political competition together with citizens making educated choices about their representatives, rather than exclusively focusing on strengthening the capacities of EMBs.

Given the political developments in the region and the significance of elections as milestones in peace processes, of particular importance to the GPECS Regional Component will be support to transitional and post-conflict elections; for example, in the event that a political agreement is reached and the environment becomes conducive for the holding of elections in countries currently experiencing conflict (i.e. Libya, Yemen), the Regional Component will have the flexibility to support all phases of the electoral process, in accordance with what the Security Council mandate may be and under the guidance of the UN Electoral Focal Point and in cooperation with DPA/DPKO; this support, as with any support, will be coordinated with other international organizations providing electoral assistance and can include, given the massive displacement of peoples in the region, assistance to out-of-country-voting. Other areas of assistance can include support to the legal reform process, electoral management body establishment or reform, voter registration, civic education and outreach, training and capacity building, procurement of election materials and other operational support to the electoral event as deemed necessary and in line with UN's mandate. Similarly, such support can be envisioned to other transition and post-conflict countries. Support can also include convening of regional coordination group of electoral assistance providers engaged in post-conflict countries.

Budget Overview and Value for Money

The below tables provide an overview of the regional component phase II budget along with a comparison with the budget and expenditures of phase I.

OUTPUT	BUDGET
Output 1: Regional electoral capacity and knowledge enhanced	\$1,512,500
Output 2: Profession of electoral administration strengthened through regional cooperation	\$1,802,500
Output 3: Civic and political participation of	\$1,292,500

women enhanced	
Output 4: Role of youth in the electoral cycle promoted	\$1,117,500
Operational costs	\$1,194,938
General Management Costs (GMS)	\$553,595
TOTAL	\$7,473,533

	Budget (USD)	Budget (SEK)	Received (USD)	Received (SEK)
Phase I + Extension Period	7,217,185	47,500,000	6,385,517	47,500,000
Phase II	7,473,533	65,800,000		
<i>This table illustrates that while the overall budget for Phase I and II are similar in USD, the SEK amount is higher due to the fluctuation of the exchange rate. It is also worth noting that under phase I, there was a loss of over \$830,000 also due to the exchange rate (the difference between the budget and amount received in US dollars).</i>				

The value for money of the regional component has also been demonstrated by the effective and efficient implementation of phase I; as a result of its synergies with other units within UNDP, the component has access to a greater pool experts and resources; similarly, its cost-sharing approach with the regional partners demonstrate commitment to value for money and local ownership. The final evaluation of phase I concluded with the following finding on the project’s value for money:

“The regional project demonstrates value for money not only in its judicious use of donor funds but also from its linkages with the other components of GPECS (global, other regions) and the broader UNDP governance and peacebuilding cluster which enables an economy of scale to more easily engage with colleagues working in areas linked to elections (human rights, parliament, local governance, etc.). Its judicious use of funds for example include cost-sharing for events such as the Human Rights and Elections event in March 2016 executed in partnership with Qatar, and on a vision for ensuring, through modest contributions, national participation at a regional level that both provides core input at a much more reasonable cost for one event than could be achieved by replicating event within individual countries, while building networks and strengthening relationships. The utilisation of Regional Hub Advisors in gender, youth and human rights areas has enabled the project to draw on readily available expertise without the challenge or expense of appointing individual advisors. Similarly, as a component of GPECS, the project has access to global resources and expertise as well as linkages to GPECS advisors covering other regions; the project has utilized these linkages to enhance the quality of its knowledge products (for instance through partnership with the Joint Task Force on e-learning, and collaborating with GPECS Asia on development of curriculum on electoral security) as

well as synergies with other regions (exposure to Latin America experiences through GPECS LA region).”

IV. REGIONAL COMPONENTS RESULTS AND OUTPUTS

In Phase II, the GPECS MENA Regional Component aims to broaden and deepen the scope of outcomes which were envisaged and pursued in the first phase (2014-2016). In the overall, first and second phase, the Project envisages creating a regional commonly shared view impinging on the culture and practice of citizenship building and democratic elections. The GPECS Regional Component will focus on the following four result areas:

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

Working in partnership with key stakeholders including national electoral management bodies, national electoral support initiatives, civil society organizations, parliaments, media, regional groups and international organizations, the GPECS Regional Component will provide technical assistance through policy advisory services, capacity enhancement initiatives and regional cooperation and learning.

The Regional Component will work towards building coherence in democratic and electoral support in the region through dialogue, partnership and initiatives that reinforce the participation of youth and women in political and civic life at both the national and local levels. It will also support national efforts to enhance capacity of electoral authorities to play their role in the professional, transparent, and credible administration of elections. The GPECS Regional Component will also support the development and maintenance of regional tools, an innovative policy agenda focusing on the realities of the region, knowledge products in cutting-edge areas, and the promotion of the community of practice that includes UN, international and national partners from the region aimed at identifying lessons learnt and best practices in electoral support in the region. The GPECS Regional Component will mainstream the usage of social media and digital tools for positive transformational change, helping to amplify citizen voices, connecting people and providing platforms for citizens to work together towards achieving peaceful democratic transitions. It will also work to provide guidance on how best to effectively use social media in electoral assistance.

It is expected that the regional activities will comply with the concepts of Ownership, Alignment, Harmonization, Result-Based and Mutual Accountability spelled out in the in the 2005 Paris Declaration and in the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness. The support is consistent with the overall direction of UN support on electoral issues and will be undertaken in an integrated fashion with UN country support teams, and in coordination with the efforts of the broader international community, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. Recognizing the importance of conflict-sensitive programming,

particularly given the complexity and interconnectedness of ongoing conflicts in the region, the 'Do No Harm' (DNH) approach will be applied during implementation of the GPECS Regional Component. Towards this end, UNDP will ensure that activities are implemented in such a way as not to heighten tensions or conflicts, and work towards preventing conflict. Through reliance on UNDP's regular conflict analysis of the region, the regional component is equipped with the necessary information and data to remain alert and flexible in its programming approach; furthermore, the built-in flexibility in project implementation allows for revising programming objectives to ensure they remain appropriate to the situation and are realistic and feasible given the prevailing conditions. Additionally, the security of all those involved including partners, beneficiaries, and staff will be factored into all decisions of planning, designing and implementation of activities.

In addition to the output on women's political participation, the GPECS Regional Component will mainstream gender across all the outputs, ensuring that the participation of women is taken into consideration in all activities supported by the project, with specific gender indicators under each output.

Output 1: Regional Electoral Capacity and Knowledge Enhanced

This is the largest output of the GPECS Regional Component expanding and building on objectives reached and currently in motion under Phase I. The aim of this output is to support the creation of sustainable regional capacity and knowledge of electoral issues.

While there are differences in terms of capacity and experience in democratic practices including election management in the target region, there are also many common features in the sphere of elections that create opportunities (as well as pose challenges) to those institutions responsible for planning and organizing public elections as a public service. Given the trend towards democratic transitions in the past years, the region is in need of information and know-how on the established principles of democratic elections and election management processes that are efficient, credible and transparent. To address this need, the GPECS Regional Component aims at developing and strengthening the collection, processing, interpretation and dissemination of relevant regional electoral information to support efficient and accurate decision-making by election administrators, and informed choices of voters on Election Day.

With a focus on strengthening local capacity, the Regional Component, in close cooperation with EAD of DPA, will continue supporting the electoral department of the League of Arab States and building its capacity on electoral knowledge and information, and providing electoral assistance to EMBs in the region.

In order to support the transmission of knowledge in the electoral field, the GPECS Regional Component will continue working on various electoral initiatives, including the Building Resources for Democracy Governance Elections (BRIDGE) and the Arabic site of the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network. Through this, the Regional Component will continue its investment in developing a pool of regional electoral experts. The Regional Component will also foster

regional expertise through the further development and expansion of the regional Lexicon of Electoral Terminology which makes electoral information accessible to the region in three languages: Arabic, English and French.

Through various initiatives the GPECS Regional Component will encourage and stimulate learning, know-how and dialogue around electoral issues of relevance to the region (e.g., constitutional drafting, electoral security, election observation). With the region exemplifying the use of ICTs for good governance, the GPECS Regional Component will advocate and promote use of ICTs as platforms for the public sphere and use various information communication technologies to reach citizens, particularly women and youth in the region.

Throughout its activities, the Regional Component will strive to build, share and make use of electoral knowledge in the Arabic language, benefiting the region as a whole.

The following measures are expected to contribute to achieving this result:

- **Increase professional knowledge** of election administrators and other relevant electoral stakeholders. The GPECS Regional Component will support the a) codification of a body of legal knowledge and practice in the region on elections. b) creation of a regional training and documentation center for the enhancement of electoral knowledge and good practice among electoral officers and experts of different professional levels and fields of specialty will be supported by the project; d) a research and publication cell within the Regional Component as a focal instance for the production, outreach and handling by different user categories. Expanding the Electoral Lexicon and facilitating its use. To proceed with the work done under the phase I of the regional initiative, a new distribution plan of the Lexicon based upon lessons learned from the first phase in view of enhancing an effective handling by users. Also, expanding country coverage of the Lexicon by including language variations from countries of the region not included in first phase such as Morocco and Algeria. Increase of understanding on key electoral issues (i.e. voter registration, EDR, RMS, Electoral Security). The GPECS Regional Component will increase awareness and technical understanding among stakeholders through regional conferences and national workshops. In addition, the Regional Component stands by to support advocacy towards reform of this issues.
- **Supporting the formation of a network of Arab speaking electoral experts.** Through collaboration and partnership with the League of Arab States and the ArabEMBs organization, this support will include a) building a network of Arab speaking experts on elections²⁷, b) developing e-learning courses on different relevant matters with issuance of diplomas to the identified experts, and c) expanding the pool of regional BRIDGE facilitators. Under phase I, the GPECS Regional Component has facilitated the training of 40 accredited and semi-accredited BRIDGE facilitators that serve as trainers for the League of Arab States and other organizations engaged in electoral strengthening activities.

²⁷ The need for increased number of Arab speaking electoral experts has been identified at various electoral gatherings including at the 2013 and 2014 UNDP electoral team meeting. The project shared and sought feedback on a proposal to increase and enhance the pool of electoral experts from the Arab States.

Electoral experts will be identified from this pool of trained facilitators, from BRIDGE database of experts, as well as from electoral assistance initiatives underway at the regional and country level. The GPECS Regional Component will work closely with these experts to further enhance their capacity, expose them to other country experiences including experiences of other regions, and facilitate their engagement with electoral stakeholders at the regional and national levels.

- **Enhanced capacity of the League of Arab States** to provide effective and sound electoral services to its member states. The GPECS Regional Component will support the development of the capacities of LAS election staff as well as the department overall through technical expertise, BRIDGE courses on specific issue areas in the practice of elections, study tours visiting partner election departments in other regional institutions (e.g. OAS and OSCE/ODHIR), and in the preparation of election observation missions. Support to LAS will continue to be in close partnership with and under the leadership of the UN's Electoral Assistance Division (EAD).
- **Engage with media** to promote public access to professional, accurate and comprehensive electoral information; both to safeguard the transparency of electoral processes as well as to encourage an electoral process in which there is public debate and voters have adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the election process itself in order to make informed choices. The region offers new opportunities and challenges in promoting freedom of expression and access to information with the proliferation of the media and new media having a powerful impact on the social and political transformations in the region. Media in the Arab region is characterized by the flourishing of new media outlets, citizen journalism, as well as by stalled legal reforms, blasphemy laws and ongoing challenges of professionalism in the field²⁸. Within this context, the GPECS Regional Component recognizes the critical role media play in the transparency, accountability and credibility of electoral processes; and as such, it will work with regional media networks, media regulatory bodies, and firms engaged in professionalizing media in the region to raise awareness on the role of media in electoral and democratic processes, facilitate discussion and partnerships between media and other electoral stakeholders including EMBs, civil society, and the private sector, develop media's understanding of its essential function in the electoral process, and promote the development of a framework for improving the quality of electoral reporting in the region. Recognizing the challenges of working with media, the GPECS Regional Component will collaborate and partner with agencies such as UNESCO and regional institutions like the League of Arab States, and others already engaged and working with media in the Arab States to enhance public confidence and participation in electoral and democratic processes.

Gender mainstreaming: *advocate for temporary special measures and gender balanced boards; develop and strengthen networks of women in elections; promote and strengthen capacity of women in elections; promote and facilitate disaggregated data on women; ensure*

²⁸ UNESCO report. <https://www.unesco-ci.org/cmscore/29/29-regional-session-promoting-freedom-expression-and-media-development-arab-states>

gender balanced workshop/conference panels; promote gender sensitive media reporting; support women run media; produce knowledge products and resources on women in elections.

Output 2: Profession of electoral administration strengthened through regional cooperation

A regional organization of electoral authorities in the Arab States has already been created under the sponsorship and technical support of the GPECS Regional Component in June 2015 with the goal of professionalizing electoral administration through regional cooperation and exchange among electoral authorities in the different countries. The key aim of the organization is to advance peer to peer support and collaboration on elections, a mechanism that has proven effective in other regions of the world where EMBs have formed similar associations with the Arab States the last region to have such an organization. The title of the new organization is ‘Organization of ArabEMBs’, with discussions underway to have its headquarters in Tunis. As requested by the executive board of the Organization of ArabEMBs, UNDP will continue supporting the further development and consolidation of the organization in the coming few years. Moreover, a number of professional exchanges and learning experiences took place along the roadmap to create the new regional organization as well as workshops and conferences of a regional or sub-regional scope. All these activities demonstrated that regional cooperation is not only desirable but actually feasible in the field of elections and democracy, and will contribute to strengthening the profession of elections in the region. Recognizing the value of a peer-to-peer EMB organization in the region, the League of Arab States have actively supported ArabEMBs in establishing themselves as a new organization and expanding its membership; the two organizations have also initiated work on a memorandum of agreement that outlines the areas of collaboration between the two, and defines strategies for ensuring coordination and coherence in regional cooperation on elections in the region.

Looking to current challenges from a long term perspective, it can be ascertained that regional and also south-south cooperation have demonstrated tangible benefits in other parts of the world, promoting knowledge sharing and building closer ties between national electoral management bodies and their peers in the region and beyond. With many countries in the region going through similar transitional processes, the sharing of experiences, lessons and best practices of one country with another contributes significantly towards fostering and sustaining positive change. The availability of information on the experiences of neighboring countries allows for more informed decision-making and effective electoral administration.

The GPECS Regional Component is also supporting the enhancement of the ethics of elections beyond electoral management bodies to include electoral practice by related stakeholders, mainly political parties, civil society organizations monitoring elections and human rights institutions. In establishing a profession of elections, it is essential that electoral management bodies recognize that a human rights based approach to elections is required to complement political and technical approaches. Human rights relating to the electoral process come from the well-known principle

that power comes from the people. Human rights issues can arise at every point in the electoral cycle. Relevant human rights include not only the right to participate in public and political life but rights directly associated with elections, including rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, association, opinion and expression and freedom from discrimination, and also rights that can be infringed as a result of misconduct during the electoral cycle, such as security of the person, freedom from arbitrary detention and due process in courts and tribunals. Through this output, the Regional Component will promote and advocate for the synergies between electoral stakeholders and the human rights community in efforts to ensure that human rights serve as the basis of the ethics of elections in the region. Through partnership and collaboration with the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ANNHRIs), the GPECS Regional Component is laying the foundation for synergies between EMBs and national human rights institutions as natural partners in creating an environment conducive to the holding of elections in which people can freely exercise their political rights.

To achieve these objectives under this output the GPECS Regional Component will carry out measures along the following work streams:

- **Secretariat of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)** supported. In achieving this objective, the GPECS Regional Component will support the organizational setup of the secretariat, its staffing²⁹, general operating costs and strategies for making it a self-sustaining organization. Other activities to include the holding of annual general assembly held jointly with a regional conference; functioning of governing bodies of the organization as well as a the design and implementation of a strategy for enlarging membership; a newsletter and the Website of ArabEMBs is created and helped maintenance. Support is also provided for the enhancement of institutionalized relationship with other regional associations (Latin America association of electoral bodies (UNIORE), Association of Central and East Europe Election Organizations (ACEEEO), Election Coordination Forum of the South African Development Countries (ECF-SADC), and the Forum of Electoral Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA)).
- **Facilitate south-south and triangular cooperation among key electoral stakeholders** to enable the sharing of experiences and lessons learnt, analysis of what has worked in other parts of the world and identification of good practices that can be adopted in the region. This GPECS Regional Component will continue to strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones aimed at enhancing institutions of democratic governance that have a role and impact on electoral processes. Activities to also include holding of thematic conferences and workshops bringing together EMBs from other regions to interact and have exchanges with their Arab counterparts.
- An **ethics of elections** is codified and enhanced among electoral administrators, political competitors, and election observation organizations. **Codes of conduct** are created not only

²⁹ UNDP will support the recruitment of two staff for the secretariat until the organization completes its full legal and operational setup and is able to recruit its own staff.

for electoral professionals, but also for political parties and candidates, and CSO's monitoring elections. A strategy is designed for disseminating of the different codes of conduct through the different activities of the GPECS Regional Component, which would allow the outreach to the relevant audiences (i.e. EMBs, political parties, CSOs).

- Promoting knowledge and awareness of **political rights as fundamental human rights** among EMBs and other relevant electoral/democratic stakeholders through promoting engagement with and collaboration among the human rights and elections communities in the region. This activity will be implemented in partnership with regional actors such as the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ANNHRIs), LAS and ArabEMBs. Specific interventions include regional workshops targeting EMBs, national human rights institutions, election monitoring organizations to reinforce and strengthen the natural linkages between human rights and electoral processes, and to identify ways to coordinate the work of EMBs and National Human Rights Institutions at the national level. GPECS Regional Component will also support a regional **forum of citizenship and elections** as an occasion for a variety of electoral partners groups and institutions to come together on a periodic basis and assess their respective topics while at the same time planning and coordinating for the following two years. The GPECS Regional Component first held the forum in 2015 as an initiative with the League of Arab States who adopted the initiative in a Ministerial Council resolution on September 13. The periodic character of the forum will allow this activity to become a regional institutional reference in the field of democracy as a means of awareness rising in regard to social and political participation, and understanding the principles of citizenship and human rights; it will be a critical mechanism of engaging all key regional electoral institutions including the League of Arab States and the ArabEMBs, among others.

***Gender mainstreaming:** advocate for and promote the role of women in election administration; advocate with ArabEMBs on incorporating gender considerations in all its activities; ensure all codes of conduct take into consideration gender and role of women in elections.*

Output 3: Civic and political participation of women enhanced

Achieving gender equality is an uphill battle in a region facing a complex mixture of volatile political transitions, armed conflict, ultra-conservatism, poverty, violent extremism, and raging humanitarian crises. While women played a central role in the 2011 uprisings, this has not translated into greater freedom and expanded rights for women. The region continues to be ranked the lowest in political participation on the gender gap index, with women underrepresented in parliament, political parties, and further into political life including in their engagement in political

activities and voting.³⁰ In the Gender Empowerment Measure³¹, the region is ranked second lowest in the world, and it is the lowest in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's (IPU)³² ranking on the percentage of women in parliaments. The world's average for the proportion of women in both upper and lower houses combined in February 2013 stands at 20.4 per cent³³ compared to 13.8 percent for the Arab region; these numbers, however, are still a significant increase since 2005 when the figures for the region stood at a 6.5 per cent.³⁴ The number of seats currently assumed by women in Arab parliamentary bodies (lower chambers) is below 4 percent in six countries, namely Qatar (0 per cent), Yemen (0.3 per cent), Oman (1.2 per cent), Egypt (2 per cent), and Lebanon (3.1 per cent).³⁵ Three of the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCC) have relatively high numbers: 10 per cent in Bahrain, 17.5 per cent in United Arab Emirates, and 19.9 per cent in Saudi Arabia.³⁶ The high numbers for Saudi Arabia were achieved in 2013 by presidential decree.³⁷

These numbers are lower at the local level where women's participation in local elections remains extremely low and the levels of their success at being elected to local councils are even lower. This has had a very negative impact of ensuring responsiveness to women's local development needs and priorities, which has had a negative impact on the quality of local development outputs and outcomes in general.

The political rights of women in the region is therefore a critical issue and central to the objectives of this project. Enhancing the political role of women during political reforms (post-conflict and transitional) over the past years has shown that this is an opportune time to foster initiatives that accelerate the role of women in the region's path to democracy. The need to include women and ensure their full participation at all levels and stages of decision-making and in conflict resolution and peace building processes was also a message that was strongly expressed by participants at the Arab Development Forum organized by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) in Amman, Jordan 2013.³⁸

Through this output, the GPECS Regional Component will contribute towards enhancing women's political participation in the region by addressing the gender responsiveness of institutions, electoral and others, and to refer to the extent that they render equal opportunities to men and women to enjoy anticipated benefits. The Regional Component will also work towards ensuring gender equality issues are mainstreamed into regional and national dialogues, regional and national institutions and networks and in relevant policies and political processes. Recognizing that it is not enough to only increase the number of women represented in decision-making processes, the

³⁰ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/the-global-gender-gap-index-results-in-2015/>

³¹ Rojasdatabank.info

³² www.ipu.org/women in national parliaments

³³ Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Women in Parliaments: World and Regional Averages." Available from <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/world010213.htm> (accessed June 13, 2014).

³⁴ Zaatari, Zeina. "No Democracy without Women's Equality: Middle East and North Africa." In *2013 Women's Political Participation Report MENA: Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum*, p. 6.

³⁵ Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Women in Parliaments: World Classification." Available from <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> (accessed June 13, 2014).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ *The Arab Millennium Development Goals Report: Facing Challenges and Looking Beyond 2015*. United Nations Development Programme, p. 24.

³⁸ The Arab Development Forum: Voices and Choices for the POST-2015 Agenda in the Arab Countries 10-11 APRIL 2013. Amman, Jordan.

GPECS Regional Component will also focus on the quality of women's participation, advocating for their presence at the decision-making table and equipping them with the necessary skill sets to play effective leadership roles once there.

The Regional Component's overall strategy for this output is to promote cooperation and networking among groups supporting women's political participation in the Arab region, advocate for the inclusion of women in all phases of the electoral cycle, strengthen knowledge and awareness on the rights of women in a democratic society, and supporting activities that empower and enhance the capacities of women to play strong and effective roles in peace and reconciliation matters.

The GPECS Regional Component will also ensure gender mainstreaming across all the outputs and activities of the regional initiative, with specific indicators to monitor progress.

To achieve its objectives in this area, the GPECS Regional Component will carry out the following specific activities:

- **Gender equality through constitutional drafting and legal frameworks.** The GPECS Regional Component will promote and advocate for gender equality to be enshrined in constitutional and other relevant legal texts, lobbying for and offering technical legal assistance to governments and legislative bodies at times of constitutional and legal reform. The Regional Component will support networking among constitutional drafters, advocate for LAS and other regional bodies to advocate for gender equality among its member states and facilitate south-south cooperation to enable the sharing of experiences from other regions that have gone through similar transitions.
- **Regional networks of women involved in public life** (e.g. policy advocacy CSOs). The GPECS Regional Component will provide technical support to existing and newly created regional networks of women involved in public life (e.g. policy advocacy CSOs).
- **Women participation as voters, candidates, representatives, and electoral administrators.** The GPECS Regional Component will promote and advocate for the recruitment of women at various levels of EMBs throughout the electoral cycle. In addition, it will support lobbying at the regional level with political actors to include women in their structures and that education activities contain components targeting directly these groups. Thus targeting women from both grassroots level and top-down change.
- **Women, parliament and institutional strengthening:** the GPECS Regional Component will promote and advocate for gender mainstreaming in parliamentary, legislative, and electoral institutions and processes; strengthen the capacity of regional electoral bodies (such as ArabEMBs, electoral department of the League of Arab States, regional observer organizations) to promote among its member states women's participation in critical institutions for law and policymaking; facilitate networking and cooperation among women parliamentarians, political leaders and party members around issues of accountability, participation and representation, via the development of good practices on institutional reforms and constitution-making inclusive processes developed; and support south-south cooperation on the effective participation of women in elected assemblies.

- **Role of women in conflict and post-conflict situations:** UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (1325) underscores that political transitions are critical moments to empower women. Constitution-making processes are an essential component of the roadmap to peace, and the importance of the role of women in that process has been repeatedly proven not only for improving the status of women but for overall development and peace and security. To meet the aims of 1325, the GPECS Regional Component will advocate and promote among women, men and organizations the importance of ensuring women’s full participation in constitution-making processes; facilitate dialogue on the role of women in preventing conflict and violent extremism; enhance regional knowledge and awareness of the importance of the role of women during conflict and post-conflict situations; and strengthen the capacity of regional organizations on responsiveness and accountability on gender issues, conflict analyses, dialogue accompaniment, mediation, social mobilization, advocacy, resilience, and peace building.
39
- **Role of women within regional electoral organizations:** Advocating for gender mainstreaming within ArabEMBs, the Electoral Department of the League of Arab States, and other regional bodies supported by the GPECS Regional Component. Activities to include training and awareness, advocating for the recruitment of female staff/consultants and use of female facilitators, and the recognition of women’s contributions to these organizations.

***Gender mainstreaming:** facilitate the mainstreaming of gender across all project outputs and activities including within the project component itself.*

Output 4: Role of youth in the electoral cycle promoted

The Arab region is currently experiencing an unprecedented youth bulge with two thirds of the population below thirty years of age, half of whom fall within the 15 - 29-year age bracket⁴⁰. According to the 2016 Arab Human Development Report, there are over one hundred million young people in the region who are more educated, active and connected to the outside world and therefore have a greater awareness of their realities and higher aspirations for a better future. With such numbers, they have a massive potential for bringing stability and social-political and economic development to the region. However, if they remain disempowered the risks for continued instability in the region is high with an overwhelming power for destruction.

³⁹ While reflected separately in the proposal (in the narrative, workplans and results framework) many initiatives related to prevention of conflict and violent extremism under gender (output 3) and youth (output 4) will be coordinated as one exercise, with relevant activities designed, planned and implemented targeting both women and youth together.

⁴⁰ 2016 Arab Human Development Report on Youth

Their participation in civic and political spheres remains weak because of a combination of institutional and structural constraints. Most Arab countries share common institutional and legislative shortcomings, characterized by restricted freedom, gaps between law and practice, and limited power sharing, especially in electoral laws and laws on freedom of association. The spectrum of unconventional or informal channels of engagement is diverse and ranges from activism on social media platforms to militant extremist action.⁴¹

In terms of electoral participation, while they led the 2011 uprisings, that willingness to demonstrate did not directly translate into a greater propensity to use the ballot box after the uprisings. In fact, relative to the rest of the population, young people preferred demonstrating to voting. According to perception surveys, in voting, every country in the region is well below the global average among all age-groups, with a gap of about 20 percent (figure 2.10; table 2.3). In several countries, voting is low among youth compared with the overall population, reflecting the lack of confidence of youth in undemocratic institutions. For instance, in Tunisia's latest elections in 2014, young people represented the highest ratio of voters who refrained from voting, with only 17 percent of Tunisians aged between 18 and 25 registering to vote.⁴²

This lack of participation is due in part to their lack of confidence in institutions and continued frustration in their daily lives, feeling disempowered with no sense of control over their futures. It is this gap that the GPECS Regional Component will address through a focus on promoting greater political and civic engagement of youth both at the regional and national levels. It will implement activities that enhance the understanding of the role of youth as drivers for positive change in society while increasing their opportunities for participation. Such activities will include advocating for legislation and policies that enable youth participation and promoting dialogue among youth and policy makers in the region, giving them platforms to express their concerns in constructive ways.

Supporting youth involvement in school and community affairs during their schooling years, when their political identity is being formed, is found to be one of the best ways to foster political involvement among adults in the future.⁴³ As such the GPECS Regional Component foresees to work with children at schools, educational institutions including universities and outside to nurture an appreciation of citizenship, rights and responsibilities. It will support initiatives that empower youth and enable them to actively engage in political and civil areas from an early age. Expanding the youth category with inclusion of "children" is meant to ensure focus at all spectrums of the 'youth' within the region, and supporting initiatives that can be launched and influenced at a very young age (e.g. civil registration at birth, in school curricula, camps for citizenship during secondary education, e-learning through games and contests, etc.).

To achieve its objectives in this area, the GPECS Regional Component will carry out the following specific activities:

⁴¹ 2016 Arab Human Development Report on Youth

⁴² 2016 Arab Human Development Report, chapter 2

⁴³ 2016 Arab Human Development Report, chapter 2 (reference 35)

- **Regional standards and guidelines for role of youth in the electoral cycle:** contribute to establishing clear standards and guidelines for youth participation throughout the electoral cycle (for youth participation during voter registration, candidate nomination process, polling and counting) and promote a wider understanding of youth participation among key electoral stakeholders including electoral management bodies, political parties, parliamentarians, and election observation groups. This area of intervention will also include capacity building of EMBs on the importance of youth participation and having youth sensitive policies that encourage the positive participation of youth in electoral and political processes. The GPECS Regional Component will also advocate for and promote innovative and creative methods for youth participation in the electoral cycle including the use of ICT and new social media during voter registration, candidate nomination, polling day, etc. Through this intervention, country offices will also be supported with strategies on how they can tackle, at the national level, barriers to youth's participation as voters, candidates and electoral administrators. The Regional Component will also promote and encourage developing responsive youth friendly legal frameworks, legislation and laws; and quotas to increase political participation of youth (legally binding or voluntary, reserve seats or candidate nomination, political party membership).
- **Increased participation of youth at the regional level:** promote and advocate for the inclusion of youth in regional electoral organizations including ArabEMBs and the electoral department of the League of Arab States; support the participation of youth in regional elections observation missions. The GPECS Regional Component will also advocate for and support the participation of youth in regional initiatives that promote democracy and increased civic and political participation; this will include strengthening regional networks of youth involved in public life (e.g. policy advocacy CSOs). It will also support activities to empower youth engagement through regional graduate education and expert learning and by raising awareness events and regional information tools as well as by facilitating networking among youth organizations.
- **Engaging academia on citizen rights, freedoms, and elections.** Preparation of materials will be facilitated to be included in middle and high school curricula in close connection with advocacy organizations, teachers association and education governmental authorities. The Regional Component will also promote knowledge about citizen rights, freedoms, elections and other democratic institutions in university education, both undergraduate and graduate. Support will also be given to curricula on democracy and elections to be included in curricula of relevant university schools such law, public administration, political science, sociology, social work, and pedagogy. Graduate programs on human rights, democracy and elections at different universities will be supported with preparation of contents for courses as well as providing professors to teach given courses; this will build on the project's engagement with the University of St. Joseph in Beirut on electoral courses for graduate and undergraduate students. Specialization in the electoral field of knowledge and practice will be supported by granting fellowships to graduate students. E-learning courses will be

designed for students on different relevant matters with issuance of relevant diplomas. The GPECS Regional Component will liaise and coordinate with other bodies working to promote civic education among schoolchildren including UNICEF.

- **Youth participation as prevention of conflict and violent extremism:** the GPECS Regional Component will support knowledge generation, dialogues and seminars, and south-south cooperation on youth civic and political participation as a means for preventing conflict and violent extremism. Goal 16, which aims to promote inclusive and accountable governance and reduce violence and corruption, can contribute towards countering and preventing violent extremism and building peace. Inclusive and credible elections can provide the necessary political space for disaffected youth to voice their opinions and have a say in the policies and decisions that govern them.⁴⁴

Gender mainstreaming: ensure representation of young women in all project supported youth activities; promote role of young women in activities with academia; facilitate the participation of young women in regional events and initiatives; support knowledge development on role of young women in the peace and security agenda.

⁴⁴ While reflected separately in the proposal (in the narrative, workplans and results framework) many initiatives related to prevention of conflict and violent extremism under gender (output 3) and youth (output 4) will be coordinated as one exercise, with relevant activities designed, planned and implemented targeting both women and youth together.

V. RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

<p>Intended Outcome (from Strategic Plan) – Outcome 2. Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance; In particular: SP Output 2.1. Parliaments, constitution making bodies and electoral institutions enabled to perform core functions for improved accountability, participation and representation, including for peaceful transitions</p>				
<p>Outcome indicators as stated in the Strategic Plan/ Global Project Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets. Indicator 2 – Voter turnout, disaggregated by sex, age and excluded groups, and 4 – Peaceful completion of electoral and constitutional processes.</p>				
<p>Partnership Strategy: Continued close cooperation will be maintained with the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs, the representative of the UN electoral Focal Point, as well as the other UN agency partners within the Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism on Electoral Assistance (UNESCO, UN Women, UNOPS and DPKO). During Phase II, all knowledge products, ‘best practice’ or advisory positions on electoral assistance on supranational matters produced by UNDP will be developed within the parameters of policy issued by the Focal Point, and will be shared with ICMEA members for their comment. External to the UN, special efforts will continue to be made to leverage the knowledge and expertise provided by ACE, BRIDGE, the European Commission (via the work of the Joint EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance and its dedicated Joint Task Force),⁴⁵ International IDEA, EISA, IFES, INE Mexico, League of Arab States, ArabEMBs, etc.</p>				
<p>Project title and ID (ATLAS Award ID): Regional Electoral Support for Middle East and North Africa Phase II (2017-2020)</p>				
INTENDED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT TARGETS (per annum)	INDICATIVE ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	INPUTS (also see workplan)
<p>Output 1: Regional electoral capacity and knowledge enhanced Indicator 1: No. of electoral knowledge products (including BRIDGE modules)in Arabic disseminated in the region</p>	<p>Indicator 1 Y1 :2 Y2 : 3 Y3 : 3</p>	<p>1.1 Increase professional knowledge on elections 1.2 Promote the establishment of a network of Arab speaking electoral experts 1.3 Enhance capacity of the League of Arab States</p>	<p>BPPS; Regional Hub Amman</p>	<p>\$1,512,500</p>
	<p>Indicator2</p>			

⁴⁵ See www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org.

<p>Baseline: 4 (2015)</p> <p>Indicator 2: No. of electoral practitioners and experts benefited from BRIDGE trainings (Male/Female) Baseline : 85 (2015)</p> <p>Indicator 3: No. of electoral events organized by League of Arab States on elections Baseline: 2 (2016)</p> <p>Indicator 4 : % of output 1 activities that have considered gender/youth mainstreaming</p>	<p>Y1 : 85 Y2 :90 Y3 95</p> <p>Indicator 3 Y1 :2 Y2 : 2 Y3 : 2</p> <p>Indicator 4: Y1: 60% Y2: 60% Y3: 60%</p>	<p>1.4 Engage with media to raise awareness and facilitate partnerships</p>		
<p>Output 2: Profession of electoral administration strengthened through regional corporation</p> <p>Indicator 1: ArabEMBs fully established with office, staffing and operational secretariat Baseline: interim secretariat with no staffing Baseline: (2016)</p> <p>Indicator 2: No. of regional initiatives undertaken to strengthen</p>	<p>Indicator 1: Y1: No of member countries increased; events Baseline: 2 (2016) Y2: legal status complete and office space secured; staff recruited per organigram of organization Y3: Activities increased from previous years, and partnerships established and membership fees received</p> <p>Indicator 2 :</p>	<p>2.1 Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)</p> <p>2.2 Facilitate south-south cooperation and triangulation</p> <p>2.3 Promoting the creation of electoral codes of conduct</p> <p>2.4 Promoting knowledge and awareness of political and human rights and democratic processes</p> <p>2.5</p>	<p>BPPS; Regional Hub Amman</p>	<p>\$1,802,500</p>

<p>political and human rights and democratic processes Baseline: 1 (2016)</p> <p>Indicator 3: No. of regional and global institutions engaged in project activities Baseline: 7 (2016)</p>	<p>Y1: 1 Y2: 2 Y3: 1</p> <p>Indicator 3: Y1:8 Y2: 10 Y3: 12</p>			
<p>Output 3: Civic and political participation of women enhanced</p> <p>Indicator 1: No. of networks of women supported Baseline: 2 (2016)</p> <p>Indicator 2: No. of activities promoting women in elections and women’s political participation. Baseline: 2 (2016)</p> <p>Indicator 4: No. of publications and knowledge products on the role of women in elections Baseline :1 (2015)</p>	<p>Indicator 1: Y1: 2 Y2: 3 Y3: 4</p> <p>Indicator 2 Y1: 2 Y2: 2 Y3: 2</p> <p>Indicator 4 Y1:1 Y2:2 Y3:2</p>	<p>3.1 Gender equality through constitutional drafting and legal frameworks;</p> <p>3.2 Promoting regional networks of women involved in public life;</p> <p>3.3 Promoting women participation as voters, candidates, representatives, and electoral administrators;</p> <p>3.4 Promoting gender mainstreaming in parliamentary, legislative and electoral institution and processes.</p> <p>3.5 Enhancing knowledge and awareness on the role of women in conflict and post conflict situations;</p>	<p>BPPS; Regional Hub Amman</p>	<p>\$1,292,500</p>
<p>Output 4: Role of youth in the electoral cycle promoted</p>	<p>Indicator 1</p>		<p>BPPS; Regional Hub Amman; COs</p>	<p>\$1,117,500</p>

<p>Indicator 1: No. of , events, trainings, on promoting youth participation throughout the electoral cycle Baseline: 2 (2016)</p> <p>Indicator 2 : No. of knowledge products produced on youth participation Baseline: 1(2016)</p> <p>Indicator 4: No. of universities the project engaged with on democracy and elections Baseline: 1 (2016)</p>	<p>Y1:3 Y2: 3 Y3: 3</p> <p>Indicator 2: Y1:2 Y2:2 Y3:2</p> <p>Indicator 3: Y1:2 Y2:4 Y3:6</p> <p>Indicator 4: Y1:2 Y2:3 Y3:3</p>	<p>4.1 Promoting to establishing clear standards and guidelines for youth participation throughout the electoral cycle;</p> <p>4.2 Increase youth participation at the regional level</p> <p>4.3 Encourage engagement of academia on citizens’ rights , freedoms and elections;</p> <p>4.4 Enhancing youth participation as means for preventing of conflict and violent extremism.</p>		
<p>Output 5. Project operational costs</p>				<p>\$1,194,938</p>
				<p>GMS (8%) = \$553,595</p>
				<p>Total Phase II = \$7,473,533</p>

I. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

This Regional Component is an integral part of the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS) that is directly implemented by UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS). The executive of the GPECS Project is the Director of Governance and Peacebuilding based in New York and the project is implemented under the overall guidance of the GPECS Project Board, which includes donors to the Global Project and UNDP Regional Bureau. GPECS/BPPS Electoral Team are responsible for the implementation of the various components according to their functions and location. In the case of the MENA Regional Component, the implementation will be led by the Regional Electoral Advisor for Arab States under the supervision of the Governance and Peacebuilding Regional Team Leader based in the Regional Hub in Amman and the Lead Electoral Advisor based in New York. The management and implementation of the Regional Component will be closely coordinated with UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States.

The GPECS MENA Regional Component phase II will continue to operate from the Regional Hub in Amman with a team led by the Regional Electoral Advisor, and with staff that will support the implementation of the Regional Component, namely, the Regional Electoral Policy Specialist and additional support staff, as required to support Regional Component implementation.

The Regional Electoral Advisor is responsible for the implementation of all activities established by the Regional Component. He/she will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation, as well as ensuring that the GPECS Regional Component produces the outputs specified in this document, in compliance with the required standards of quality and within the specified limits of time and cost.

GPECS Project Board

The GPECS Project Board (PB) is the group responsible for making all management decisions for the GPECS; specifically, it (a) provides *overall direction and guidance for the Programme*; (b) *monitors and controls progress*; (c) *reviews each completed stage* and (d) *monitors delivery of results and objectives*. The *Project Board* comprises the following members as per UNDP programming manual guidelines:

- **Project Executive:** the Director, Governance and Peacebuilding UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support;
- **Senior Users:** Representative of the Regional Bureaus in UNDP;
- **Senior Supplier:** Donors (SIDA); other GPECS donors

The GPECS Project Board will meet in person at least once a year and more often if required. Virtual Steering Committees may also take place through the year to ensure good communication and guidance for GPECS.

To aid implementation and coordination at the regional level, the GPECS will have a Regional Coordination Group consisting of the project implementation team in the region, Sida focal point

for the project, and other partners as deemed necessary given the nature and agenda of the meeting; the Regional Coordination Group will meet at regular intervals (on a quarterly basis) or as necessary when raised by the GPECS or the Sida Focal Point for the Project. The Coordination Group will: (a) provide strategic guidance to the Regional Component in the formulation and review of annual work plans, implementation, budget allocations and setting of annual targets; (b) review policy matters pertaining to the Regional Component, the electoral process, and broader electoral assistance in the region; and (c) consider emerging issues and needs, and provide advice and feedback to the Project Management Unit.

GPECS Project Organization Structure



Quality Assurance
Gender Team Director
Policy Specialist

GPECS Project Manager
(UNDP Lead Electoral Advisor)

Regional Hub

Governance & Peacebuilding Team

Arab States GPECS Team

Regional Electoral Advisor for Arab States (P5)
Regional Policy Specialist (P4)
Admin and Finance Associates
Regional Officer
Project Analysts
Operations Officer

Other GPECS Components

Global (New York)
Electoral Policy Specialist
Gender and Elections Policy Analyst

Joint EU-UNDP Task Force (JTF) Brussels
SEEA/JTF Coordinator
Electoral Assistance Specialist

Other Regions

Regional Electoral Advisor for Asia & Pacific
Regional Electoral Advisor for Africa
Regional Electoral Advisor for Latin America and the Caribbean

Arab States - Regional Coordination Group
Implementation team,
SIDA focal point

II. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In accordance with the programming policies and procedures outlined in the UNDP User Guide, the project will be monitored through the following:

Within the annual cycle

- On a quarterly basis, a quality assessment shall record progress towards the completion of key results, based on quality criteria and methods captured in the Quality Management table below.
- An Issue Log shall be activated in Atlas and updated by the Project Manager to facilitate tracking and resolution of potential problems or requests for change.
- Based on the initial risk analysis submitted (see annex 1), a risk log shall be activated in Atlas and regularly updated by reviewing the external environment that may affect the project implementation.
- Based on the above information recorded in Atlas, Project Progress Reports (PPR) shall be submitted by the Project Manager to the Project Board through Project Assurance, using the standard report format available in the Executive Snapshot. These reports will also be regularly shared with EAD/DPA.
- a project Lesson-learned log shall be activated and regularly updated to ensure on-going learning and adaptation within the organization, and to facilitate the preparation of the Lessons-learned Report at the end of the project
- a Monitoring Schedule Plan shall be activated in Atlas and updated to track key management actions/events

Annually

- **Annual Review Report.** An Annual Review Report shall be prepared by the Project Manager and shared with the Project Board and the Outcome Board. The report will also be shared with EAD/DPA. As minimum requirement, the Annual Review Report shall consist of the Atlas standard format for the QPR covering the whole year with updated information for each above element of the QPR as well as a summary of results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level.
- **Within the project cycle:** The regional Arab States component will undergo a **mid-term review** in the second year of implementation and a **final evaluation** at the end of the project.

III. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project forms part of an overall programmatic framework under which several separate associated country level activities will be implemented. When assistance and support services are provided from this Project to the associated country level activities, this document shall be the “Project Document” instrument referred to in: (i) the respective signed SBAs for the specific countries; or (ii) in the Supplemental Provisions attached to the Project Document in cases where the recipient country has not signed an SBA with UNDP, attached hereto and forming an integral part hereof

This project will be executed by the agency (name of agency) (“Implementing Partner”) in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures only to the extent that they do not contravene the principles of the Financial Regulations and Rules of UNDP. Where the financial governance of an Implementing Partner does not provide the required guidance to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition, the financial governance of UNDP shall apply.

The responsibility for the safety and security of the Implementing Partner and its personnel and property, and of UNDP’s property in the Implementing Partner’s custody, rests with the Implementing Partner. The Implementing Partner shall: (a) put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried; (b) assume all risks and liabilities related to the Implementing Partner’s security, and the full implementation of the security plan. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of this agreement.

The Implementing Partner agrees to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml. This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under this Project Document.

IV. MULTIYEAR WORKPLAN

Output/Activity	Budget Input	Total	2017	2018	2019	2020
Output 1: Regional electoral capacity and knowledge enhanced						
1.1 Increase professional knowledge	Type of Expenses	430,000.00	197,000.00	170,000.00	63,000.00	0.00
Conferences, workshops, seminars on key electoral issues (i.e. voter registration, EDR, RMS, Electoral Security)	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	22,500	13,500.00	9,000.00	-	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	120,000	72,000.00	25,000.00	23,000.00	-
	Ticketing and visas	97,500	58,500.00	25,000.00	14,000.00	-
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	30,000	18,000.00	12,000.00	-	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	15,000	9,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	-
Establishing a Regional Training and Documentation Center for the enhancement of electoral knowledge and good practice	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	-	-	-	-	-
	Ticketing and visas	13,000	-	13,000.00	-	-
	Establishment and institutional memory costs (ICT, publications, audiovisuals)	26,000	-	20,000.00	6,000.00	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	5,000	-	-	5,000.00	-
Codification of a body of legal knowledge and practice in the region on elections	Short-term consultant (3 months)	38,000	21,000.00	15,000.00	2,000.00	-

Conducting applied research including longitudinal surveys	Research and survey services	10,000	-	10,000.00	-	-
	Translation into Arabic	3,000	-	3,000	-	-
	Reporting and design	3,000	-	3,000	-	-
	Publication+D33s, printing	7,000	-	7,000	-	-
Expanding the Lexicon and facilitating its use	Arab linguists and electoral experts	40,000	5,000.00	25,000.00	10,000.00	-
1.2 Promote the establishment of a pool of Arab electoral expertise		219,250.00	79,500.00	85,000.00	54,750.00	0.00
Developing e-learning courses on different relevant matters with issuance of diplomas	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	7,500.00	3,750.00	3,750.00	-	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	40,000.00	10,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	-
	Ticketing and visas	32,500.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	12,500.00	-
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	12,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	10,000.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,000.00	-
	Training facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	8,000.00	3,750.00	4,250.00	-	-
Enhancing pool of regional BRIDGE facilitators	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	15,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	1,000.00	-
	Ticketing and visas	16,250.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	6,250.00	-
	Printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	5,000.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	-	-
	Electoral experts/facilitators	23,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	3,000.00	-

Translate and customize BRIDGE modules to the Arab context	Bridge translation and customization/BRIDGE facilitators	50,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00	-
1.3 Enhance capacity of the League of Arab States		335,000.00	85,000.00	63,000.00	149,700.00	37,300.00
Customization and implementation of BRIDGE and other training courses South-South Corporation and Study Visits (accommodation, travel, transportation)	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	45,000.00	10,000.00	15,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	50,000.00	20,000.00	15,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	26,000.00	11,700.00	7,000.00	5,000.00	2,300.00
BRIDGE workshops	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	13,500.00	3,750.00	-	9,750.00	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	72,000.00	20,000.00	-	52,000.00	-
	Ticketing and visas	58,500.00	16,250.00	-	42,250.00	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	15,000.00	3,300.00	-	11,700.00	-
Enhancement and modernization of the electoral affairs department	ICT experts for database and institutional memory	20,000.00	-	10,000.00	-	10,000.00
	Publications, printing	10,000.00	-	5,000.00	-	5,000.00
Thematic workshops and conferences	Electoral Experts	25,000.00	-	11,000.00	9,000.00	5,000.00
1.4 Engage with media to raise awareness and facilitate partnerships		512,500.00	96,700.00	200,900.00	160,900.00	54,000.00
Conferences and workshops on role of media in elections, bringing experiences from within and outside the region	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	12,000.00	-	6,000.00	6,000.00	-

	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	64,000.00	-	35,000.00	15,000.00	14,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	52,000.00	-	25,000.00	15,000.00	12,000.00
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000.00	-	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	6,000.00	-	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Partnerships with regional media networks, media regulatory bodies, and other media entities engaged in professionalizing and strengthening the positive role of media in the region	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	2,000.00	-	2,000.00	-	-
	Ticketing and visas	8,000.00	-	8,000.00	-	-
Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5		362,500.00	96,700.00	120,900.00	120,900.00	24,000.00
Total output 1		1,496,750.00	458,200.00	518,900.00	428,350.00	91,300.00
Output 2: Profession of electoral administration strengthened through regional cooperation						
2.1 Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)		981,000.00	371,000.00	340,000.00	260,000.00	10,000.00
Operationalization of the secretariat: staffing, office, technical assistance	Recruitment of 2 staff	100,000	40,000	40,000	20,000	-
	Running costs (rent, office supplies, rent, etc.)	34,000	11,000	23,000	-	-
	Setup of secretariat (furniture and equipment, office supplies)	100,000	33,000	33,000	34,000	-
Functioning of General Assembly meetings, strategic planning, meetings, conferences	Event facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	30,000	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
		50,000	50,000	-	-	-
Support towards the increase of membership through partnerships agreements, lobbying	Travel, ticketing and visas	5,000	-	-	5,000	-

Executive board meetings (10 meetings)	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	12,000	3,600	8,400	-	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	30,000	19,800	10,200	-	-
	Ticketing and visas	25,000	15,600	9,400	-	-
Thematic workshops and conferences supporting ArabEMBs annual objectives and work plan	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	16,000	7,000	9,000	-	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	63,000	15,000	48,000	-	-
	Ticketing and visas	46,000	7,000	39,000	-	-
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	8,000	2,000	6,000	-	-
Communication: strategy and action plan, website, social media	executive board meetings and general assembly meetings	90,000	30,000	40,000	20,000	-
Facilitate partnership and engagement with other regional associations (UNIORE, ACEEEO, ECF-SADC, FEMBOSA)	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	27,000	9,000	5,000	13,000	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	144,000	48,000	20,000	76,000	-
	Ticketing and visas	117,000	39,000	20,000	58,000	-
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	27,000	9,000	4,000	14,000	-
Technical services	Advisors and consultants	57,000	22,000	25,000	10,000	-
2.2 Facilitate south-south cooperation and triangulation		132,000.00	72,000	-	50,000	10,000
Holding of conferences, workshops and events that bring together electoral stakeholders from the south; as well as triangulation between north-south countries; support south-south exchanges and study visits	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	39,000	30,000	-	9,000	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	40,000	20,000	-	15,000	5,000
	Ticketing and visas	29,000	10,000	-	14,000	5,000

	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	13,000	7,000	-	6,000	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	11,000	5,000	-	6,000	-
2.3 Electoral codes of conduct for EMBs and stakeholders		70,000	40,000	-	30,000	-
Code of Conduct for electoral professionals through consultation, workshops with EMBs and other stakeholders	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	5,250	5,250	-	-	-
Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates through active involvement of relevant stakeholders	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	28,000	15,000	-	13,000	-
Code of Conduct for CSO's monitoring elections with a methodology of active involvement of relevant stakeholders	Ticketing and visas	22,750	13,750	-	9,000	-
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000	3,000	-	3,000	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	6,000	3,000	-	3,000	-
Guidelines for monitoring abidance to the codes of ethics by electoral authorities and other electoral stakeholders	Consultant (short-term)	2,000	-	-	2,000	-
2.4 Political rights as human rights		648,500.00	273,700.00	159,900.00	190,900.00	24,000.00
Conferences, workshops, seminars, trainings bringing together electoral and human rights communities around issue of electoral rights as human rights	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	12,000.00	5,000.00	-	7,000	-

	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000.00	3,000.00	-	3,000	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	20,000.00	10,000.00	-	10,000	-
	Ticketing and visas	35,000.00	23,000.00	-	12,000	-
Knowledge and information guides on electoral rights and role of NHRIs in the electoral cycle	Consultants/experts	25,000.00	6,000	10,000	9,000	-
Conferences, workshops, seminars with Human Rights Commissions on promoting citizen rights and freedoms to participate in electoral processes	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	14,000.00	-	7,000	7,000	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	14,000.00	-	7,000	7,000	-
	Travel, ticketing and visas	20,000.00	-	10,000	10,000	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	10,000.00	-	5,000	5,000	-
Annual forum of democracy, citizenship and elections	Conference facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	12,000.00	12,000	-	-	-
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	50,000.00	50,000	-	-	-
	Ticketing and visas	52,000.00	52,000	-	-	-
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000.00	6,000	-	-	-
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	10,000.00	10,000	-	-	-

Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5		362,500.00	96,700.00	120,900.00	120,900.00	24,000.00
Total output 2		1,831,500.00	756,700.00	499,900.00	530,900.00	44,000.00
Output 3: Civic and political participation of women enhanced						
3.1 Gender equality through constitutional drafting and legal frameworks		145,000.00	30,000.00	75,000.00	40,000.00	0.00
Technical advisory services, legislative bodies and country offices on constitutional and legal reform to promote gender equality in constitutional and other relevant legal texts (e.g. electoral law)	Expert fees including her/his travel and training services	15,000.00	10,000	5,000	0	
Conferences, workshops, trainings promoting the role of women in constitution-making and legal reform	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	22,000.00		15,000	7,000	
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	40,000.00		20,000	20,000	
	Ticketing and visas	24,500.00		15,000	9,500	
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	7,500.00		5,000	2,500	
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	6,000.00		5,000	1,000	
Research and publications aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding of the role, responsibility and impact of women in legal reform	research experts	15,000.00	10,000	5,000		

	design for publication	5,000.00	5,000			
	translation of the research	-				
	printing of publications in two languages	10,000.00	5,000	5,000		
3.2 Promoting regional networks of women involved in public life		95,000.00	15000	40000	40000	0
Support to the formation and strengthening of regional networks of women involved in public life (e.g. policy advocacy CSOs).	Expert fees including travel and workshop participation	25,000.00	15000	5,000.00	5,000.00	
Thematic conferences, seminars, workshops and trainings targeting women groups	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	14,000.00		7,000.00	7,000.00	
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	30,000.00		15,000.00	15,000.00	
	Ticketing and visas	19,000.00		9,500.00	9,500.00	
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000.00		3,000.00	3,000.00	
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	1,000.00		500.00	500.00	
3.3 Promoting women as voters, candidates, representatives, and electoral administrators.		347,500.00	133,500.00	94,000.00	100,000.00	20,000.00

Workshops and trainings on gender and elections targeting electoral management bodies	Consultant/expert	60,000.00	20,000	20,000	20,000	
	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	15,000.00	8,000	2,000	5,000	
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	64,000.00	24,000	25,000	15,000	
	Ticketing and visas	44,500.00	19,500	20,000	5,000	
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	17,000.00	6,000	6,000	5,000	
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	7,000.00	3,500	3,500		
	Research and publications on participation of women in public life	Consultants/experts	35,000.00	10,000		25,000
design for publication		10,000.00	5,000		5,000	
translation of the research		11,000.00	3,000		8,000	
printing of publications in two languages		24,500.00	2,500		12,000	10,000
Guides and knowledge materials to support country level efforts on women, targeting both of assistance providers and beneficiaries	Consultants/experts	21,500.00	12,000	9,500		
	design for publication	5,000.00	5,000			

	translation of the research	6,000.00	3,000	3,000		
	printing of publications in two languages	27,000.00	12,000	5,000		10,000
3.4 Women, parliament and institutional strengthening		248,000.00	88,000.00	90,000.00	70,000.00	0.00
Support advocacy efforts (and material) for gender mainstreaming in parliamentary, legislative, and electoral institutions and processes including	Consultants/experts	60,000.00	36,000		24,000	
	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	14,500.00	4,500		10,000	
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	44,000.00	24,000		20,000	
Networking and cooperation events bringing together women parliamentarians, political leaders and party members around issues of accountability	Travel, ticketing, visas and DSA	57,500.00	17,500	35,000	5,000	
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	24,000.00	6,000	7,000	11,000	
Guides and knowledge material on good practices in enhancing women's political participation through institutional reforms and constitution-making inclusive processes	ICT services for developing e-learning courses	25,000.00		25,000		
	Consultants/experts	23,000.00		23,000.00		
3.5 Prevention of conflict and violent extremism		466,500.00	100,700.00	170,900.00	170,900.00	24,000.00

Research and publications on the links between inclusive elections and the prevention of conflict and extremism	Consultant/experts	6,000.00		2,500.00	3,500.00	
	design for publication	4,000.00		1,000.00	3,000.00	
	Translation services	4,000.00		1,000.00	3,000.00	
	printing of publications in two languages	10,000.00		3,000.00	7,000.00	
Support to regional initiatives that strengthen social cohesion, gender balanced decision making and increase civic space	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	11,500.00		4,500.00	7,000.00	
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	24,500.00		12,000.00	12,500.00	
	Ticketing and visas	17,000.00		10,000.00	7,000.00	
	Translation and interpretation services	8,000.00		5,000.00	3,000.00	
	Printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	3,000.00		3,000.00		
	Research and publication	4,000.00		4,000.00		
Gender expertise	Technical Professional Services	12,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	
Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5		362,500.00	96,700.00	120,900.00	120,900.00	24,000.00
Total output 3		1,302,000.00	367,200.00	469,900.00	420,900.00	44,000.00
Output 4: Role of youth in the electoral cycle promoted						
4.1 Regional standards and guidelines for role of youth in the electoral cycle		190,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00
Develop standards and guidelines for youth participation throughout the electoral cycle (for youth participation during voter registration, candidate	Consultant/experts	15,000.00	5,000	5,000		5,000
	Design for publication	2,500.00		2,500		

nomination process, polling and counting)	Translation services	2,000.00		2,000		
	Printing and publications in two languages	6,500.00		6,500		
Workshops, trainings, conferences on youth participation with key electoral stakeholders including electoral management bodies, political parties, parliamentarians, and election observation groups on youth participation	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	11,000.00	3,000	4,000		4,000
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	43,000.00	16,000	12,000		15,000
	Ticketing and visas	27,000.00	13,000	6,000		8,000
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	12,000.00	6,000	3,000		3,000
	Training facilitators	12,000.00	4,000	6,000		2,000
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	9,000.00	3,000	3,000		3,000
	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	7,000.00			7,000	
Support sharing of experiences of other regions on the empowerment and inclusion of youth in civic and political life, particularly in conflict and post-conflict settings	Ticketing and visas	12,000.00			12,000.00	
	Accommodation and DSA	20,000.00			20,000.00	
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	2,500.00			2,500.00	
	Consultant/experts	4,000.00			4,000.00	
Support innovative and creative methods for youth participation in the electoral cycle including the use of ICT and new social media during voter registration, candidate nomination, polling day, etc.	design for publication	-				
	Translation services	-				
	Printing and publications in two languages	-				

	social media and movie production	4,500.00			4,500.00	
4.2 Increased participation of youth at the regional level		194,000.00	90,000.00	54,000.00	50,000.00	0.00
promote and advocate for the inclusion of youth in regional electoral organizations including ArabEMBs and the electoral department of the League of Arab States	Consultant, communication, travel	5,000.00		5,000.00		
	Design printing and publications	2,000.00		2,000.00		
	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	7,000.00		7,000.00		
Support the participation of youth in regional elections observation missions	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	40,000.00	20,000	20,000.00		
	Ticketing and visas	23,000.00	16,000	7,000.00		
Support activities that raise awareness on youth participation, empower youth and facilitate networking among youth organizations.	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	9,000.00	4,500		4,500	
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	52,000.00	24,000	8,000	20,000	
	Ticketing and visas	44,000.00	19,500	5,000	19,500	
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	12,000.00	6,000		6,000	
4.3 Engaging academia on citizen rights, freedoms, and elections		256,000.00	103,000.00	83,000.00	70,000.00	0.00
Develop and implement courses, seminars and conferences with universities in the region on electoral topics	Consultant, communication, travel costs	55,000.00	15,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	
	Accommodation/DSA	43,500.00	14,500.00	14,500.00	14,500.00	
	Travel, ticketing	30,000.00	12,000.00	8,000.00	10,000.00	
	Design, publication and printing	8,000.00	2,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	
	Trainings/courses (venue, food, etc.)	6,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	

Supporting the preparation and promotion of civic education materials for schools	Research and publication, consultant, travel	16,000.00	5,000.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	
Support campaigns, electoral games, contests and other innovative approaches targeting school children	Survey/research companies/online tools	40,000.00		25,000.00	15,000.00	
	Translation services	5,000.00		5,000.00		
	Consultants/experts	-				
	Printing, publication and design	-				
Youth camps, courses and educational activities targeting schools, students, administrators with a focus on citizen rights, freedoms, elections and other democratic institutions.	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,750.00	3,750.00			
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	20,000.00	20,000.00			
	Ticketing and visas	16,250.00	16,250.00			
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000.00	6,000.00			
	Workshops printings and publications, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	6,500.00	6,500.00			
4.4 Youth participation as prevention of conflict and violent extremism		454,550.00	96,700.00	191,950.00	141,900.00	24,000.00
Research, knowledge generation, and dialogues on youth civic and political participation as a means for preventing conflict and violent extremism	Research and publication, consultant, travel, translation	19,000.00		15,000.00	4,000.00	
Support south-south cooperation on youth and peace-building	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	5,750.00		3,750.00	2,000.00	
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	22,000.00		15,000.00	7,000.00	
	Ticketing and visas	18,000.00		12,000.00	6,000.00	

	Workshops translation and interpretation English to from Arabic	5,000.00		3,000.00	2,000.00	
Workshops and trainings on inclusive and credible elections as means to engage disaffected youth	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,000.00		3,000.00		
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	9,000.00		9,000.00		
	Ticketing and visas	7,000.00		7,000.00		
	Workshops translation and interpretation English to from Arabic	3,300.00		3,300.00		
Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5		362,500.00	96,700.00	120,900.00	120,900.00	24,000.00
Total output 4		1,094,550.00	339,700.00	378,950.00	311,900.00	64,000.00
Total Output Costs (Output 1+2+3+4)		5,724,800.00	1,921,800.00	1,867,650.00	1,692,050.00	243,300.00
Operational costs						
Project running costs		365,500.00	80,000.00	120,000.00	120,000.00	45,500.00
Communication and M&E		70,000.00	15,000.00	25,000.00	5,000.00	25,000.00
Project support staff		759,638.00	230,000.00	254,000.00	254,000.00	21,638.00
<i>Total operational costs</i>		1,195,138.00	325,000.00	399,000.00	379,000.00	92,138.00
Total Programme Cost (Output costs + operational costs)		6,919,938.00	2,246,800.00	2,266,650.00	2,071,050.00	335,438.00
<i>GMS</i>		553,595.04	179,744.00	181,332.00	165,684.00	26,835.04
Total Budget		7,473,533.04	2,426,544.00	2,447,982.00	2,236,734.00	362,273.04
Total Budget		7,473,533.04	2,426,544.00	2,546,208.00	2,141,208.00	359,573.04

V. ANNUAL WORKPLAN: 2017

Output/Activity	Budget Input	2017
Output 1: Regional electoral capacity and knowledge enhanced		
1.1 Increase professional knowledge	Type of Expenses	197,000.00
Conference on money in politics and political party financing	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	13,500.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	72,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	58,500.00
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	18,000.00
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	9,000.00
Developing concept note and action plan for the codification of a body of legal knowledge and practice in the region on elections	Short-term consultant	21,000.00
Expanding the Lexicon and facilitating its use (collecting and compiling country level feedback on use of Lexicon)	Arab linguists and electoral expert	5,000.00
1.2 Promote the establishment of a pool of Arab electoral expertise		79,500.00
Developing e-learning course on human rights in elections (based on 2016 and 2017 workshop findings and recommendations)	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,750.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	10,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	10,000.00
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	4,000.00

	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	3,500.00
Enhancing pool of regional BRIDGE facilitators	Training facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,750.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	7,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	5,000.00
	Printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	2,500.00
	Electoral experts/facilitators	10,000.00
Translate and customize BRIDGE modules to the Arab context	Bridge translation and customization/BRIDGE facilitators	20,000.00
1.3 Enhance capacity of the League of Arab States		85,000.00
Customization of newly updated BRIDGE module (strategic planning) South-South Corporation	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	10,000.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	20,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	11,700.00
BRIDGE workshop on introductory module for LAS staff	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,750.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	20,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	16,250.00
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	3,300.00
Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5		96,700.00
Total output 1		458,200.00
Output 2: Profession of electoral administration strengthened through regional cooperation		
2.1 Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)		371,000.00
Operationalization of the secretariat: staffing, office, technical assistance	Recruitment of 2 staff	40,000
	Running costs (rent, office supplies, rent, etc.)	11,000
	Setup of secretariat (furniture and equipment, office supplies)	33,000

Functioning of General Assembly meetings, strategic planning, meetings, conferences	Event facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	10,000
		50,000
Executive board meetings (4 meetings)	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,600
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	19,800
	Ticketing and visas	15,600
Sharing of knowledge and expertise on voter registration (based on recommendations of 2015 VR workshop)	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	7,000
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	15,000
	Ticketing and visas	7,000
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	2,000
Communication: strategy and action plan, website, social media	website, branding, social media, newsletter	30,000
Facilitate partnership and engagement with other regional associations : Conference on Independence of Electoral Management Bodies	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	9,000
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	48,000
	Ticketing and visas	39,000
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	9,000
Technical services	Advisors and consultants, communication advisor	22,000
2.2 Facilitate south-south cooperation and triangulation		72,000
Holding of conferences, workshops and events that bring together electoral stakeholders from the south: training on political party registration and monitoring	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	30,000
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	20,000
	Ticketing and visas	10,000
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	7,000
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	5,000
2.3 Electoral codes of conduct for EMBs and stakeholders		40,000
Code of Conduct for electoral professionals through consultation, workshops with EMBs and other stakeholders	Consultant/expert	5,250

Code of Conduct for political parties and candidates through active involvement of relevant stakeholders	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	15,000
Code of Conduct for CSO's monitoring elections with a methodology of active involvement of relevant stakeholders	Ticketing and visas	13,750
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	3,000
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	3,000
2.4 Political rights as human rights		273,700.00
Conferences on Elections and the Role of NHRIs: Election Monitoring	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc)	5,000.00
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	3,000.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	10,000.00
	Ticketing and visas	23,000.00
Knowledge and information guides on electoral rights and role of NHRIs on election monitoring	Consultants/experts	6,000
Annual forum of democracy, citizenship and elections	Conference facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	12,000
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	50,000
	Ticketing and visas	52,000
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	10,000
Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5		96,700.00
Total output 2		756,700.00
Output 3: Civic and political participation of women enhanced		
3.1 Gender equality through constitutional drafting and legal frameworks		30,000.00

Technical advisory services on temporary special measures	Expert fees including her/his travel and training services	10,000
Research on TSM: collecting data and information on TSM in the Arab States	research experts	10,000
	design for publication	5,000
	translation of the research	
	printing of publications in two languages	5,000
3.2 Promoting regional networks of women involved in public life		15000
Support to the formation and strengthening of regional networks of women involved in public life (e.g. policy advocacy CSOs).	Expert fees including travel and workshop participation	15000
3.3 Promoting women as voters, candidates, representatives, and electoral administrators.		133,500.00
Workshops and trainings on Gender and SDG	Consultant/expert	20,000
	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	8,000
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	24,000
	Ticketing and visas	19,500
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	3,500
Research and publications on impact of TSMs globally and in the Arab States	Consultants/experts	10,000
	design for publication	5,000
	translation of the research	3,000
	printing of publications in two languages	2,500
Guides and knowledge materials on TSMs at national level	Consultants/experts	12,000
	design for publication	5,000
	translation of the research	3,000

	printing of publications in two languages	12,000
3.4 Women, parliament and institutional strengthening		88,000.00
Support advocacy efforts (and material) for gender mainstreaming in parliamentary, legislative, and electoral institutions and processes including	Consultants/experts	36,000
	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	4,500
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	24,000
Workshop on Temporary Special Measures - bringing together women parliamentarians, political leaders and party members	Travel, ticketing, visas and DSA	17,500
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000
Gender expertise	Technical Professional Services	4,000.00
Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5		96,700.00
Total output 3		367,200.00
Output 4: Role of youth in the electoral cycle promoted		
4.1 Regional standards and guidelines for role of youth in the electoral cycle		50,000.00
Develop standards and guidelines for youth participation throughout the electoral cycle (for youth participation during voter registration, candidate nomination process, polling and counting)	Consultant/experts	5,000
	Design for publication	
	Translation services	
	Printing and publications in two languages	
Workshop on role of youth organizations in advancing the youth agenda in the Arab States	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,000
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	16,000
	Ticketing and visas	13,000

	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000
	Training facilitators	4,000
	Workshops printings, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	3,000
4.2 Increased participation of youth at the regional level		90,000.00
Support the participation of youth in regional elections observation missions	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	20,000
	Ticketing and visas	16,000
Support activities that raise awareness on youth participation, empower youth and facilitate networking among youth organizations.	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	4,500
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	24,000
	Ticketing and visas	19,500
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000
4.3 Engaging academia on citizen rights, freedoms, and elections		103,000.00
University programs: 1) Qatar University Seminar and St. Joseph University Course	Consultant, communication, travel costs	15,000.00
	Accommodation/DSA	14,500.00
	Travel, ticketing	12,000.00
	Design, publication and printing	2,000.00
	Trainings/courses (venue, food, etc.)	2,000.00
	Supporting the preparation and promotion of civic education materials for schools	Research and publication, consultant, travel
Youth leadership event III	Workshop facilities (venue, coffee breaks, lunch, breakout rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,750.00
	Accommodation and Daily subsistence allowance	20,000.00

	Ticketing and visas	16,250.00
	Workshops translation and interpretation English and French to from Arabic	6,000.00
	Workshops printings and publications, items distributions and design (banners, materials, posters, presentations, etc.)	6,500.00
	Technical Services of Regional Technical P4 and P5	96,700.00
Total output 4		339,700.00
Total Output Costs (Output 1+2+3+4)		1,921,800.00
Operational costs		
Project running costs		80,000.00
Communication and M&E		15,000.00
Project support staff		230,000.00
<i>Total operational costs</i>		<i>325,000.00</i>
Total Programme Cost (Output costs + operational costs)		2,246,800.00
	<i>GMS</i>	<i>179,744.00</i>
	Total Budget	2,426,544.00
	Total Budget	2,426,544.00

ANNEX I: Electoral Events Calendar

Prospective Electoral Calendar MENA Region 2017-2020

Country	Type of Election	Year	Status
Algeria	National People's Assembly	2017	Tentative
Algeria	Presidential	2019	
Bahrain	Parliamentary/local	2018	
Djibouti	National Assembly	2018	Confirmed
Egypt	Presidential	2018	
Egypt	Parliamentary	2020	
Egypt	Local	Unscheduled	Tentative
Iraq	Local	2017	
Iraq	Parliamentary	2018	
Jordan	Municipal/House of Deputies	2017	Confirmed
Kuwait	National Assembly	2017	Confirmed
Lebanon	Parliamentary	2017	
Libya	Parliamentary/local	2018	
Mauritania	National Assembly	2018	Confirmed
Oman	Parliamentary	2019	
Palestine	Presidential/Parliamentary	Unscheduled	Tentative
Qatar	Local	2019	
Saudi Arabia	Local	2019	
South Sudan	Presidential/Parliamentary	2018	Tentative
Sudan	National Assembly	2020	Confirmed
Syria	Presidential/local/Parliamentary	Unscheduled	
Tunisia	Presidential/Parliamentary	2019	
UAE	Parliamentary	2019	
Yemen	Presidential	2017	Tentative

(*) Except for a few cases where elections have been called for the last quarter of 2015, electoral dates have been deduced from constitutional and legal provisions of relevant countries. In countries undergoing or under the effect of civil or international conflict election dates are mentioned as per their current legal calendar under the assumption that voting would only take place if conflict situation allowed: Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Syria, and Yemen (election dates for these countries are under question mark).

Source.-This table was researched and constructed with information from the following sources: UNDP Bureau of Policy and Programme Support; IFES, *Election Guide*; Observatory on Politics and Elections in the Arab and Muslim World, OPEMAN (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain); texts of constitutions and electoral laws from relevant countries.

ANNEX II: Risk Analysis

Risks present themselves in terms of both the highly evolving and unpredictable security, political and electoral environments of the countries in the region which Phase II will work, and in terms of the prevailing conditions at the regional level for programming. The following are potential risks associated with the implementation of the GPECS Regional Component :

#	Description	Category	Impact and Probability	Countermeasures / Management response
1	Full funding for the project component is not available	Financial	I: H P: L	Sufficient funds have been secured from the donor. If additional activities are developed, additional donors will be approached.
2	The various levels of the project component prove difficult to manage	Operational	I: H P: L	The management arrangements are in line with all global project arrangements and therefore do not constitute a particular challenge. The Regional Component implementation Team in Amman operates under the supervision of the regional team leader for Governance and Peacebuilding and the GPECS senior electoral advisor in HQ. However, the Regional Electoral Advisor will have oversight responsibilities over all the staff funded under the GPECS Regional Component. DIM has been selected given that this is the default modality for electoral assistance and given that UNDP has strong expertise and a solid reputation in the field, particularly in comparison to other potential executing entities.
3	Proliferation of conflict in the region/more civil unrest	Political, Security	I: H P: M	More conflict in countries and delay of peace agreements will make it difficult if not impossible for electoral cycles to continue as planned, which will postpone if not hinder the Regional Component's work with various counterparts and electoral experts in said countries. However, UNDP will continue to be prepared for post-conflict electoral support using the project's expertise and capacities.

#	Description	Category	Impact and Probability	Countermeasures / Management response
4	Rise of violent extremism and disintegration of civil society and democratic institutions	Political, Security	I: H P: M	As circumstances in their countries worsen, UNDP will focus on youth, women and other repressed groups to allow for their concerns to be channeled peacefully and democratically, using this opportunity to promote and increase their participation in political processes,
5	Further adoption of political measures of inclusion and spread of repressive laws against civil society and NGO work	Political	I: M P: M	Allocating support and offering the safe space for civil society to voice its opinions. UNDP will continue to promote the protection of human rights through the Regional Component's work with existing networks and accredited NGOs, as well as policies and legislations that prioritize civic rights.

ANNEX III: ArabEMBs Annual Report 2015-2016

[excerpts from the annual report below – full document available with UNDP and ArabEMBs.

The President's Foreword

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"

Lao Tzu, Chinese Philosopher, Old Chinese proverb

The idea to gather several Arab Election management bodies under one umbrella did not stem from a vacuum, it was the product of a number of intense meetings, discussions, and proposals that took place at international conferences and forums. A number of participating delegates from Arab states had expressed their enthusiasm and support for the creation of a regional network that would facilitate communication among Arab electoral management bodies and promote international practices for election management in the Arab world.

The idea behind the establishment of the organization was not to replicate other experiences, but rather to respond to the needs of the Arab region as it witnesses various changes and undergoes developments at different levels. The organization is based on the strong and deeply rooted belief of its founders in the positive impact it will have by providing democratic institutions that would enable decision makers to work in an environment that reflects the aspirations and choices of the people.

This report, presented to you today, captures this reality. It illustrates the achievements of the organization throughout its first year, where a number of activities and events were implemented, reaffirming the important role the organization plays in enriching democracy in general and the electoral process in particular. The organization's future successes will be seen in the impact it aims to have on the performance of its member electoral bodies. Expressed interest made by a number of international organizations in the field of elections, leaves us with a positive outlook towards further enhancing cooperation with other regions, and the international community

Indeed, the journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. Therefore, allow me to express my gratitude and appreciation to those who took the initial step, and to those who will continue the journey, a journey of generosity and vision, extending my best wishes for continued success.

Dr. Emad Alshadly Alsayah
President/ArabEMBs

Roadmap towards....

*The Creation of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management
Bodies (ArabEMBs)*



The Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs) was officially launched on 8th June, 2015 in Beirut, Lebanon. ArabEMBs is an independent non-political organization aimed at enhancing regional cooperation among Arab Electoral Management Bodies through the creation of a platform that facilitates networking for the exchange of information, technical expertise, lessons learned and best practices for the enhancement of the performance of electoral administration and management bodies in the region.

The organization is the first of its kind in the Arab world, created through the signing of its basic charter by the representatives of electoral management bodies from Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen. This declared its official establishment as a mechanism for coordination and networking among Arab electoral authorities, thus, joining similar organizations around the world that were created in the past thirty years. Figure (1) lists examples of existing similar associations and regional networks on elections around the world).

Existing Associations and regional networks on elections
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Inter American Union of Electoral Institutions (UNIORE) established in 1991 ▪ The Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) established in 1991 ▪ The Election Commission Forum (ECF) of the South Africa Development Community (SADEC) established in 1996 ▪ The Association of African Electoral Authorities (AAEA) established in 1998 ▪ The Forum of Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSa) established in 2010
Figure (1): examples of existing similar associations &

The creation of the ArabEMBs was the result of an intense and detailed preparation along a roadmap that began in April 2014, which took place over a year and a half. It was also made possible with the continuous support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) through the Regional Electoral Support Project for Middle East and North Africa under the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), ⁴⁶, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The support varied from the conceptualizing the idea, emphasizing the urgency for regional coordination among the

electoral bodies in the Arab states, to the technical and operational support in bringing the organization into existence, along with supporting the organization’s activities.

1. The need and justification for the creation of ArabEMBs

The idea behind providing coordination efforts among the electoral authorities in the Arab world has been around for some time. However, the absence of adequate conditions delayed any steps being taken towards realizing this goal.

Today, the development of democratic transitions and the attempts for political reform in the Arab states are leading to an increasing momentum for improving the electoral process. Members of Arab electoral authorities reconfirmed the urgency and mutual interest for creating a networking body to enhance coordination among electoral authorities in the region who share similar challenges, common cultural, linguistic and economic factors, as well as comparable experiences within their democratic practices.

Despite the differences in the respective electoral experiences in the Arab states and differences in the types of institutions entrusted with election administration, they all share common objectives and challenges in terms of the need to enhance the credibility of the electoral process to regain citizen’s confidence in its outcomes. The need to bridge and promote technical cooperation is an important step towards realizing this common goal.

2. Operational steps towards the creation of ArabEMBs

▪ The initial idea for creating a mechanism for regional cooperation among Arab electoral authorities

The idea was initially proposed during the European Commission-UNDP Joint Task Group on Electoral Assistance Annual Global Conference, which was held at the Dead Sea in April 2014. Parallel to the conference, a meeting was held to discuss and address regional concerns of Arab electoral authorities, where the participating Arab electoral authorities confirmed their mutual agreement on the need to create a regional mechanism for cooperation and networking among the electoral authorities in the Arab world.

▪ The formation of the Preparatory Committee





In June 2014, the first meeting was held to discuss the practical steps for the creation of the organization. The participants agreed on the formation of the Preparatory Committee made up of representatives of electoral commissions from Jordan, Tunisia, Sudan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt. The committee was responsible for maintaining cooperation and facilitating the preparations for the launch of the organization to take place within one year of the meeting. The Independent Election Commission of Jordan was assigned the role of the coordinating focal point of the Preparatory Committee.

- **Exposure to similar experiences**

Members of the Preparatory Committee participated in the General Assembly of the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) which was held in Bucharest/Romania in September 2015. The Assembly provided an opportunity for members to learn from and get familiar with the organization’s experience, from its creation to challenges it faced and the mechanisms the it adopted. Furthermore, members were introduced to the organization’s structure and membership categories and terms. The experience provided the Preparatory Committee with exposure to the benefits and advantages that such regional and platforms offer.

Both, Mr. Zsolt Szolonki, the Secretary (ACEEEO), and Ms. Joyce Laetitia representing the Election Commission (ECF) of the South African Development (SADEC), were invited to attend the second Committee meeting, where they shared organization’s experiences, allowing the Committee and other electoral commissions from the experiences prior to drafting the Charter and by-laws for the organization of

- **Drafting the basic Charter of the ArabEMBs of the General Secretariat Headquarters**



General of Kazembe Forum Community Preparatory their Preparatory to benefit basic ArabEMBs. **and selection**

The Preparatory Committee met in Beirut, Lebanon in January 2015 to discuss mechanisms for cooperation and to prepare the basic charter of the organization, in addition to selecting the name and emblem of the organization that best reflects its nature and objectives. The meeting concluded that the name of the organization would be “Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)”, and through voting, selected Jordan as the host country for the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the organization.

Thirteen participants representing electoral commissions from seven Arab States, namely, Jordan, Tunisia, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt and Yemen, attended the meeting. In addition to recording a high level of women participation (46%), a noticeable representation in a field that is normally dominated by men.



- **Finalization of the draft basic Charter and by-laws**

This task was completed during the preparatory meeting held at the Dead Sea, Jordan during the period of 10-12 March 2015. The meeting was attended by two representatives from each electoral commission from Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen. Women participation was at (35%).



The final draft of the basic Charter was reviewed, incorporating comments from member electoral bodies, and finalized during the meeting. The management by-laws containing logistical, financial, and administrative procedures and mechanisms pertaining to the functions of the Secretariat and the Executive Board were also finalized. The group also agreed on general provisions that would govern the work during the transitional period, as well as the date for the official launch of the organization.

- **Participation in the 12th European Conference of Electoral Management Bodies:**

Members of the Preparatory Committee participated in the 12th European Conference for EMBs, which was held during the period of 29-31 March 2015 in Belgium with the support of the Venice Commission Council of Europe. On the sidelines of the conference, a meeting of Arab electoral management bodies was held where participating representatives of Arab EMBs presented the organization and discussed modalities and mechanisms of possible support that could be offered by the Venice Commission.

- **Final preparations for the launch of the organization of Arab EMBs:**

Final preparations for the official launch of the organization were completed during the 4th Preparatory Committee meeting held in Amman in April 2015. The meeting resulted in the signature, by first initial, of representatives on the Basic Charter, confirmation of the date and place for the launch in Beirut, which was to take place on 8-9 June 2015, and agreement on the agenda and timetable for the ceremony. In addition, the group adopted the organization's Emblem, and reviewed the management, financial and transitional by-laws governing the function of the organization.



- **The Official Launch of Arab EMBs**

The official launch of Arab EMBs took place in Beirut on the 8th of June 2015 under the patronage of H.E Mr. Nehad Al Mashnoq, Lebanon's Minister of Interior. Attendees included around 100 public figures from Lebanon, delegates of participating electoral management bodies, Ambassadors of Arab States to Lebanon, officials of



Arab States for Election Affairs, Secretary Generals of similar international and regional organizations, regional representatives of organizations supporting elections in the Arab world, the resident representatives of UNDP country offices who address relevant issues, representatives of civil society organizations working in the field of elections, democracy and human rights, regional and local media representatives, and senior UNDP project officers providing support in areas relevant to elections, democracy and governance in the Arab states.

During the launch ceremony, the basic charter was signed by representatives of member electoral

management bodies (founding members) from Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen. Furthermore, parallel to the ceremony, the first General Assembly meeting and the first Executive Board meeting were held. The meetings concluded an agreement on the transitional period of 6-12 months from the date of the launch. The transitional period was an important decision for the facilitation of the transfer of authorities and responsibilities of the Preparatory Committee to the different organizational units to be formed as stipulated in the Charter and administrative by-Laws.

The Institutional Framework of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (ArabEMBs)

“A regional, independent and apolitical organization that incorporates the Arab Election Management Bodies, consisting of a legal entity that seeks to promote the abilities and enhance the performance of the Arab EMBs””Article (1) of the Charter

The ArabEMBs is established as the first cooperation and coordination mechanism in the field of elections in the Arab world, with its main goal being to reinforce regional coordination among Arab electoral management bodies and provide a platform to facilitate networking and the exchange of information and technical expertise, and to improve performance through the application of regional and international best practices related to the field of elections.

ArabEMBs, is a **regional Arab Organizaton**, created by Arab Electoral Management Bodies aiming at securing full membership⁴⁷ of Arab Electoral Management Bodies responsible for the management and/or supervision of general elections irrespective of the type of these bodies (independent/governmental/mixed), their framework (permanent/temporary) or scope of work (presidential/parliamentary/municipal elections) at the Arab world level. The organization of e Arab Electoral Management Bodies will assume responsibilities and tasks of a regional nature aiming at improving the technical aspects of electoral affairs at the level of the Arab World. Electoral Management Bodies in Arab states are the targeted and beneficiary groups of the Organization’s activities.

The organization is an **independent apolitical** organization working with authorities entrusted with election management in the Arab states (Arab Electoral Management Bodies) and is committed to taking the required measures to ensure independence from any influence of national governments and political parties. The organization seeks to enhance democracy and good governance in the Arab world through developing the capacities and specialized technical expertise of the various Arab electoral

⁴⁷Full membership refers to members within the “permanent member” category, it allows participation in the process of decision making and voting on resolutions issued by the GA. The president and members of the Executive Board are selected from these members, noting that the organization allows membership to other international, regional and similar electoral management bodies concerned with electoral affairs to join through the “partner member” category. (refer to details on membership categories).

management bodies without interference or influence by governments of states of the participating electoral management bodies.

The organization is a **professional entity** seeking to enhance institutional and professional electoral practices in the Arab region through providing opportunities for the sharing of experiences and knowledge relevant to the management of the electoral process within and outside the Arab world, exposing members to international experiences and disseminating successful Arab experiences internationally. The organization seeks to achieve its goals through organizing conferences, seminars and regional training programs and study tours; as well as organizing agendas and regional programs for visiting electoral functions, conducting research studies, issuance of professional periodic newsletters, and activate technical expertise forums.

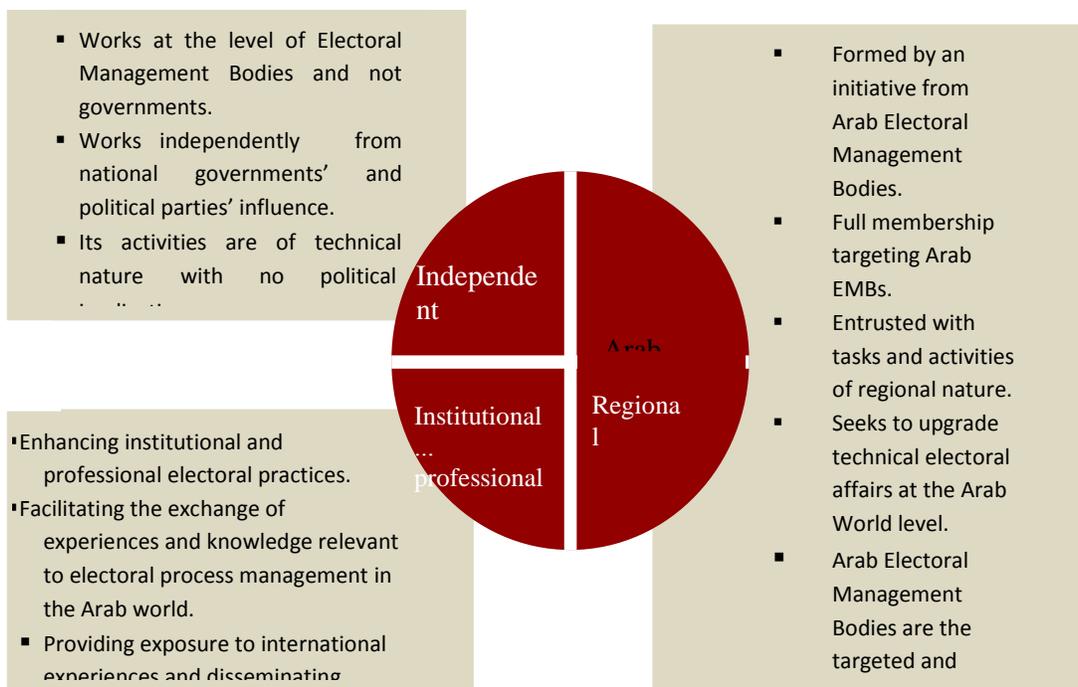


Figure (2) characteristics of the ArabEMBs

The Legal framework of the organization

The organization holds a legal status with financial and administrative autonomy; all affairs are regulated through a comprehensive legal framework that includes provisions governing the organizational structure, membership, and detailed procedures for the mechanism to establish its main organs.

The Basic Charter:

The organization of the Arab Electoral Management Bodies was created based on its basic Charter signed by the Electoral Management Bodies (founding members)⁴⁸ on the 6th of June 2015. The basic Charter is the general constitution consisting of the basic principles that govern the organization. The general Charter's provisions regulate the following matters:

1. Introducing the organization, its objectives and means to achieving its objectives;
2. Membership categories, the terms, rights and obligations of each category;
3. Responsibilities and tasks of each organ, period of member term, mandate and selection modality, in addition to mechanism of convening meetings and decision making;
4. Financial and administrative affairs, including sources of funding, areas of expected expenditure, preparation of budget, and financial management;
5. The Charter's entry into force and the required provisions and by-laws to accommodate amendments.

Executive By-laws:

The executive by-laws adopted by the General Assembly⁴⁹ incorporated detailed procedures of the general provisions reflected in the basic Charter. The by-laws specified instructions, procedures, and regulatory and administrative mechanisms pertaining to the functions of the General Assembly, the Executive Board and the General Secretariat. This included: receiving and reviewing membership applications including withdrawals, suspensions and appeals; allocating membership fees for all categories, selecting the President and members of the Executive Board, organizing meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Board, and establishing a mechanism for voting on decisions as well as delegating tasks for the Secretariat.

Transitional By-Law:

The General Assembly agreed to consider a period of 6-12 months from the launch date as the transitional phase to facilitate the transfer of authorities and tasks from the Preparatory Committee to the organizational organs and units that have been formed based on the charter and the executive by-laws.

The organization adopted five interim by-laws that embodied regulatory, financial and administrative mechanisms to govern the organization's work during the transitional phase, including the selection of

⁴⁸ Electoral Management Bodies in Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, and Yemen.

⁴⁹ General Assembly Resolution # (G/E/Q/1/2) dated 9/6/2015

the President, members of the Executive Board and the Secretariat, as well as define the scope of work and tasks of the Executive Board and the General Secretariat during the transitional period.

Strategic principles for the organization’s work:

Our Vision: “Empowering professional Arab Electoral Management Bodies.... Ensuring credible elections.... Towards enhancing the democratic process”

Our Mission: “The Organization is a professional non-political entity in the Arab region that seeks to enhance joint cooperation between electoral management bodies, develop experiences and knowledge of the electoral culture towards improving the performance of the electoral process according to international standards and criteria, and empower partners in the electoral process to actively and fully participate in the democratic process”

Our Values:

- Neutrality in the provision of services to all members and partners and ensuring equality without discrimination;
- Autonomy in decision making without any influence or intervention;
- Accountability, transparency and integrity to gain confidence of members and partners;
- Professionalism in facilitating the work of the organization in an efficient, effective, professional and responsive manner;
- Respect diversity and differences;
- Excel and innovate in knowledge management.

Our objectives:

1. Enhance joint cooperation, communication and exchange of technical expertise among members and partners;
2. Enhance in-house capacities of Arab EMBs and improve their performance;
3. Enlarge and institutionalize active membership and strategic partnerships;
4. Enforce the principles of autonomy and neutrality of electoral management bodies;
5. Produce and disseminate electoral knowledge;
6. Strengthen and sustain the organization’s resource base.

Membership Categories:

Membership in the organization exists in three categories as stipulated under its basic Charter⁵⁰, namely, Permanent member, Associate member, and Partner member.

Arab electoral management bodies that are managing general elections, whether independent, governmental, mixed, permanent, or temporary, can hold permanent, associate or affiliate status; provided they are responsible for the management, implementation, or supervision of any of the

Figure(3) Membership categories , terms, rights and responsibilities



general elections as stated in the member state legislations; that they commit to the provisions of the Charter and its by-laws; and comply with the decisions of the General Assembly and the Executive Board.

Regional and international organizations can join under the third category, partner member, as specified in the Charter.

Figure(4) Members of the Organization as per membership categories

Permanent Members:

Permanent members are EMBs responsible for the general elections in any Arab state as stipulated in its national legislation. Permanent members have the right to participate in decision making and voting on resolutions issued by the General Assembly, including the election of the president of the General Assembly and the president and members of the Executive Board. Permanent members also have the right to participate in all of the activities of the organization, and to benefit from all programs and services offered.

As of the release of this report, the organization has ten permanent member EMBs. (see figure (6)).

Associate Members:

Associate members can be any of the following electoral management bodies:

⁵⁰ Articles (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), & (9) of the principal Charter

1. EMBs who are responsible for general elections in any Arab State who do not wish to obtain permanent membership status but wish to benefit from the organization's programs.
2. EMBs who are responsible for conducting local elections in Arab States that have a permanent membership representation.

The associate member has the right to participate in General Assembly sessions, and benefit from all activities, programs, and services provided by the organization. However, these EMBs do not have the right to vote on General Assembly resolutions, nor have the right to chair the General Assembly or participate in Executive Board meetings and decisions.

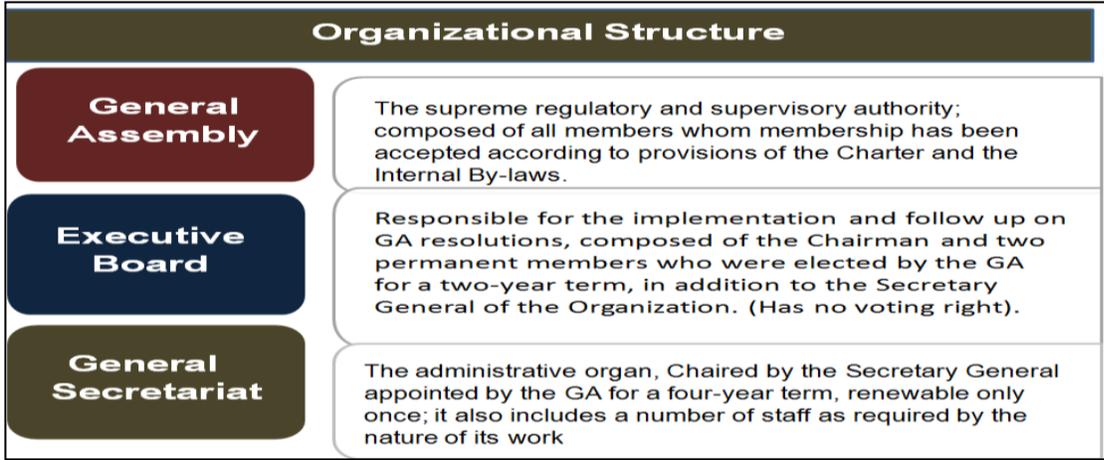
Partner Members:

International and regional organizations can become members of the organization through this category provided they are professional, independent, and accredited internationally. Furthermore, these organizations must be working in the following fields: elections, enhancing democracy, governance, human rights or any other area that falls within the scope of the organization as outlined by the General Assembly.

The organizational Structure:

The organizational structure, based on the basic Charter is composed of three levels:

- General Assembly
- Executive Board
- General Secretariat



The General Assembly (GA):

The General Assembly is the highest regulatory and supervisory authority in the Organization. It is composed of representatives of the members of the organization as stipulated in the Charter and by-laws. The General Assembly is entrusted with outlining the general policies, by-laws, plans, and budgets required to achieve the organization's goals. The GA is also responsible for approving the proposed amendments to the Charter and internal by-laws, approving membership applications and withdrawals, and ratifying agreements entered with regional and international election commissions and similar institutions.

The composition of the GA is updated annually to allow the addition of new joining members, or

Figure (6) Members of the first GA

The Organization's First General Assembly

President

Dr. Emad Alsatian Chairman of the High National Election Commission (Libya)

Members:

Mr. Riyadh El Shaka'a/ Chair of Independent Election Commission (Jordan),
Mr. Sermit amidi/ chairman of the Independent High Election Commission, (of which country?)

Dr. Hanna Nasser, Chairman of Central Election Commission (Palestine),

Ms. Faten Younes, Directorate of Political and Refugee Affairs, Ministry of Interior (Lebanon),

replacement of any member representative, based on the official request of the electoral management body or member organizations.

During the annual meeting of the GA, a consensus was reached on the selection of the President (Chair of organization) for the annual session from representatives of permanent members. In cases where a consensus is not reached, the selection is based on majority through a secret vote by permanent members.

The first GA meeting was attended by representatives of the six electoral management bodies (founding members) in Jordan, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya and Yemen. The president of the GA was selected as stipulated in the adopted interim by-laws.

Executive Board:

The Executive Board is responsible for the implementation and follow up of GA resolutions, preparation of plans, measures, and provisional budgets to ensure achieving the objectives of the organization. In addition, the executive board is responsible for proposing internal regulatory and administrative by-laws, recommending membership applications, and/ or advising or approving withdrawal requests.

The Board is composed of a Chairman, two of the permanent members elected by the GA for a two-year term, and the Secretary General (who does not hold the right to vote).

The Executive Board meets on a bi-annual basis upon the call of its chair, yet can hold emergency meetings if members collectively agree. The Executive Board assembles with the presence of the majority of members and the Chair, decisions are taken collectively or by voting if a collective agreement is not reached.

The first Executive Board was composed of members of the Preparatory Committee as per article (4/a) of the adopted interim by-law.



Figure (7) Chair and Members of the first Executive Board

The Secretariat:

The Secretariat, the organization's administrative body, is chaired by the Secretary-General who is appointed by the General Assembly for a four-year term, to be renewed once. The Secretariat is composed of a number of personnel according to the requirements of work. In accordance with article (4/b) of the interim by-law, Ms. Badrieh Al Belbisi was appointed as an acting Secretary General during the transitional phase.

First Secretariat Session:

The first session was held in Beirut, Lebanon on 9 June 2015, chaired by Dr. Emad Al-Saieh, President of the organization, and attended by representatives of members of the electoral management bodies (founding members): Mr. Riyadh Al Shaka'a, Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (Jordan), Mr. Serbest Amidi, Chairman of the Independent Higher Election Commission (Iraq), Dr. Hanna Nasser, Chair, Central Election Commission (Palestine), Ms. Faten Younis, Minister of Interior and Municipalities (Lebanon), Judge Khamis Al Dinin, Deputy Chair, Election and Referendum Higher Commission (Yemen). In addition, the meeting was attended by representatives of the League of Arab

States who were there as observers, representatives from similar regional organizations, representatives of organizations that support elections in the Arab world, and representatives of the civil society working at the regional level in areas of election, democracy and human rights.

The following topics were discussed and agreed upon during the first meeting:

- Mechanism for selecting the president after the transitional phase;
- Adoption of executive, financial, and interim by-laws;
- Setting the date and place for the next Secretariat meeting.

The Executive Board Meeting:

The first Executive Board held a total of ten extensive meetings during the transitional phase, six of which were in-person, while the rest were held virtually over Skype. (See figure (8) meetings of the first Executive Board).

The first meeting of the Executive Board was held on the 9th of June 2015, on the sidelines of the organization's official launch ceremony. The meeting resulted in setting objectives for the transitional phase, completing the institutional set up and implementing a number of initiatives that would lead to achieving the main goals reflected in its charter, namely:

1. Finalizing the infrastructure to establish the organization;
2. Promoting the organization and expanding its membership base;
3. Sustaining the relationship with partners and securing funding;
4. Conducting a number of specialized activities towards achieving the goals of the organization.

All decisions of the first Executive Board were taken during the first ten meetings and were geared towards achieving the goals of the transitional period. This annual report illustrates the success in achieving the set goals with the exception of the first goal which refers to the finalization of the infrastructure and institutional set up of the headquarters of the organization.

Meetings of the First Executive Board	No. (Ref) of Meeting	Date of Meeting	location
First meeting	(MT/1/1/2015)	9 June 2015	Beirut, Lebanon
Second meeting	(MT/1/2/2015)	12-13 August 2015	Amman, Jordan
Third meeting	(MT/1/3/2015)	8-9 December 2015	Amman, Jordan
Fourth meeting	(MT/1/4/2016)	11 February 2016	Aqaba, Jordan
Fifth meeting	(MT/1/5/2016)	20 April 2016	Dead Sea, Jordan
Sixth meeting	(MT/1/6/2016)	18 May 2016	Via Skype
Seventh meeting	(MT/1/7/2016)	26 May 2016	Via Skype
Eight meeting	(MT/1/8/2016)	14 August 2016	Via Skype

Ninth meeting	(MT/1/9/2016)	5 & 7 September 2013	Via Skype
---------------	---------------	-------------------------	-----------

Figure (8) Meetings of the First Executive

The Secretariat ensured the documentation of all meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Board and its resolutions. To that effect, a mechanism was developed for the purpose of preparing, documenting and coding all records. In addition, the Secretariat maintains an archive of hard and electronic copies.

Institutionalized Cooperation with International and Regional Organizations

One of the main objectives of the organization is to promote and institutionalize cooperation and coordination among Arab electoral bodies and to develop means to facilitate the exchange of electoral information and technical expertise. The organization as a platform for coordination with other international regional electoral networks to provide an opportunity exposure to international experiences and disseminate success stories and Arab experiences at the international level.

”It is imperative to note that “ArabEMBs”, an emerging organization established on 8 June 2015, aims at enhancing joint cooperation among electoral authorities in the Arab world.”

acts
and
for

Accordingly, efforts were exerted during the organization’s transitional phase to publicize the organization’s objectives and activities, and to promote networking with similar regional and international organizations that work on elections. To this effect, the organization was presented in six international events, and entered into two Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with international organizations working on elections.

International Accreditation

The United Nations welcomed the establishment of ArabEMBs as the first of its kind organization in the Arab world. A reference to the organization was made in article 18⁵¹ of the UN Secretary General report (A/70/306) presented at the 70th session of the General Assembly. The article made a reference to the importance of the organization as the first regional mechanism for coordination and cooperation between Arab electoral management bodies, and as a platform for networking and the exchange of information and technical expertise. t

18. UNDP continued to implement a large number of its support activities through a formal partnership with the European Union. In addition to engaging in country- specific projects, the partnership organized a global workshop on the role of electoral stakeholders and electoral administrations in reinforcing the credibility of electoral processes, which was hosted by the Independent Election Commission of Jordan. UNDP also facilitated and supported the development of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies, which was launched in June 2015 to provide a platform for regional collaboration towards enhancing electoral knowledge and capacities, and furthering the democratic agenda in the region. This is the first such regional electoral network among Arab States.

⁵¹ Report of UN Secretary General for the 70th Session of the UN GA # (A/70/306) entitled “Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization” “

Figure (9) text of article (18) of UN Secretary General # (A/70/306) presented to the 70th session of the UN GA

Furthermore, H.E. Ambassador Ahmed Bin Halle, Deputy Secretary General to the League of Arab States referred to the organization in his opening speech during the 'Forum of Electoral Management Bodies in the Arab World' which was organized by LAS and held in Cairo, Egypt.

Signing of an MOU with the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO)⁵²

On September 9th 2015, the organization signed a Memorandum Of Understanding with the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO), one of the largest regional professional independent organizations with a legal status under international law and has 24 member electoral management bodies from European countries. The association aims at enhancing free and equitable elections through building and developing the culture of transparency and accountability of electoral processes in Europe. It seeks to enhance institutional and professional electoral democratic practices in the European region by providing opportunities to exchange expertise within and outside Europe on issues related to managing the electoral process. The association organizes workshops, training sessions, and observation missions on electoral processes, and conducts research and studies on topics related to elections. In addition, ACEEEO holds an annual conference that focuses on one or more thematic topic determined by members. The conference is considered the biggest event on elections organized in Europe.⁵³

The MOU aims at consolidating cooperation between the organizations through the facilitation of networking and the exchange of knowledge and technical expertise among the two regions. The signing ceremony took place during the ACEEEO General Assembly, where the MOU was signed by Dr. Luri Ciocan, Chairman and Mr. Zsolt Szolnoki, Secretary General of the association.

⁵³. For more information on ACEEEO, you can visit: www.aceeeo.org



Signing of an MOU with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)

The organization signed an MOU with the European Commission for Democracy through Law, known as Venice Commission, on 24 October 2015. The commission is the part of the Council of Europe, that is concerned with judicial and electoral reforms. The MOU will build consolidated cooperation and present an opportunity for the commission to provide technical support to ArabEMBs in developing and customizing regional standards for elections in the Arab world.

The signing ceremony took place on the sidelines of the 104th Plenary Session of the Venice Commission, where Mr. Hisham Kehail, member of the Executive Board of ArabEMBs, and Dr. Gianni Buquicchio from Venice Commission signed the MOU.

The Venice Commission is composed of 60 member states , 47 of which are member states to the Council of Europe. The Commission provides legal consultation to member states, particularly states seeking to develop structures and legal institutions in accordance with European standards, in addition to providing international expertise in areas of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The Commission’s work focuses on three main areas:1) democratic institutions and fundamental rights, 2) constitutional and legal justice, and 3) elections, referendums and political parties.



Promoting the Organization at Regional and International Events

The organization participated in a number of regional and international events where it presented its mandate and scope of work to members of the international community and other organizations working on electoral affairs.

The 24th Annual Conference of the Association of European Election Officials which was held in Moldova from 9-11 September 2015 was attended by around 200 participants from European Electoral

Management Bodies. At the conference, Secretary General of ArabEMBs, Ms. Badrieh El Belbisi gave a presentation on the importance of the organization and shed light on the main priorities of its upcoming work.



104th Plenary Session of the Council of Europe for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) held from 22-23 October 2015 in Italy, whereby Secretary General of the organization, Ms. Badrieh El Belbisi gave a brief presentation introducing the organization of ArabEMBs.

The Sixth Forum of Latin Democracy was held in the Mexican capital, New Mexico, from 21-22 October 2015, organized by the Mexican National Electoral Institute and attended by 450 prominent figures

including ex-presidents of Republics, Ministers, Parliamentarians, representatives from Academia, and number of Ambassadors. At the forum, Mr. Safaa' Al Musawi, the Chair of the organization's Executive Board gave a brief presentation introducing the organization of ArabEMBs , highlighting its goals and strategies for supporting the various electoral management bodies in the role they play in enhancing the participation of voters in the electoral process.



The 11th International Electoral Affairs Symposium which was held from 12 – 14 November 2015 in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, was organized by the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies. At the symposium, Mr. Hisham Kehail, a member of the Executive Board, gave a brief introductory presentation on the organization of ArabEMBs and its goals.

The Forum of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) from the Arab world, held in Cairo, Egypt from 9-11 May, 2016 was organized jointly by the League of Arab States and the United Nations Development Programme- Regional Electoral Support Project. The forum provided a platform to discuss different electoral experiences and key challenges , as well as share success stories from the Arab region. The forum was attended by representatives of authorities working in electoral administration from eighteen Arab States, representatives from the United Nations Development Programme, representatives of the African and European Unions; as well a number of regional and international organizations.

The ArabEMBs participated in this forum as the first of its kind organization for regional cooperation among Arab electoral management bodies. A session was dedicated to introducing the organization through the welcoming speech of Dr. Imad Al Saiih, President of ArabEMBs, who highlighted the importance for its establishment, and presented the organization's goals, structure, membership categories, and main priorities. The president's speech also elaborated on the organization's achievements in each thematic area. The session accommodated discussions and comments by delegates of electoral management bodies participating in the forum.



Meetings with Commissioners of Electoral Management Bodies throughout the world

The organization of ArabEMBs convened preliminary meetings for cooperation and networking with electoral management bodies around the world aimed at promoting the organization and reiterating the importance of coordination among these organizations, in particular the exchange of electoral materials among them.. The meetings were held with the Commissioners of electoral management bodies from Russia, Romania, and Kazakhstan, in addition to a number of meetings with the electoral administrations in both Mauritania and Somalia.

