

# Early Presidential Elections in Yemen

Evaluation of International Assistance



**MDBF**  
Multi-Donors Basket Fund  
in support of Elections in Yemen





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# Preface

The organization of the 2012 early presidential elections in Yemen constituted the first most critical milestone of the transition agreement signed on 23 November 2011 and known as “GCC Implementation Mechanism”. The preparation of this political event in such short period of time required not only dedicated technical, operational and financial efforts, but also a strong and sincere partnership between the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER) and national and international stakeholders. Without doubt, the success of the 2012 Presidential Elections, which paved the way for new legitimacy in Yemen, is now an important chapter in the history of this country.

In this context, it is with great please that we publish the ‘Early Presidential Elections in Yemen: Evaluation of International Assistance.’ The purpose of this independent evaluation is to assess the results of international assistance to the electoral process in Yemen in terms of supporting the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda and the February 2012 electoral process. The evaluation examined the quality, sustainability, relevance, effectiveness, value for money, coordination, coherence, implementation rate and involvement of stakeholders during the 2012 early elections period. The evaluation also reviewed the impact of the donor support programme on the task of enhancing democracy and transitioning to a more stable and secure Yemen.

This evaluation was carried out in 2012 by an international team of experts on electoral cycles. It takes into account the insights of representatives from political parties, media, civil society, national authorities and international stakeholders.

The evaluation report commences by examining the political context of the 2012 Presidential Elections. Its key findings relate to the quality, coherence and involvement of all key stakeholders during the elections, focusing on human resources, training and capacity building; procurement and operations; communication, engagement and advocacy; election monitoring; engagement with media; and engagement with political parties. The report then assesses the scope of international electoral assistance to the February 2012 Presidential Elections and offers recommendations how future international development partner support could be strengthened in terms of value for money, effectiveness and sustainability.

We invite all national and international partners to make use of the report findings in their deliberations and work. We invite all Yemenis alike to renew their support for the goals of enhancing electoral administration and capacities; continuing with electoral legal reform; and increasing citizen participation in the upcoming referendum on the constitution and future elections.

Finally, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the SCER, international development partners, all participants in the interviews and discussions, the Governance Team of UNDP and the three international independent consultants (Rafael López-Pintor, Margie Cook and Delphine Blanchet) who were involved in the conduct of this evaluation and the preparation of the report.



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## Acronyms

CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
COP	Chief of Party
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DEX/DIM	Direct Execution Modality / Direct Implementation Modality
DFID	Department for International Development
DWG	Donor Working Group
EAD	UN Electoral Assistance Division
EC	European Commission
EPE	Early Presidential Election
EU	European Union
EUEOM	European Union Election Observation Mission
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GOTV	Get-Out-The-Vote
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
JEAP	EC-UNDP Joint Electoral Assistance Project
MDBF	Multi-donor Basket Fund
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
PSO	UNDP Procurement Service Office
RGP	Responsive Governance Project
SETP	Support for Elections in Transition Period
SCER	Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda
SWD	SCER Women's Department
TA	Technical Assistance
TC	Technical Committee
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP RR	UNDP Resident Representative
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WGE	Working Group on Elections
WNC	Women's National Committee
YEDC	Youth Economic Development Council
YEMN	Yemen Elections Monitoring Network
YTDPP	Yemen Transitional Democratic Process Programme
YWEF	Yemeni Women's Empowerment Foundation
YWU	Yemeni Women's Union





# Executive Summary

## Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the results of international assistance to the electoral process in Yemen in terms of supporting the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER) and the February 2012 electoral process. The evaluation examined the quality, sustainability, relevance, effectiveness, value for money, coordination, coherence, implementation rate and involvement of stakeholders during the 2012 early elections period. The evaluation also reviewed the impact of the donor support Programme in enhancing democracy and the transition to a more stable and secure Yemen.

This report has been prepared in two stages. An initial evaluation was conducted in April 2012. Following receipt of the report, further input was sought by donors. A follow-up mission in November 2012 sought additional insights from DFID and UNDP and 20 further representatives from political parties, media representatives and civil society were interviewed. This revised report builds on the initial evaluation report to address some of the specific concerns raised by donors, outlines the recommendations of the independent assessment mission and follow-up mission on the international assistance to the Early Presidential Election of February 2012 in Yemen, and the lessons learned from that process.

## Structure of the Report

- In examining the evaluation criteria outlined in the TOR the evaluation team applied the criteria to the thematic focuses of the programme, thus looking at quality, coherence and involvement of stakeholders and so on on a thematic basis as outlined in Sections 5 and 6 under the topic headings of HR, training and capacity building; procurement and operations; communication, engagement and advocacy; election monitoring; engagement with media and engagement with political parties.

- The criteria of collaboration, management and project governance structures are examined in Section 4 with specific reference to the UNDP Review of Election Support report and the ICAI Review of DFID Support to Elections report. This section also provides some recommendations to strengthen M&E approaches.
- The political and international cooperation context in which project governance structures are reviewed is further examined in Section 4 (b) i. This section also addresses recommendations regarding future collaboration arrangements.
- Specific evaluation criteria of Value for Money, effectiveness and sustainability have been elaborated further in Section 7 with specific reference to DFID and ICAI policies and evaluation frameworks and to the impact of the donor support programme in enhancing democracy and the transition to a more stable and secure Yemen supported by comments from interviewees and reference to the (limited) data available.

## Scope of International Support to the 2012 election

Support to the February 2012 elections was rapidly conceived in November 2011 following a year of unrest culminating in the signing of the Transition Initiative. The GCC Implementation Mechanism agreement of November 2011 (see political context below) calls on the United Nations Secretary General, in cooperation with other agencies, to provide ongoing assistance for the implementation of the agreement which included provision for the February election to be followed by a process of national dialogue. The UN is also requested to coordinate the assistance from the international community to implement the initiative and mechanism. A Joint UN Needs Assessment Mission was deployed in early December 2011 following the signing of the GCC Agreement which resulted in the immediate articulation of the Project Document rapidly agreed to by donors on 21 December 2011. It is in this context that the international community provided support to the February 2012 early Presidential elections through the following funding mechanisms:

1. The UNDP Multi-Donor Basket Fund: a pooled contribution including funding from Denmark, Germany, Japan, United Kingdom, UNDP, and the UN Peace Building Fund. This fund was initiated in November 2011 for the February 2012 election.
2. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding channeled through its implementing partners, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). Under the Yemen Transitional democratic Process (YTDP) Programme and Responsive Governance Programme.
3. The Joint Electoral Assistance Project (JEAP) funded by the European Commission (EC), through UNDP. This Programme actually commenced in July 2008. After setbacks due to the fast-changing political environment, JEAP, in its last months, was reconfigured to partner closely with the multi donor basket fund and the USAID initiatives in a collaborative effort of support. It is this last period of JEAP that is the subject of this evaluation.

## Unique Aspects of February 2012 election

Although the donor coordination processes of the international support to the February 2012 election are comparable with experiences elsewhere as explored further in the report, the event was unique in a number of ways.

First, as an uncontested election, some of the dimensions attaching to a competitive process were not present and lessons learned are perhaps not as comprehensive as they might be from a traditionally competitive event. For example, issues concerned with the balance of media reporting and equitable access to media air time and space did not apply, but have in the past and will in the future. The legal and regulatory framework for media is dreadfully out of date; there is no agreed Code of Conduct for media in relation to elections (that media consulted are aware of) and there is a need for training of journalists and broadcasters in all aspects of election coverage as well as the introduction of a systematic media monitoring process. Another example pertains to perceptions of the SCER's independence and impartiality. Some stakeholders have projected that, despite the SCER's commendable administration of the election, the process of appointment of Commissioners and perceptions of the political loyalties of the SCER staff could raise doubts in a future, more competitive political context as to the impartiality of SCER. Further, time did not allow the quality of the voters register to be reviewed. Many stakeholders, especially media, civil society and political parties, require the old voters register to be completely abandoned in favour of a more trustworthy and reliable future system of registration, citing the VR as a tool of electoral manipulation.

Second, preparation time for the elections was an unprecedented and extremely tight three months, which put great strain on the project in critical areas of procurement and recruitment. Fast track measures were successfully implemented by UNDP to overcome these challenges, thus avoiding potentially devastating delays and donors have requested that such measures become standard operating procedure. Time constraints also meant there was a deliberate absence of focus on capacity development in favour of operational delivery. Future election support must however embed a focused capacity development strategy that, for example, focuses on SCER's own data collection and management capacity. Media representatives have cited the absence of reliable historical results data as a grievous gap in SCER's capacity.

Third, again due to the rapid timeframe, some aspects of the election preparation and management were simply unable to be addressed. For example it is recognised, as many stakeholders have commented in the course of the evaluation, the voters register is both unreliable and mistrusted. Nonetheless, interlocutors agree the election was not compromised by this factor; measures were adopted to enable unregistered voters to cast a vote and consideration is already underway as to how the issue of the establishment of a more reliable voters register can proceed.

Fourth, the response from the international community to the call for funding was very swift, again ensuring that no fatal delays were experienced.

Finally, the UN's Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and its Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) had a more prominent presence in the formulation of the Project Document than is often experienced in electoral support Programmes and worked closely with UNDP throughout the process. Given the role of the Special Adviser in the National Dialogue process and the fact that elections and constitutional referendum are integral to the transition process, a continuing close collaboration between the UNDP-managed election project and the Office of the Special Adviser especially in areas of policy, planning, electoral law reform, strategy, risk assessment and mitigation and planning is recommended through the creation of formal or informal linkages or structures. These are discussed in more detail in Section 4 (b) below.

## Donor Collaboration

The evaluation found that the Yemen 2012 experience in terms of donor collaboration and governance of the basket fund compares favorably with experiences elsewhere and reflects many of the recommendations of both the UNDP and DFID in their respect reviews of support to election processes. Section 4 (b) ii below elaborates on these external investigations and the contextual Yemen experience in more detail.

The Table at Annex 1 outlines the thematic areas of assistance, donors involved, recipients of assistance, objectives per area, implementing agencies, outcomes, timeline and impact.

## M&E Aspects

The evaluation found a weakness in the absence of measurable baselines and reliable data and recommends that any future project embed a robust M&E and Learning framework; be subject to continuous evaluation against established milestones and progress indicators and that tools for the measurement of attitudes, behaviours and performance delivery be carried out as part of the project implementation strategy to ensure future measurability of progress, impact and results. It is recommended that future project management tools also be mindful of donor criteria of evaluation for effectiveness and value for money and that in collaboration with donors, such indicators be agreed in the early stages of the project. Section 7 below elaborates on some of these criteria in an effort to provide some contextual understanding and learning of emerging standards of assessment.

The evaluation focused on five other key areas: human resources, training and capacity building; procurement and operations; communication, engagement and advocacy; women's participation and election monitoring. The report examines the content of assistance in each of these areas, reflects on lessons learned and makes a number of recommendations for consideration.

*Recommendations on M&E approaches are elaborated in Section 4 (b) ii on pp 26-27.*

## General Conclusions

The early presidential elections were intended to be a key measure of the transfer of power, and necessary for the establishment of an interim government to safeguard the transition process.

Consultations with stakeholders carried out in the initial and follow-up evaluation missions universally found that the election, despite being uncontested and therefore seen as rather atypical, provided a critical circuit breaker to escalating tensions in Yemen; have opened the way for the national dialogue process and have confirmed confidence in elections as a democratic tool. Stakeholders also agreed unanimously that the election was managed competently and efficiently and enjoyed a high voter turnout and uncontroversial result.

## Evaluation Limitations

Finally, the report notes two limitations on the evaluation process; the first being the impact of the fragile security situation in Yemen both on observation and access to information and perspectives from outside Sana'a. The absence of any international observer mission has an immediate impact on the amount of data available in assessing the impact of an electoral event, especially when domestic observer groups are still relatively immature in their evaluative experience. Additionally, this report

notes the unavoidability of its Sana'a-centric focus and acknowledges that first-hand representative feedback from other regions has not been available as the security situation in Yemen precludes travel outside the capital. Being the capital, Sana'a has greater access to media, a more literate and better informed population; better access to transport and accessibility to polling stations and possibly a more progressive dynamic in relation to the participation of women in society compared with more remote regions and smaller communities where logistic, cultural and traditional barriers are more challenging. It is recognized that the report is unable to fairly represent the situation of these areas or those directly affected by security issues - especially in the south - and that election planning including voter education, operations planning and mobilisation needs to be cognisant of these issues as planning for the future moves forward.

The second limitation relates to the absence of baseline data, opinion polling and statistics on voter registration and turnout. The only available statistics at the time of writing the first evaluation report were those relating to voter registration, ballots cast (valid and invalid ballots) and voter turnout at the national level. The essence of this information is contained in a table within the report. In May 2012, following the initial evaluation, IFES published the results of a nationwide survey on the 2012 Presidential Election in Yemen. The survey aimed to elicit citizen's opinions of various issues and levels of confidence in the 2012 election process. This survey has helped inform general observations and has confirmed views expressed by stakeholders both in the initial and follow-up missions

## Evaluation Process and Methodology

The initial assessment team comprised senior electoral experts Rafael López-Pintor (Spain) as team leader, Margie Cook (Australia) and Delphine Blanchet (France). The assessment methodology included documentary analysis; quantification of deliverables and outcomes of assistance activities whenever appropriate and feasible; and interviews with 40 persons from the donor's missions, implementing agencies, SCER electoral administration authorities and operational staff, and civil society organizations. The team deployed in Yemen on April 18-30, 2012. Following receipt of the report, additional comment and inputs were sought by donors. A follow-up mission was therefore conducted in November 2012 and carried out by Margie Cook during which interlocutors from DFID, UNDP and 20 further representatives from political parties, media representatives and civil society were interviewed in individual and small group consultations. This revised report builds on the initial evaluation report to address some of the specific concerns raised by donors as noted in this Executive Summary.



## Political Context of the 2012 Elections

Since the establishment of the new Republic of Yemen (ROY) on 22 May 1990, and the devastating civil war of 1994, the Government of Yemen (GoY) engaged in efforts to reform the management of the national economy, as well as to strengthen democratic structures and processes. The introduction of a multiparty system, the creation of an independent electoral body, the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER), as well as the promotion of civil society participation and the giving of full legal rights to women in order to facilitate their participation in the political life of the country were important steps toward democracy building. Central to these efforts have been the holding of several electoral processes.

Yemen's second presidential election was held in September 2006, and was considered largely free and fair. The election campaign was marked by the relative freedom afforded to the press and the raucousness of the debate. Importantly, the election was unusual in the region in that the incumbent head of state was presented with a real challenger. The Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), a coalition of parliamentary opposition parties (Islah, Yemen Socialist Party, the Union of Popular Forces, the Nasserite Popular Unionist Organization, the Arab Socialist Baath Party, and the Al Haq Party) agreed to put forward a single candidate, Faisal bin Shamlan, who was well respected in the country for his stance against corruption. The election saw Mr. Saleh return to power with a reduced majority of 77.2% of the vote, down from 96.3% in 1999, and Mr bin Shamlan received 21.8 % of the roughly 6 million votes cast. The EU election monitoring mission endorsed the poll, calling it an "open and genuine contest" and declaring it a major milestone in the democratic development of Yemen. Although the EU observers voiced some concerns over "procedural irregularities", they judged the voting process as "good or very good" in over 82% of polling centers.

## Stalled electoral processes in 2009

Since the 2006 electoral process however, many conflicts between the Ruling Party and Opposition surfaced. In February 2009 via the “February Agreement” the Yemen Parliament voted to extend the term of the current Parliament by two years with a view to discussion of and a referendum to amend the constitution to revise the electoral system and reform the electoral legislation. The referendum was expected in 2009 but was not conducted furthering distrust between the ruling and opposition parties.

## The 2011 Uprisings

In the wake of other mass protests in the Middle East, popular demonstrations started in Yemen in January 2011. These demonstrations initially focused on unemployment, poor economic conditions and corruption, but grew in scope to include open calls for the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Mindful of the potential for civil unrest and its political consequences, in April 2011 the United Nations appointed Mr Jamal Benomar as Special Adviser on Yemen. With the prospect of a political crisis looming, talks were initiated and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Transition Initiative was signed in November 2011, brokered by the GCC with United States (US) and European Union (EU) backing. The GCC Agreement envisioned the safeguard of the unity, security and stability of Yemen and respect for the aspirations of the Yemeni people for change and reform. It also called for a smooth and safe transfer of power to avoid anarchy and violence and for an immediate stop to the protests. The implementation steps of this plan, known as the “GCC Mechanism”, included the transfer of power to the Vice President and the formation of a government of National Unity. In accordance with the GCC Mechanism, Phase 1 required the Vice President to call for presidential elections within 90 days. This date was set for 21 February, 2012. In accordance with the terms of the GCC Mechanism, the Vice President issued a decree appointing a Prime Minister from the opposition, tasking him to form a government of National Unity. The February 2012 election was unique in that it was, by agreement, uncontested. Many of the dimensions and challenges of a traditional electoral contest were thus absent in 2012. The Vice President also set up a Military Committee for establishing safety and security.

The United Nations has been closely engaged in assisting to broker negotiations, dialogue and a peace agreement between the various stakeholders and political interests in Yemen through the office of the Special Adviser. Throughout 2011 and subsequently, the Special Adviser has worked closely with all stakeholders on transition processes including support to the November 2011 Agreement. The rapid response of the international community to support the February 2012 elections decision provided immediate material backup to ensure the Agreement was able to be progressed. At that time UNDP stepped in with international assistance, expert electoral technical advice and a targeted Programme of support to the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER) to ensure the successful conduct of the elections. It is important to note that from the date of the Agreement in November, only three months was provided to prepare for and conduct the election. This placed great stress both on the SCER, on the international community and on UNDP as the implementer of the international assistance, particularly with regards to the recruitment of expert assistance and in support to procurement processes for voter education and awareness through to the material needs of the SCER.

In phase 2 of the GCC Mechanism, which began following the 21 February 2012 election of the new president, the Government of National Unity will be expected to take steps to undertake constitutional reform, electoral reform, a conference of national dialogue, and new elections according to the terms of the new constitution. Parallel with these developments, UNDP is elaborating the next Phase of the election support Programme which will be advised in part by this evaluation and its recommendations.



# Background, Objectives and Methodology

## Background

This evaluation is a review of the effectiveness of the international assistance to the Early Presidential Election in Yemen through three separate projects: a) The Joint Election Assistance Programme (JEAP) – particularly the support to the February 2012 elections; b) The Support to Elections during the Transition Period (SETP); and c) The USAID funded support to the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). An independent assessment was requested to UNDP by all donors involved: EU (in relation to JEAP); DfID (UK), Japan, Germany, Denmark and USAID and was exclusively limited to assistance provided for the February elections. The assessment team was composed of team leader and senior electoral expert Rafael López-Pintor (Spain), and senior experts Margie Cook (Australia) and Delphine Blanchet (France) (see team members' bios in Annex 4). The assessment team was deployed in Yemen during April 18-30, 2012.

JEAP was a European Commission (EC) /UNDP project with the EC. Commencing in 2008, it fell into two distinct phases marked by a dramatic revision of the Project Document signed in October 2010 after an operational suspension for the previous year based on the deferment of the 2009 elections. Towards the end of 2011 the JEAP Board extended the project to June 2012 to enable more targeted support to the February 2012 election however circumstances leading to the establishment of the SETP project overtook this vision and JEAP's conclusion date was brought forward to end March 2012.

SETP was established following a Needs Assessment Mission in early December 2011 with the Project Document signed on 21 December 2011. It embeds a two-phase approach, the first phase being support to the conduct of the 2012 Presidential election having recently concluded. The second phase

will commence following this evaluation, taking on board lessons learned and recommendations. SETP overlapped to some extent with JEAP which had been re-oriented towards electoral support. SETP effectively assumed the lead in election event support.

SETP enjoyed a level of collaboration and cooperation with the two USAID election support projects being implemented through IFES and NDI. USAID requested that these initiatives be embraced within the scope of the evaluation.

## Objectives

"The main objective of the external evaluation is to analyse the results of donor support of the electoral process in Yemen in terms of supporting the SCER and February 2012 electoral process. The evaluation examines the quality, sustainability, relevance, coordination, coherence, implementation rate and involvement of stakeholders during the 2012 early elections period. Further, the evaluation reflects on the impact of the donor support programme in terms of the quality of the early elections and how they fit in the process of enhancing democracy in Yemen and transition to a stable and secure Yemen." There is one element on the ToR for this mission, which could not be fully covered. It refers to detailed data collection on voter registration and turnout. The only available statistics at the moment are those relating to voter registration, ballots cast (valid and invalid ballots) and voter turnout at the national level. The essence of this information is contained in a table within one of the sections of this report.

## Methodology

The scope of this assessment is limited to the early February 2012 election. It is not including an analysis of the electoral process as such, but is limited to the international assistance to the process. In this regard, some topical items included in the ToR of the assessment mission could not be covered due to either unavailability of information (e.g. voter turnout broken by gender or region) or the impossibility of collecting relevant information throughout the country for security or mobility reasons as well as the timeframe on which the assessment team was available. Thirdly, an applied approach was envisaged whereby the assessment was intended as a tool for further improvement at further assistance experiences in Yemen based on lessons learned and practical recommendations.

From this perspective, a standard assessment methodology was applied by using the following main research assessment tools: a) documentary analysis in trying to get a clear idea about the objectives and expected outcomes of the three different projects under consideration as it is against these objectives and outcomes that actual performance had to be assessed (see list of documents consulted in Annex 2); b) whenever appropriate and feasible, quantification of deliverables of certain support activities; c) interviews with relevant persons representatives of the main stakeholders (donors, implementing agencies, SCER authorities and operational staff, and CSOs). Holding interviews out of Sana'a was not considered for security and short time reasons (See list of persons interviewed in Annex 3).

While doing documentary analysis and conducting interviews, special attention was paid to the facilitating elements as well as main challenges encountered for performance among the three main stakeholders of assistance: donors, recipients and implementing agencies.

A table was compiled by the assessment team to be used as a base line for the assessment exercise and further structuring of this report. The table includes the more relevant information regarding the different thematic areas of assistance, donors involved, recipients of assistance, objectives per area,

implementing agencies, outcomes, timeline and impact. A look at this table is recommended before reading of the main body of the report. (See table in Annex 1).

A follow up to the initial April evaluation was conducted in November 2012 to address some gaps in the initial review. This report is therefore an expanded version of the April 2012 assessment.



# Key Findings

## Donor cooperation

1. Early coordination among donors was crucial to the success of the assistance undertaking. Frequent communication, discussion and a bit of planning among donors existed at least since eight months prior to the time when an election was announced. A Donor Working Group (DWG) at the highest level existed as well as an Election Working Group (EWG), which had been in place for years. From the DWG, the political will and funding energies were infused into the more operational group (EWG).
2. Looking forward, a main recommendation is to continue with the spirit of engagement and cooperation among donors. This would include encouraging both the DWG and EWG to remain operational regarding electoral issues during the transition process, no matter how far in time the next election might be. The National Dialogue and Military Restructuring belong to the Yemeni political actors, and might be subject to uncertainties and time delays hard to assess. Contrarily, elections related activities supplemented should benefit from continued international support (e.g. civil registries and voter lists, civic education, women empowerment, capacity building of the SCER, training of its middle management). The donor community should remain as engaged as they were during the Early Presidential Election.

## UNDP role

3. An agency like UNDP could get quickly into operations because it was already operating in the field. UNDP was available to put together a diversity of efforts and define goals and activities related to funding towards those goals. The decision by UNDP on the use of some more flexible

and efficient instruments like Delegation of Authority and Fast Track, complemented by bringing in senior people with experience of electoral cycles in order to become more operational was a leap forward at implementation. The agreement between donors on a common results framework was also instrumental for the effectiveness of this cooperative undertaking. There was unanimous recognition among both donors and SCER of the role played by UNDP as implementer of electoral assistance. Consistently with this state of opinion, an interest of continuing cooperation within a similar institutional framework was also expressed. This notwithstanding, some donors manifested their desire and expectation for further transparency when dealing with some specific issues.

4. UNDP expressed gratitude for the generosity, openness, flexibility and understanding by donors regarding an operation to be undertaken under exceptional conditions. UNDP has improved its public image among donors and in the country. An effort should be made in sustaining this fresh image. In the context of the electoral assistance field, UNDP continues to be the agency in a better position to coordinate and funnel assistance from a variety of donors.
5. For a future electoral cycle, assistance funds should be set aside in a flexible framework. Generally in transitional environments, earmarking funding by electoral items is not operational since many things may change in a short time period. Funding shall be allocated according to broad criteria on areas of assistance rather than by specific activities, even less by items. An open framework is necessary within which changes can be introduced depending on circumstances: timing, unexpected political events, availability of certain resources in and out of country, etc. In this sense, the multi-donor basket fund approach (that allows for a suitable combination of trust fund, cost sharing and in-kind donation - although the latter was not implemented in this project) proved generally useful.
6. At emergency situation, strategic planning is almost by definition absent as things are volatile and anticipation of events becomes highly unreliable for operational purposes. Once the emergency situation is surmounted, both donors and implementing agencies as well as SCER should operate based on at least some basic planning; if not strategic at least managerial and operational planning. The project's UNDP internal management and donor coordination architecture reflected this priority.
7. Given the interconnectedness between the election support process and the national dialogue and other aspects of the transition process, it will be critical that effective linkages and lines of accountability and communication are forged and agreed between the Office of the Special Adviser on Yemen as the UN's political lead in the transition process, and UNDP as the lead in election project support. To ensure harmonization in the UN approach overall.

## Human resources, training and capacity building

8. From the Needs Assessment Mission which commenced on 1 December 2011 to the February 2012 project implementation was conducted in a record short period of time with few dedicated management and technical staff and few targeted short term technical support. Besides the COP, IFES for instance recruited on a short-term basis an international consultant specifically for its security component and a media expert for the media center component. The SETP functioned with an election coordinator, an election operations expert, a civic education expert, a media expert and a short term IT consultant. JEAP team comprised of one international CTA and four locally recruited senior advisors.

9. The openness of the SCER is also to be praised at discussing support activities with donors and implementers. More importantly SCER offered an open door to the different project international staff. This included giving office space to staff from JEAP, SETP and IFES within the SCER premises. The spirit of consultation with SCER on the recruitment of key project staff as foreshadowed in the project document should be followed through. The international TA had unimpeded access to the SCER, which expressed gratitude for the quality and team work of the international advisors in the pre-election period.
10. A main strength of the Yemen electoral administration is that it should be considered a rather sustainable organization, in spite of the fact that it went through different names and organizational shaking-ups over its near two decades of existence. It is the oldest electoral commission in the Arab World. It remained fully operational largely due to continuing international assistance of varying degrees. Nevertheless, the structure and staffing of SCER are considered among its top authorities as burdensome, and needed of reform. A smaller and more specialized staff is needed. Consequently the need for training and capacity building is apparent. This should include both the members of the governing body and the technical staff.
11. As another weakness on the recipient side, training of security personnel and poll workers at the polling stations was deficient as comes out from different opinions from both inside the SCER and domestic observers reporting. Inconsistencies in following procedures as well as at the layout of polling stations were frequently observed. In this regard, the SCER should ensure that adequate training is provided to poll workers recruited under the legal framework.
12. The fact that the past elections were held under emergency circumstances should not let aside the importance of planning. Main recommendation is about the necessity of strategic, organizational, management and operational planning. While the SCER is familiar with the electoral procedures and processes there is some capacity deficiency which would benefit from further partnerships at international levels. Under emergency situation, only a modicum of operational planning may be possible and effective. Nevertheless, within an electoral cycle, and even under the uncertainty resulting of a transitional period, proper strategic, organizational and managerial planning is a necessity.

## Procurement and operations

13. Procurement represented a large proportion of the international support to the process for two projects directly supporting the SCER, the IFES project (around 68-70 % of its budget) and the SETP project (71.7 % - which does not include media time purchases). Strong time pressure had to be faced by all implementing agencies as well as SCER.
14. There has not been overlapping of expenditures from the different projects thanks to the efficient coordination between the projects teams as the list on procurement was shared among projects. On the contrary, the strategy of complementary and "gap-filling" among projects showed a great success. This good practice should be maintained.
15. While a close cooperation with the beneficiary is a standard good practice in defining the needs in terms of procurement, those should be based on a defined strategy and consequent operational plan. Given the short amount of time available, this was not possible for the Early Presidential Election (EPE) but should be implemented in the future. The SCER would benefit of more exposure

to training and capacity building experiments in terms of strategic and operational planning, which would include election procurement planning and inventory management.

16. The choice of the level of quality of an ink is a fraud mitigation process depending on factors such as the level of budgetary resources, level of public trust in the electoral process and particularly of trust in the voter register. In the case of the 2012 elections, the level of trust in the voter register was low. Due to decisions by the SCER to allow voters who are not on the register to vote with one form of identification, inking was the main safeguard against multiple voting. This explains why the SCER opted for a very high quality of ink (or better said, an ink with a very high percentage of silver nitrate) that resulted very expensive (USD\$1.2 million) whilst this level of concentration of silver nitrate (25%) would not have been necessary.
17. However, whilst the EU EOM 2006 report indicated that the ink procedures were correctly applied in the vast majority of the observed polling stations (92%), reports from domestic observers (YEMN) on the 2012 presidential election indicate that the check was sometimes not consistently done (11% of observed polling stations) or the ink was not applied or the print of the voter's thumb was not taken (14% of the observed polling stations). One reason lies probably on the fact that the polling staff was new in its vast majority, and they were political appointees. Two recommendations are pertinent here: a) Given the impact on the electoral budget, the necessary percentage of silver nitrate could be re-assessed; and b) polling station staff should receive more training on procedural matters.
18. There was a serious issue with the indelible ink initially procured by UNDP for the 2008 elections, which became not re-usable for later electoral events. All main stakeholders are now aware of this problem, and there is no need to abound on it. Nevertheless, as a lesson learned, it should be noticed that the handling of problems like this one may create a confidence gap between donor and provider as well as between provider and recipient. In this case, UNDP has confirmed that no donor would bear the consequences of the ink issue.
19. On retrieval and storage of electoral materials, the SCER looks in a better shape than many other electoral bodies working under similar circumstances. As of now, the SCER has preserved almost all ballot boxes from previous elections as well as 20.000 metal screens and the 350 laptops, intended to be used in the special polling centres reserved for non-resident voters, which were left from a total of 385. But some items SETP purchased were not necessary or were underused.
20. An inventory of SCER warehouses and inventory control systems should be conducted.
21. There is an almost universal lack of confidence in the voters register and the legal framework pertaining to registration and the electoral process generally. Consideration must be given to the creation of a new viable register, taking into account concerns expressed in the UNDP Review of Election Support and the ICAI Review of DFID's Electoral Support of value for money, the use of appropriate electoral systems and technologies and the sustainability of systems outside continuing external financial and technical support. Interlocutors have high expectations of a new register linked to a (biometric) national ID card. In the timeframe available this may be ambitious and some mitigation of expectations for 2014 will be necessary.
22. Future interventions should be mindful of Recommendation 8 of the UNDP Review of Electoral Support which recommends a UNDP review of the chain of support, addressing procedural and efficiency issues especially as they relate to streamlining procurement and recruitment processes.

## Communication, engagement and advocacy

23. Along with procurement of election materials, communication, engagement, outreach and advocacy were amongst the most visible outputs of all three projects delivering an intense, multi layered, innovative, creative and high-impact set of interventions taking an encompassing approach to the concept of media and moving beyond traditional print and electronic media engagement to also include billboards, theatre, mobile media, music, posters, face-to-face engagement in Change Squares as well as SMS, websites and other social media initiatives.
24. This area benefitted greatly from the coordination of activities between JEAP, SETP and IFES with the latter taking responsibility for the setting up and equipping of the SCER media center along with election-focused media training and engagement with SCER and support to accreditation while JEAP and SETP concentrated on messaging and media space and time production and placements for voter awareness and support to the CSO sector.
25. Civic education campaigns before and for this election clearly had a positive effect on voter mobilization in general and of women in particular. Voter education for this election was more intensive and of better quality than in previous elections in the opinion of experts who have been in the country for a long period of time. Concerning voter education campaigns, all the successful components of the campaigns should be retained in order to capitalize on them at Phase 2 (for example the motto "Your vote protects Yemen" plus the motivational song, 'Sawa Nebniha', which became very popular.)
26. The skills building, education, media strategies and participation of women, young people and other communities that will be required in the ongoing national dialogue and transition process should build upon the momentum, relationships and successes of the election period and should proceed without significant gaps .
27. Regarding media relationships, the SCER seemed not to be fully aware of the importance of media relationships. They started quite late to engage in media activities until a media center was established 10 days prior to the elections. Technical assistance that leverages the pre-election experience; focuses on reform of the approach to media engagement in SCER; builds on the new vision encouraged by this election experience, and that enhances the SCER's independent, professional, and transparent capacity in media strategy and planning and the use of media as a tool of education and social change is a recommended focus in Phase 2.
28. At this time, taking into account other priorities of the transition process, the evaluation team is not convinced of the need for the establishment of a permanent media center.
29. Relationships between international stakeholders as well as the SCER with political parties have been an almost empty chapter in the past elections. Closer relationship with parties as the main actors of the electoral competition should be looked for.

## Women participation

30. Deeply embedded cultural, traditional and other impediments to the participation of women in politics are a deterrent to women nominating and standing as candidates and engaging in public life, despite the increasing rates of the participation of women as voters. Women's participation

was therefore a core pillar of the JEAP Programme from the outset, and the use of media and other outreach strategies to encourage the participation of women in the elections was a deliberate short term focus of the JEAP and SETP as well as NDI. In its voter education/GOTV campaign, NDI placed heavy emphasis on women participation, and in its training of monitors NDI ensured a 50% gender balance with YEMN.

31. While SCER has a Women's Unit, it does not have the status of a department or section but rather is an office attached to the office of the Chairman. Gender mainstreaming is not reflected either in the staffing of the SCER, in the gender balance of SCER appointees or in its Programmement. A significant impact of the targeted support to women's participation both in the JEAP pillar and more so in the focus on women in the pre-election education, media and awareness raising activities, has been to shine the spotlight on the need to pay attention to SCER's institutional approach to women's participation including the harmonization of initiatives, policies and approaches within SCER.
32. Regarding public communication, outreach and advocacy as they pertain to the participation of women a number of activities have been identified. While the media and awareness activities afforded creative, positive visibility and prominence to women, unfortunately the perception of a tokenistic longer-term support to women's organizations and the impossibly short timeframes for delivery of objectives does not reflect positively on the actual commitment of international assistance to women's engagement in the electoral process.
33. SETP's focus and outputs were on ensuring visibility to women's participation as elaborated in the assessment report. The high turnout of voters and the very acceptable rate of women's participation, along with the momentum generated by the innovative and hopefully agenda-setting education and promotional strategies to engage women in the electoral process should be leveraged in Phase 2. The continued strong support of advocacy for women's political rights, voter mobilization and sharing in the electoral administration and operation in a fair manner is strongly urged.
34. This is clearly an area of political life where gender balance leaves much to desire. Male and female voters are getting close to the gender distribution of the population countrywide. Nevertheless, women participation in the electoral operation at any level is extremely limited. Women candidates for parliament in previous elections were few. For the first time in the history of the country there is a female commissioner at SCER.
35. SCER will benefit from a more integrated approach to gender mainstreaming that cuts across human resources and personnel, media and outreach, training, operations and other departments. A capacity assessment can help provide direction as to the best means to achieve this within a structural reform process. It is strongly recommended that Phase 2 technical assistance include provision for a Gender Advisor.

## Elections monitoring

36. The SCER accredited more than 16,000 domestic monitors, although it is hard to figure out how many of those were more properly political party poll watchers. NDI trained 1175 monitors for the YEMN network plus more than 200 upon request for the Resonate organization, and additional training was provided to people from another 15 organizations. The presence of domestic monitors around the country has worked, as at other occasions, as a tool of transparency, confidence building

and lessons learned for improvement at future elections. In this regard, the YEMN observer report is particularly illustrative.

37. Regarding international observers, there were not missions deployed contrary to other elections in Yemen. It is recommended that, like in other previous elections, the presence of some standard international observer mission is deployed, which could help as an instrument of transparency and confidence building.

## Concluding remarks

38. The early presidential election of February 2012 was called in an emergency situation under exceptional circumstances. It could be interpreted not only or mainly as a peculiar election with only one candidate running, but also as an exit from a grave political crisis, with armed conflict included, towards peace and reconciliation. In this sense, the electoral exercise constituted a most relevant political event; and as such seems to have been envisaged by the bulk of citizenry. This fact would help explain the rather unexpectedly high voter turnout as many Yemenis may have looked at the election as a peace making instrument more than just the choice of a President.
39. A broad consensus has been shown by all relevant stakeholders involved at international assistance on that this assistance was instrumental for the success of the elections. These would have taken place anyway once an international agreement was reached for the launching of a peace process. Nevertheless, without international assistance, the elections would have been harder in getting properly organized, and voter mobilization especially among women and youth might have been less massive. Moreover, and most importantly, the past elections would offer a rare opportunity to look at performance by donors and implementing agencies from an instrumental rather than a substantive perspective. It was an occasion where the way *how* things were done may be considered more enriching than *what* kind of things were done. Accordingly, the evaluation has noted the innovative approaches adopted.
40. A successful event as the last election was, it should be kept in mind that next and more competitive elections –even referenda- will most likely not be the same. Keeping momentum at public awareness and democratic enthusiasm at establishing a representative system of government and the rule of law in addition to a strong independent electoral management body, constitutes a big challenge and a hard undertaking. In what comes to elections, comparative international experience of the last few decades shows that –particularly after armed conflict but not only- the bulk of the people consider that the most significant political change is achieved once a new government has been established by popular vote; once the most dangerous stage of the conflict seem to have been surmounted. This is a main reason why voter turnout after armed conflict tends to be very high. Then political interest tends to decline and political affairs (e.g. constitution drafting, legal reform, etc.) remain in the less open circles of the elites.
41. Hence the need for donors and other stakeholders of not indulging on the past, but looking forward with a spirit of continuing engagement at sustainability of the electoral management bodies as much as enhancement of public awareness through civic education campaigns, influencing school curricula, updating of voter list, modernizing of civil registries etc. The fact that Yemen has had multiparty elections for near 20 years did not avoid the country from suffering new and serious political crises.

42. History shows that democratic progress and consolidation takes time. It is not a matter of years, but of decades or even longer. Elections are a crucial step towards democracy. In the case of Yemen there were multiparty elections since 1993, and we still talk about a transitional stage towards democracy. Consequently, donors' attitudes and support should be thought of as strategies and activities within a long-term framework. It is only with this kind of approach that donors would feel encouraged and committed to maintain an institutional memory on past assistance experiences and be prepared to operate in an efficient manner –as they did in February 2012- for single electoral events hopefully within forthcoming electoral cycles in Yemen.



# Scope of International Electoral Assistance to the Early Presidential Elections of February 2012.

## a. Focus of assistance of the different projects.

The scope of activity of the different projects under assessment can be summarized as follows. The Joint Election Assistance Programme (JEAP) covering July 2008 – June 2011 (extended eventually to March 2012) was budgeted to USD\$5,763,240. The project enunciated six outcome indicators:

- Enhanced transparency and accountability of public institutions and participation of all constituencies in systematic national and local decision-making within the scope of international treaties ratified by the Republic of Yemen;
- Enhanced national capacities to demand and deliver transparency and accountability of public officials;
- Legal and institutional frameworks for ensuring fair and free multiparty elections strengthened;
- Improved institutional and human capacity to promote gender equity and empower women in social, political, economic and legal spheres;
- Improved institutional framework ensuring that women and girls have the benefit of their equal rights;
- Increased active participation of women in decision-making, political and social sectors.

This EC-UNDP project commencing in July 2008 was initially envisioned to conclude in June 2011 following the 2009 elections. The project was framed within the ‘electoral cycle’ approach and aimed

to assist in the development of the capacity of electoral institutions to deliver mandated functions, including elections that reflect the will of the people and feature the participation of well-informed voters, particularly those from disadvantaged groups. In particular, the project anticipated enhancing the professionalism of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER) and the election polling and counting officials at all levels; improved legal and regulatory frameworks; an update of the voter register, assistance to the efficient conduct of civic education and domestic observation; support for the increased participation of women in the electoral process and the generation and codification of lessons learned as well as coordinated donor support.

The three main focus areas of the project were: a) Electoral Institutions and Processes including the articulation and conduct of training Programmes including BRIDGE modules; civic education; voter registration and support to CSOS and domestic observation; b) legal reform; and c) women's participation in elections.

The objectives were to strengthen the electoral cycle and assist in the development of the capacity of electoral institutions to deliver mandated functions and to: a) enhance the professionalism of the SCER; b) improve legal and regulatory frameworks (including results tabulation, transmission and publication processes and the complaints procedures); c) support the update of the voters' register; d) assist in the efficient conduct of civic education and domestic observation; and e) support increased participation of women in the electoral process.

On February 26th, 2009 in the "February Agreement" the Yemen Parliament voted to extend the term of office of the current parliament by two years, from April 27, 2009 to April 26, 2011 with a view to discussion of and a referendum to amend the constitution to revise the electoral system and reform the electoral legislation. The referendum was expected in 2009 but was not conducted as of the time the Project Document was revised. In October 2009 following the deferment of the 2009 elections, the project was operationally suspended for one year. The Project Document was substantially revised in August 2010 (signed in October 2010).

The revised project scope deleted election-specific activities such as support to ad hoc staff and other activities related to the electoral legal framework, focusing instead on a more broad based capacity development strategy with the SCER. The revision identified the outputs of the revised Project to be: "In addition to measurable outputs of the original project, expected outputs include increased knowledge levels in target populations and attitudinal/perception and behavior change towards acquiring a culture of democracy and supporting increased women participation in the electoral process."

The scope and beneficiaries of the Revised Project were identified as: a) Improving democratic values; b) improving perception and attitudes towards women status and increased women's participation in the political process; c) teaching of democratic values in schools and the ministries of education in designing an electoral syllabus that can be incorporated in the school curriculum; d) Capacity building of permanent SCER staff to improve their ability to administer electoral and referenda activities in an increasingly professional manner. The SCER was to liaise and coordinate with government institutions such as the Ministry of Education, Women National Committee and Ministry of Endowment and Guidance and to be responsible for validating the needs and for monitoring that solutions to meet those needs within the constraints of the project; e) The updating of the voters register was revised to focus on a 'clean-up' of the existing register.

After confirmation of the legal framework, the project foreshadowed engagement in a needs assessment, which was not conducted, and subsequent capacity building activities to empower the SCER to engage with the Yemeni electorate in voter education campaigns on the reigning electoral system and its procedures as well as strengthening its professional qualifications to administer and conduct elections according to international standards. The redirection noted flaws in the project design especially related towards civic education which in the original document focused on the individual's choice to register and vote, redirecting civic education to a more community-based integrated approach.

The revised JEAP proposed a baseline assessment survey to generate ToR for the baseline survey were developed, but the activity was abandoned before commencement. The third phase was to be an evaluation survey to measure the impact of the project. A full JEAP evaluation is still to be conducted.

In January 2011 increasing unrest led to instability in Yemen with calls for the resignation and departure of the President. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Agreement brokered in November, 2011 provided for the effective stepping down of President Salah, the assumption of power by Vice President Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi and the conduct of Presidential elections at short notice in February 2012. The GCC Agreement called on the United Nations for assistance with the implementation of the Agreement and in coordination of international assistance for that purpose.

In November 2011 the UN's Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) desk officers worked very closely with the UN Special Advisor in providing him with substantive information on electoral timelines and possible operational issues affected by the political environment in order to ensure that the Special Advisor had accurate background information for negotiations on the GCC Agreement. An EAD/UNDP Needs Assessment Mission was immediately deployed in early December 2011 a few days after the signing of the GCC Initiative. EAD backstopping included providing guidance on possible funding sources, liaising with the different embassies/missions to ensure that they were well-informed about the electoral process as well as funding needs. EAD also liaised closely with the Peacebuilding Support Office for immediate Peace Building Fund (PBF) funding for the Yemeni elections given the electoral funding gap at the time.

In December 2011 the JEAP Project Board extended the project to 31 June 2012 in order to support the preparations and conduct of the 2012 elections. This amendment was approved at the same time the SETP was being negotiated and agreed. In December 2011 the conclusion date of JEAP was brought forward to 31 March 2012.

At the same time it was determined that a specific project needed to be created to support the forthcoming electoral process as JEAP did not have the required flexibility to carry on this function. This project -Support to Elections during the Transition Period SETP (2011-2014) was approved on December 21, 2011. Its budget amounts to USD\$15, 028,046 with the budget for Phase 1 of the project set at USD\$5, 395,046, which was fully mobilized by January 2012. Outcome Indicator of the project was open, smooth and fair elections in the period 2011 – 2014. This project supports, through the creation of a Transition Election Support Team (TEST) the reinforcing of the electoral cycle, two presidential, one parliamentary election, local council elections and a constitutional referendum. SETP is supported by a multi-donor basket fund which currently includes funding from UK DFID, Denmark and the UN. Germany and Japan, although not formally signing as contributors to the basket fund, joined the SETP assistance effort by earmarking and funding a number of items shortly before the February elections (indelible ink in the case of Germany, and a larger number of items of varying cost in the case of Japan).

Unlike the JEAP ProDoc which elaborated in some detail, the objectives and activities of the project, the SETP ProDoc is a leaner document that identifies the key objectives but omits detailed operational and activity plans. Phase 1 of the project which has just concluded targeted the February 2012 elections through four key interventions: a) resource mobilization; b) procurement of goods and services; c) other kinds of support; and d) implementation of an outreach and advocacy plan for the election.

Phase 2 of the project will consider the findings and lessons learned from this post-election evaluation. It is intended to continue to focusing on electoral reforms; the expected referendum on the new constitution as well as post referendum activity with a continuing focus on institutional and individual capacity support to the SCER.

A third source of international assistance was the USAID funded support to IFES and NDI, with a budget of US\$3.5 million. These two organizations were the implementers of USAID Yemen Transitional Democratic Process Programme (YTDP). NDI activities under this initiative were mainly focused on training for election monitoring by civil society organizations as well as civic education. IFES assistance activities were addressed to the SCER and mainly focused on three areas: a) operations (repairing previously used metal voting booths and purchasing new cardboard booths as well as support to the SCER mainly with IT and communication technology); b) security (providing armbands in a number of 104,000 for election security personnel as well as a security advisor to the operation center); and c) media support (establishing and operating a media center, which was located at the Movenpick hotel as well as providing media advise to the electoral and other election related authorities).

## **b. Project governance structure**

### **i. Principles of Political and Operational Integration**

The National Dialogue Process soon to commence in Yemen is the centerpiece of Yemen's transition of which the February 2012 elections were the first major activity and where it is anticipated the constitutional referendum to be followed by elections of 2014 will cement the arrangements and aspirations of the national dialogue process. The National Dialogue process will by virtue of the prospective agenda deal extensively with election policy issues among other matters. Issues relating to the electoral legal framework are also anticipated to be covered in the dialogue process. The elections are an inescapable political reality and integral to the national dialogue and transition process. Within this context there is a clear need for the political and operational/technical elements of the UNDP's support to Yemen to work very closely with the political side to ensure harmonization and unanimity of approach; to ensure the Special Adviser is provided with the best advice and support possible on election matters and that the implementation of decisions from a technical perspective is smooth and efficient.

The role of the Special Adviser changes the landscape a little as far as coordination and oversight processes are concerned and introduces considerations that are not so common within a standard 'non-mission' electoral support framework including expectations for collaboration and integration between the various election and transition support efforts. Such integration opens opportunities for UNDP in its project leadership role to provide an even more useful facilitation process for donors at higher levels of political cooperation than might normally be available.

The background to this new terrain is that the Security Council, which acts on behalf of the General Assembly in matters related to international peace and security and which can establish two types

of “peace operations” - Peacekeeping Missions “PKOs” (with armed peacekeepers) and Special Political Missions “SPMs” (without armed personnel) – has established a Special Adviser, The United Nations’ approach is guided by Security Council resolution 2051/2012, which states in part that ***“All electoral assistance in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, or special political mission settings should be delivered in a fully integrated manner from the outset, whether or not the mission is structurally integrated”***.

The mandate of the Special Adviser is, inter alia, is to ***“support the implementation of the transition process, and to provide advice to the parties in conjunction with the Government of Yemen.”*** The mandate also ***“requests the Secretary-General to continue to coordinate assistance from the international community in support of the National Dialogue and transition..., and to continue to report to the Security Council in Yemen every 60 days”***.

Peace Missions (SPM or PKOs) can be either integrated - ie the head of the mission is also formally head of all UN activities in country and the Resident Coordinator becomes Deputy SRSG (as in Afghanistan), or not integrated. Integration or not is a decision of the Secretary General. The Yemen model is not integrated, largely because the Special Adviser is not resident full time in country.

In giving effect to these guidelines and the political realities of the Yemen situation, the links that make up an integrated mission as elaborated in working arrangements should recognise that UNDP has the lead role in provision of UN technical assistance, as per the UN electoral needs assessment, with all the associated administrative and financial authorities and responsibilities to donors. Nonetheless, the project must operate within the framework of SC resolution 2051 (2012) which in essence mandates the Special Adviser to lead UN political support to the transition.

Within the Yemen context, the Special Adviser on Yemen (and the Department of Political Affairs in support of the SG) are obligated by SC resolution 2051 to maintain political and policy oversight over the UN’s electoral support activities in Yemen. UNDP is the lead provider of UN assistance. To ensure harmonisation and to work within clear lines of accountability and operational responsibility, the identification of the most beneficial formal and structural links between the Special Adviser and the electoral project is urged.

## Recommendation

- Given the interconnectedness between the election support process and the national dialogue and other aspects of the transition process, it will be critical that effective linkages and lines of accountability and communication are forged and agreed between the Office of the Special Adviser on Yemen as the UN’s political lead in the transition process, and UNDP as the lead in election project support to ensure harmonization in the UN approach overall. These principles should be embedded in the Project Document. A possible approach may be that the Office of the Special Adviser is formally integrated as Co-Chair with UNDP into the Donor Working Group or relevant policy and decision-making body of the elections project at which issues of political and strategic decisions with regard to election support and matters of risk assessment and mitigation planning are standing agenda items.

## ii. Management Structure: Yemen 2012 experience and the UNDP and ICAI reviews of election support

### Recent Studies

A number of studies have been published in the course of 2012 which assist in putting the Yemen 2012 experience in context. In April 2012 the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) published an *Evaluation of DFID's Electoral Support through UNDP*, and in August 2012 UNDP published its *Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes*. The ICAI report was not a study of UNDP but of DFID's management and oversight of electoral support through UNDP. It flagged some critical issues in policy direction and relationship management between UNDP and DFID regarding electoral support.

Generally speaking, especially in relation to governance structures and donor participation in decision-making; in relation to timeliness of the international response for electoral support and the efficient response to administrative arrangements including procurement and recruitment obligations, the Yemen experience sits comfortably within the parameters of recommended strategies of both reports. Donors are keen to ensure that the efficiency demonstrated by the use of fast-tracking for procurement and the use of delegated authority processes will be integrated into the next Phase of the Programme in order to avoid the delays acknowledged by UNDP in its own review. For its part, UNDP has undertaken to provide a response by the end of 2012 to the problem of "cumbersome procedures and slow recruitment and procurement processes that affect UNDP management of electoral projects." It is recommended that the Donor Working Group concept which provided for donors, UNDP and other key stakeholders to be jointly engaged in policy and decision-making regarding the project is continued.

### Reporting and M&E frameworks

Increasingly, donors are under pressure to account for the results and impact of their development investment. The UNDP review found that the quality of reporting on basket funds is patchy and does not provide donors with adequate information on the use of their funds. Adequate reporting on impact is in turn dependent upon robust M&E frameworks including baseline indicators and targets against which performance can be measured. It is recommended that the donors and UNDP look jointly at how objectives, delivery, impact and learning are identified at the project design stage to ensure adequate reporting further down the track.

Tools that might be employed in this regard include the referencing of baseline indicators that will be used as measurement points on progress towards results and the achievement of outcomes. Appropriate external verifiable indicators such as the Freedom House Media Index; World Bank statistics; the UNDP Human Development report; and other like tools are useful provided they are updated regularly enough to be relevant and meaningful in the lifetime of the project. In the absence of sufficient external verifiable indicators, some baseline markers need to be created locally.

Elections are political processes that are influenced by confidence in government, institutions and processes. It is also acknowledged that in governance programmes, the measurement of success and sustainability is challenging because what is being measured – attitudes and behaviours – are not easily quantifiable nor are necessarily easily measurable within the program life. The IFES post election survey is a useful starting point but it is recommended that further effort be put into the conduct of a survey that examines broader issues including confidence in the National Dialogue process; in

political parties; in media and in the SCER and other government institutions; that seeks views about the hopes of the national dialogue process that can be tested against perceptions when the process is concluded; that looks at voting intentions (a set of questions that can also point to the possibility of tight results that can impact on security and violence, for example). For cost-efficiency, technical implementing partners may consider a more comprehensive joint survey that serves a variety of needs.

As the programme invested - and will no doubt continue to invest - a significant amount of money into media, an assessment of media ownership, independence, accessibility, audience demographics and reach which could complement the attitudes surveys is recommended. Media representatives interviewed for this review acknowledged the poor levels of professionalism within the media industry and the need for training at both junior and more senior levels. Measurement of media impact is notoriously difficult and it is suggested that linking up with the BBC Media Action global programme on media and governance (a 5-year DFID-funded \$20m initiative currently being rolled out globally) to benefit from the learning and tools being generated from that program would be informative. Measurement of media impact can be aided also by a media monitoring programme that embraces both qualitative and quantitative indicators, the findings of which are fed back into any media training or media-based communications programme. The harmonisation of media efforts provides a positive multiplier impact.

Other tools that can assist the M&E process include Outcome Mapping – a process that looks less at the deliverables of the project but more on behavioral changes and the influences of “secondary partners” and is a useful check against whether the partners through which activities are being delivered are actually best placed to achieve the outcomes. The conduct of periodic political economy analysis and assessment at regular stages through the life of the project also provides a more overarching contextual analysis and guide to risk (and therefore mitigation planning and strategies).

Finally, it is acknowledged that M&E is a continuous process. Progress against outcomes should be reviewed by the relevant working group on a quarterly basis.

## Yemen 2012 a positive reflection of ICAI Concerns

The ICAI Report noted DFID’s ‘dependence’ on UNDP to deliver electoral assistance and found weaknesses in areas including capacity development and learning; truncated planning, design and implementation problems; a lack of attention to value for money, and risks attaching to UNDP’s proximity to government as well as issues concerning internal UN agency coordination. The Yemen 2012 process does in fact reflect positive attention to some of these key concerns. The UN’s DPA /EAD offices and through the Office of the Special Adviser worked especially closely in supporting the November 2011 Agreement then followed through with a close relationship with UNDP in formulating the scope of support for February 2012 and the finalisation of the Project Document to which donors responded so quickly. The SETP project was clear in that in the very short time available it’s main focus was operational support, not on capacity building but that Phase 2 would take a longer term approach to the development of skills, professional development and utility within the SCER and its partner stakeholders.

## VfM and future investment in VR

The UNDP and ICAI reports both urge a focus on development of cost-effective and sustainable processes and on the risk of high tech solutions that are dependent long-term on continued external financial and / or technical support. For Yemen there is a clear message here with regards to the impending focus on a new voters register.

## Long term governance context

Both the ICAI and UNDP reviews also recommend that election support should be grounded in long term development and governance objectives. The UNDP refers to the electoral cycle while the ICAI report refers to anchoring election support in a 'strategy for democratic development', a broader concept than the electoral cycle alone. The Yemen 2012 election was brought on so quickly that there was no time to contextualise the support within a broader framework (although the JEAP project, if not so affected by external events could have had a greater impact). However, moving forward, it is clear that the constitutional referendum and elections of 2014 which are the ultimate the focus of Phase 2 of SETP, are integral to the process of National Dialogue. This dialogue will be instrumental in deliberating on Yemen's future governance structures, on its constitution and on its electoral system and regulatory framework. Already the Special Adviser has been engaged in brokering acceptance of a new appointments process for the SCER. It is noted that while the political dialogue process is a very different dynamic from election operational and capacity building support processes – a point noted by ICAI in Recommendation 4 of its report – , nonetheless there will be a benefit gained from ensuring the two processes are linked, possibly through the structured participation of the Office of the Special Adviser in the Donor Working group and especially in dialogue concerning policy options, strategic decision-making and risk and mitigation planning. It will be critical that both UNDP/donors and the Office of the Special Adviser have a clear and structured working relationship as the national dialogue process moves ahead.

## Donor Working Group facilitated donor engagement in decision-making

To counter concerns regarding fund management, ICAI recommends stronger governance arrangements over UNDP in the field, the cultivation of alternative delivery channels for electoral assistance; a stronger focus on cost control and ensuring electoral support is anchored in a strategy for democratic development as well as third party monitoring oversight. Given the status of ICAI as the primary oversight body of DFID, it should be expected that DFID will actively seek to reflect ICAI's recommendations at the field level. The February 2012 experience was a positive one as far as reflecting some of the ICAI recommendations are concerned of which the Donor Working Group process whereby donors were engaged in policy and strategic decision making with regards to the SETP is a positive example.

## Management Structures: NEX and DEX options

As noted in the UNDP August 2012 report, election support projects are not restricted to a rigid management structure template. Many of these projects involve basket funds which pool donor funding to improve donor and other partner coordination in the implementation of complex, politically sensitive and highly visible projects. UNDP country offices typically handle such funds often supported by Project Management Units and specialist technical expertise with funds allocated variably through competitive tendering for component aspects; grants; direct budgetary support and so on.

UNDP project implementation modalities include both National Execution/National Implementation (NEX/NIM) Models under which national agencies take implementation responsibility and Direct Execution/ Direct Implementation (DEX/DIM) models where UNDP retains this responsibility.

The decision as to which implementation modality is most appropriate is often dictated by circumstances including the maturity and demonstrated capacity of the electoral management body; the relative

stability of the context in which the election is being held noting that countries in transition or post crisis mode are less suitable for DEX/DIM implementation than those in more developed and stable circumstances, and the size of the budget is also a factor. The risks of mismanagement and corruption should also be considered. NEX/NIM require more skilled local oversight and financial management capacity. There is a balance to be drawn between the national ownership perceptions attaching to the NEX/NIM models vs the closer budgetary control provided by the DEX modal.

The UNDP Review of Election Support report noted that of 205 electoral assistance projects reviewed as part of the evaluation, close to 50 per cent used the DEX/DIM modality. Of 54 countries that provided detailed information, 24 per cent of projects used only NEX/NIM; 20 per cent used only DEX/DIM and 31 per cent combined the two.

By way of example, the Kenyan election support process of 2007 was a DEX/DIM model. The NEX/NIM arrangement is being utilized for the 2012 project which has faced serious challenges with major procurement processes being cancelled due to incompetence incurring serious delays. NEX approaches used in Malawi disintegrated to the point that the 2014 elections will be conducted under an entirely DEX process while in Indonesia 20 projects have been successfully concluded all utilising the NEX model.

## Project Management and Coordination Architecture

The management and coordination 'architecture' of a project is not set in concrete either. In the past ten years, management structures of election support projects have moved towards much more inclusive decision and policy making models wherein donors and the EMB play a far more participatory role alongside UNDP in decision and policy making. Surprisingly, the UNDP Election Support review did not address this issue which has been a touchy subject in many election projects as it pertains directly to perceptions of 'ownership' of the election support initiatives. The Yemen experience in 2012 was an extremely positive one with the various working groups ensuring donors were directly engaged in management decisions on the one hand, and all operational and technical players also collaborated closely.

## Recommendations

- The Donor Working Group concept which provided for donors, UNDP and other key stakeholders to be jointly engaged in policy and decision-making regarding the project is continued.
- With regard to M&E, donors and UNDP to look jointly at how objectives, delivery, impact and learning are identified at the project design stage to ensure adequate reporting further down the track.
- Both the UNDP/donors and the Office of the Special Adviser have a clear and structured working relationship as the national dialogue process moves ahead.
- It is recommended that any future management structure replicates the very positive and inclusive decision-making forums of 2012.

### iii. The JEAP and SETP experiences

In Yemen, JEAP was established as an EC-UNDP project with the EU as the sole financial contributor in addition to some core UNDP funding. The SETP established a multi-donor contributory funding

project with support from DFID (UK), Japan, Germany, Denmark and UNDP Peace Building and UNDP TRAC Funds. The nature of the two projects necessitated an overlapping of JEAP and SETP Phase 1. This presented no substantial implementing issues. The USAID-funded NDI and IFES Programmes were delivered under the Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPPS) framework with additional funds coming from USAID's Responsive Governance Project (RGP) for the Get-out-the-Vote campaign (GOTV).

Both UNDP projects were executed under a Direct Execution Modality (DEX) sometimes referred to as Direct Implementation (DIM). In this task, UNDP must ensure that direct execution is carried out in an effective, efficient and transparent manner. The execution of the projects requires that the UNDP, acting as Executing Agent/Implementing Partner, has the technical and administrative capacity to assume the responsibility for mobilizing and applying effectively the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs. It is expected that the implementation of the DEX/DIM modality contributes to build national capacities. The UNDP Country Office ascertains the national capacities during the project formulation stage, determining where the strengths/weaknesses are, how UNDP can assist to build new capacities, and the exit strategy of the project, ensuring that the intervention of UNDP has collaborated to the development of new capacities. As executing agent/implementing partner, UNDP assumes overall management responsibility and accountability for project implementation, while as a funding agency UNDP is accountable to the Executive Board for all aspects of its operations.<sup>1</sup>

Both JEAP and SETP established Project Boards in compliance with UNDP project management guidelines. The JEAP Project Board also served as the project Steering Committee.

While this evaluation does not embrace an assessment of the JEAP project except in so far as it contributed in its final months to the 2012 Presidential elections, it is relevant to note that some aspects of the implementation of the DEX modality in the delivery of the project overall were found by the principal donor to be wanting, and that these perspectives may well inform future decision-making considerations with regards to future support modalities. Noting that the JEAP itself was beset by the consequences of the external political fluidity resulting in revisions, changes and operational suspensions, nonetheless it appears that some aspects relating to procurement<sup>2</sup> and financial disclosure were of particular difficulty and in the view of the donor perhaps not subject to sufficiently robust review within the Project Board or Steering Committee context. A sense of donor participation was also reported to be absent within JEAP. It is noted also that the final revisions have not been formalized.<sup>3</sup> In the period leading up to the elections the JEAP Board was responsive and supportive to the coordinated activities of the two UNDP projects.

The SETP project management and coordination architecture, having learned from the JEAP process and recognizing the urgency of the situation, was more deliberative in the articulation of roles and responsibilities and provided for more formal and informal engagement of stakeholders. This approach appears to have been very effective and was welcomed by all donors and by the SCER. The ProDoc

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<sup>1</sup> Extracted from UNDP guidelines on policies and procedures. UNDP may identify a Responsible Party to carry out activities within a DEX/DIM project. This party may be the government, an NGO, or an Agency of the UN System. In the case of NGOs and Agencies of the UN System, their own financial rules apply for the activities carried out by them. In case the government implements part of a DEX/DIM project, the government's own rules may be applied or, alternatively, procedures agreed with UNDP can be established.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP has committed itself to bearing the financial burden of issues relating to the procurement of indelible ink found to be of unsatisfactory quality and has confirmed that no burden will be borne by the donor.

<sup>3</sup> The donor informed the evaluation team that this omission has been due to EU internal reasons.

articulated the roles of the Project Board and of UNDP in project assurance in far more detail than has been customary in UNDP project documents. Additionally it embedded the Elections Working Group (EWG), a forum in which all donors could meet on a weekly basis to review, assess and coordinate processes, within the project structure. SETP benefitted from the establishment by SCER of the International Electoral Assistance Coordination Group co-chaired by SCER and UNDP and at a practical coordination level by the creation of a Technical Committee comprised of the two UNDP projects, JEAP and SETP as well as NDI and IFES to coordinate the technical support provided by each agency to optimize complementary activities and reduce the risk of duplication.

While JEAP was challenged by the late disbursement of funds – not received until 2011 – the timely donor commitments and rapid transfer of funds by donors to UNDP for SETP provided confidence to the implementation process. An issue is noted regarding the identification of certain donors to the SETP with a ‘multi donor basket fund’ when their contributions are targeted to very specific interventions. This is an issue for further deliberation between UNDP and donors as to how that participation may be better expressed.

The role of the UN Election Assistance Division (EAD) is acknowledged by UNDP as having been catalytic both in the identification of the SETP project scope and budget and the elaboration of the Project Document, and in supporting the recruitment of project staff. UNDP Yemen provided regular updates on the funding situation and EAD provided support in identifying and recruiting electoral personnel (with Arabic skills). Initially, reporting was limited during the start-up of the electoral project but once the SETP Elections Coordinator arrived, regular weekly reporting followed. The EAD desk officer is in regular contact by email, phone, and intra-agency video-tele-conferences with the SETP Elections Coordinator and UNDP Yemen on all electoral issues. UNDP Yemen and the SETP Elections Coordinator also provide information on all planned electoral activities as well as recommendations for candidates to conduct evaluation missions. EAD uses its roster regularly to help support and recruit for all electoral missions. Although under the DEX/DIM modality UNDP is wholly responsible for the hiring of staff, the ProDoc nonetheless affirms that this will be done in consultation with the SCER. This was in fact not achieved, but it is recommended that in future SCER be consulted in the identification or approval of project appointees.

Internally within UNDP an Elections Task Force assisted in the coordination of all UNDP responsibilities. UNDP’s ability to deliver results on time was facilitated by the speed of project authorization through the ‘virtual’ LPAC process, the application of fast-track procedures and increased delegations of authority. The impact of these multi layered coordination mechanisms was unanimously endorsement by donors and SCER of the efforts to ensure a satisfactory information-flow and coordination of activities.

In terms of visibility, the EC-UNDP JEAP project through large banners displayed at SCER and in other materials, and the SETP project via the multiple products delivered, ensured acknowledgment of the international assistance provided to the election process. It is the view of the evaluation team however that the level of visibility was rather intense and in the interests of national ownership a less prominent acknowledgement should be considered.

## Recommendations

- Inclusive, participatory governance structures of the nature endorsed by all parties in the SETP project that provided for donor, SCER and other implementing partner (e.g. NDI and IFES) dialogue should be affirmed and embedded in future project management and coordination architecture.

- The positive impact of the fast-tracking of election support processes and the models of coordination should be shared as a lesson learned more widely within the organization.
- The spirit of consultation with SCER on the recruitment of key project staff as foreshadowed in the project document should be followed through.

#### iv. Donor cooperation

Early coordination among donors was crucial to the success of the assistance undertaking. Frequent communication, discussion and a bit of planning among donors existed prior to the time when an election was announced. A forum to discuss election assistance matters among donors was held eight months before the GCC agreement was signed in November 2011. Once the election was called, the donors were quite well prepared to enter into the details of a division of labor among them (the “who was going to do what”). The SCER was not ready to start preparations until they had their legal mandate and this only happened in November. The donors were already ready to help the SCER and they were able to do it because they had anticipated what needed to be done.

A Donor Working Group (DWG) at the highest level existed as well as a Working Electoral Group (EWG), which had been in place for years. From the DWG, the political will and funding energies were infused into the more operational group (EWG).

There was also the USAID willingness to joint efforts with other projects’ donors. Sharing on communication and coordination helped avoiding overlapping between USAID funded activities and the other two projects.

The ability by the EU to reshape JEAP several times in order to deliver the support to the elections between December 2011 and February 2012 is also to be praised as a main contributing factor to the success of the entire assistance operation.

The openness of the SCER is also to be praised at discussing support activities with donors and implementers. More importantly SCER offered an open door to the different project international staff. This included giving office space to staff from JEAP, SETP and IFES within the SCER premises. Incidentally, it deserves mentioning that SCER wide office space and equipment is a rare phenomenon among electoral management bodies in new democracies at poor countries. This may at least partly illustrate the institutional relevance of the organization after 19 years of electoral history in spite of successive crises of different seriousness. Sharing offices with international experts is not frequently found among electoral bodies –with the exception of peace-keeping operations almost or exclusively managed by the international community.

The past experience should work as a repository of institutional memory for the donor community, which should remain benefitting from such an extraordinary capital. Keeping some basic institutional memory may also be cost effective for both donors and recipients. For example, retrieval of materials to warehouses and making inventories would help very much when planning for elections.

## Recommendations

- Looking forward, a main recommendation is to continue with the spirit of engagement and cooperation among donors. This would include encouraging both the DWG and EWG to remain operational regarding electoral issues during the transition process, no matter how far in time the next election might be. The National Dialogue and Military Restructuring belong to the Yemeni

political actors, and might be subject to uncertainties and time delays hard to assess by now. Contrarily, elections related activities will benefit from continued international support (e.g. civil registries and voter lists, civic education, women empowerment, capacity building of the SCER, training of its middle management). The donor community should remain as engaged as they were during the Early Presidential Election.

- As a coordination mechanism, the EWG helped both as a trust and a consensus building tool. A good indicator of this was the quick disbursement of funds. Looking at the immediate future, this group should keep meeting frequently during the inter-election period.

#### v. UNDP role

An agency like UNDP could get quickly into operations because it was already operating in the field. On a more limited scope, international organizations like NDI and IFES were also in privileged position as they had been present in the country for long, either on a continuous basis as NDI for twelve years, or on an in-and-out experience like IFES. They could capitalize on contacts with civil society organizations, public authorities, vendors, and of being familiar with the culture and political electoral habits of the Yemeni society.

UNDP was available to put together a diversity of efforts and define goals and activities related to funding towards those goals. The decision by UNDP on the use of some more flexible and efficient instruments like Delegation of Authority and Fast Track in order to become more operational was a leap forward at implementation. Its website was also redesigned in a way that donors could have access to updated information, which was useful for their purposes. It was even framed in an orange color rather than the UN blue in order to convey an image of joint venture with a multiplicity of donors.


There was unanimous recognition among both donors and SCER of the role played by UNDP as implementer of electoral assistance. Its openness, flexibility and efficiency were generally praised. Consistently with this state of opinion, an interest of continuing cooperation within a similar institutional framework was also expressed. This notwithstanding, some donors manifested their desire and expectation for further transparency when dealing with some specific issues (e.g. the problem with the ink, information on earmarking of certain items by some donors). At UNDP, they were also grateful for the generosity, openness, flexibility and understanding by donors regarding an operation to be undertaken under exceptional conditions. UNDP has improved its public image among donors and in the country. An effort should be made in sustaining this fresh image. In the context of the electoral assistance field, UNDP continues to be the agency in a better position to coordinate and funnel assistance from a variety of donors.

### Recommendations

- At an operational level, more effective cooperation between UNDP and UNDP was suggested by some donors. Relationship between the two UN branches seemed to have worked at some time better than another.
- For a future electoral cycle, assistance funds should be set aside in a flexible framework. Generally in transitional environments, earmarking funding by electoral items is not operational since many things may change in a short time period. Funding shall be allocated according to broad criteria on areas of assistance rather than by specific activities, even less by items. An open framework is necessary within which changes can be introduced depending on circumstances: timing,

unexpected political events, availability of certain resources in and out of country, etc. In this sense, a basket fund mechanism has proved generally useful.

- At emergency situation, strategic planning is almost by definition absent as things are volatile and anticipation of events becomes highly unreliable for operational purposes. Once the emergency situation is surmounted, both donors and implementing agencies as well as SCER should operate based on at least some basic planning; if not strategic at least managerial and operational planning.



# Assessment of Performance by areas of assistance

This evaluation looked thematically at areas of project support. This section reviews the content and activities of these thematic areas, provides some reflections on lessons learned and makes recommendations with regard to possible future activity direction.

## a) Human resources, training and capacity building

### **Brief description of content of assistance**

This section has mainly to do with technical assistance to SCER. Project implementation was conducted in a record short period of time with few dedicated management and technical staff and few targeted short term technical support. Besides the COP, IFES for instance recruited on a short-term basis an international consultant specifically for its security component and a media expert for the media center component.

The SETP functioned with an election coordinator, an election operations expert, a civic education expert, a media expert and a short term IT consultant. JEAP team comprised of one international CTA and four locally recruited senior advisors (one communication/outreach advisor, one gender advisor, one legal advisor, one finance administrator). Even if the TA arrived generally late in the process, the new recruitments were remarkably swift, with for instance IFES COP arriving beginning of January, the SETP election coordinator and the election operations expert arriving merely 45 days before election-day. The fast track procedure allowed the UNDP to proceed to fast recruitments. JEAP had been working with the SCER since 2008. IFES has a long previous experience in Yemen, even if interrupted. The SETP project was able to benefit from the earlier presence of the JEAP inside the SCER.

The international TA had unimpeded access to the SCER, which expressed gratitude for the quality and team work of the international advisors in the pre-election period. IFES for instance was able to “embed” its security consultant within the –sensitive- operations room. These conditions allowed for a quick implementation of the projects. The SETP project team helped to design the ballot paper and validation of ballot procedures, and generally provided advice on the electoral procedures and operations. It is noted that SETP and IFES worked closely on technical assistance in support to the early elections. The security expert provided advice to the operation room on a day to day basis and helped to develop a security risk assessment. Also, some innovative practices were tested.

- Security personnel attached to the electoral process on E-day were all wearing an armband as an identity proof (IFES project); this was aimed at being quickly able to identify a security official and was widely appreciated.
- Payment to the polling station staff was channeled through the post office (SETP took the transfer fees in charge); this was meant to reduce the risk of corruption, allowing the staff to receive the integrity of their payments on time, without having to rely on their immediate hierarchy to be paid.
- The same transfer of payments innovation was proposed by the SCER to the armed forces in charge of the security of elections day but received strong resistance from these, and therefore was not implemented. Instead, the previous system whereby officers are paid by their superiors remained in place.
- Innovative strategies were found in the communication and voter awareness Programmes with the new use of certain media (within public transportation for instance).
- The media center used new technologies for the first time as optical fiber.
- The IFES project staff also facilitated international media presence (before international media were not allowed to bring their own equipment in Yemen).

Regarding the SCER human resources, although it is not in the scope of this mission to proceed to an evaluation of the SCER human resources, some background information on the institutions could be useful. The Yemeni electoral administration is the oldest in the Arab world and can be considered a rather sustainable organization, despite having experienced different names and organizational shaking-ups over its -almost- two decades of existence. The SCER remained operational largely due to continuing international assistance of varying degrees. Successive turnover of members of the governing body of the electoral commission should be considered as normal and mainly related to ebbs and flows of the political cycle. Nevertheless, what is more important for sustainability is that core technical personnel and people in key position at the administrative and operational level remain in the organization. The chief of operations for instance has been working for the SCER since 1993. A person of that seniority actually serves as chief electoral officer, no matter of what his title reads. A similar long experience is enjoyed by a number of technical staff of SCER.

The structure and staffing of SCER are considered among its top authorities as burdensome, and needed of reform. Besides the 10 members of the governing body, there are 66 high officials with a vice-ministerial status and 120 with general director status. Nevertheless, the number of operational departments is according to international practice. The total number of permanent employees is 700 (400 in headquarters and 300 in the regional branches).

It is worth noticing that in spite of the large size of the SCER, the cost of elections in Yemen, contrarily

to what is more frequently the case, seems to have dramatically declined over the years. At the first elections in 1993, the cost per registered voter has been reported at US\$34; including compilation of the first voter list at \$15 per registered voter (data released by a former member of the electoral commission at a recent conference in Cairo, sponsored by UNDP and IFES, where this assessment team leader was rapporteur). In the last February elections, the cost per registered voter may be around US\$6 if the approved budget of US\$45 million is enlarged with funding from international assistance. Such a rate per registered voter would fall within the range of transitional election costs in many other countries.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding trainings of electoral and security officials, few and generally insufficient trainings<sup>5</sup> were however supported - to the extent of the possible time available- by the international community. IFES had planned to provide training to the security personnel in charge of the elections but the security expert arrived while the training had already been planned and was starting. IFES contribution to the training was then minimal, with the exception of useful lessons learnt. In all cases (IFES, JEAP) training design, manuals, and methodology was not designed by the TA. The SETP project did not encompass trainings.

In its last phase of the project, JEAP facilitated the training of trainers and of polling station staff y providing transportation, rentals of training venues, stipends to the trainees, and some technical presentations.

In what comes to capacity building of the SCER, although projects proposals mention the need for transfer of knowledge and capacity building, this objective could not be achieved in the short time frame. However, the presence of experienced and well targeted TA allowed for identification of the problems and consequent needs for future TA. IFES is sponsoring a SCER election process lessons learned seminar in May with all stakeholders that should prove useful to systematize the lessons learnt

### **Lessons learned and recommendations**

- The fact that the international partners had previous experience in Yemen and in particular with the SCER helped to fasten the trust-building period. The international community should take advantage of this achievement to quickly build new projects.
- There has been no overlapping of human resources between JEAP and SETP; both teams worked often closely on specific topics like media outreach, communication, voter awareness campaigns. However, future projects should take into consideration the EMB capacity in liaising with different donors, projects and interlocutors and make sure the teams present in the SCER do not replicate the same functions.
- Embedding the TA proved efficient and should be replicated.
- The SCER Chairman emphasized the need to restructure the SCER both at central and governorate levels. A smaller and more specialized staff is needed. A priority - on which any capacity building effort could then be based upon- is to assist the SCER in designing a human resource plan and a possible restructuration of the institution.
- Given the short time available, not much could have been achieved in terms of training of election

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<sup>4</sup> López-Pintor, R. and Fisher, J. (eds.). (2006). *Getting to the CORE. A Global Survey on the Cost of Registration and Elections*. New York: UNDP.

<sup>5</sup> Reports from domestic observers mention issues of inconsistencies in applying the procedures as well as in laying-out the polling stations.

officials. However, a project like JEAP, which was already present in the field and had previous experiences with providing capacity to the SCER (BRIDGE) could have done more. The SCER itself self-evaluated the trainings as being insufficient, and asked for more efforts in this field. In addition, reports from the different projects widely mention weaknesses in the fields of IT, and operational and strategic planning. A robust, systematically coordinated effort is needed in terms of training of the middle and lower management of the EMB. The needs should be identified and a plan for a multi-donor, cross-sector (security, media, voter register, ToT, IT and new technologies) training Programme should be developed.

- The fact that the past elections were held under emergency circumstances should not let aside the importance of planning. Main recommendation is about the necessity of strategic, organizational, management and operational planning. While the SCER is familiar with the electoral procedures and processes there is some capacity deficiency which would benefit from further partnerships at international levels. Under emergency situation, only a modicum of operational planning may be possible and effective. Nevertheless, within an electoral cycle, and even under the uncertainty resulting of a transitional period, proper strategic, organizational and managerial planning is a necessity.
- In case the political process would advise for a quick update of the current voter lists (last update occurred in 2008), the need for training would substantially increase at different levels. IFES conducted an assessment of the VR in 2009 that could be used as a starting point. Also, a VR exercise should be taken as an opportunity for civil education while mobilizing the people to register.
- A great amount of information and assessment has been collected by the different teams working closely with the SCER during this short period; next projects should be based inter alia - upon the useful recommendations made by the experts.
- While it is likely that next projects will prioritize capacity building, they should identify realistic indicators showing concrete results in participation with the SCER staff.

## b) Procurement and operations

### Brief description of content of assistance

Procurement represented a large proportion of the international support to the process for two projects directly supporting the SCER, the IFES project (around 68-70 % of its budget) and the SETP project (71.7 % - which does not include media time purchases). Because of the short timeframe available, the success of a swift procurement was a pivotal element of the support to the electoral process; this result has been achieved by both projects. The JEAP project did not include procurement for its last phase of activities. The budget allocated by the Yemeni government to the SCER arrived late in the election cycle (January 2012) and would not have been sufficient to cover the whole electoral process; hence the importance of international support for procurement. Interlocutors at the SCER expressed their satisfaction with the support received,<sup>6</sup> as being on time and according to the specifications. The SCER also expressed its appreciation in not being involved in the procedural part of the procurement but in the decision-making process over the specifications.

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<sup>6</sup> "If not (for the support provided) it would have been difficult, if not impossible to run these elections on time" (Khaled Al Kadi, Director for electoral operations)

The definition of the needed equipment and materials happened late in the cycle but as early as the political conditions allowed, and donors were prompt at reacting at the SCER demands. The identification of the needs was also conducted in close cooperation and following the indications of the SCER. In case of UNDP for instance, the SCER list of demands had been examined during the NAM in December, IFES sent an assessment mission in early December as well. The SCER list was thoroughly checked against existing equipment and operational needs only once the SETP operation team arrived (January 2012). Many items were then found not necessary and some not to have been necessary. It is recommended that procurement be conducted in close liaison with election technical advisors. The list changed a few times to accommodate the needs and “fill the gaps”. The project team had then to quickly adapt their procurement to the new needs, which led to an overburden in managing finances and procedures but allowed a great flexibility.

IFES project faced similar difficulties regarding time pressure and chose to procure locally.

UNDP succeeded in providing the necessary elements on time, thanks to the adoption of the “fast track” procedure for procurement. This was made possible by a specific delegation of authority to the Country Office, whose capacity was then reinforced, including with the early arrival<sup>7</sup> of a procurement officer dedicated to the SETP project. The swift procurement was also made possible by the early financial commitments of partner countries (the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, and Denmark) and of the UN itself. The UNDP Trac fund and the UN Peace Building Fund invested one million USD each.

The main categories of IFES procurement of electoral commodities covered for the SCER included: Repair and/or purchase of polling booths,<sup>8</sup> media center equipment, IT and communications equipment.

The main equipment procured by SETP project are the indelible ink (almost 44% of the whole expenditure of the project on procurement of electoral goods), the elections day kit, IT equipment, printing materials, equipment for the regional offices and for the SCER headquarters (see graph below). Media purchases totaled approximately 17% of the budget.

Assistance provided by IFES was in support to the operation center by an international expert.

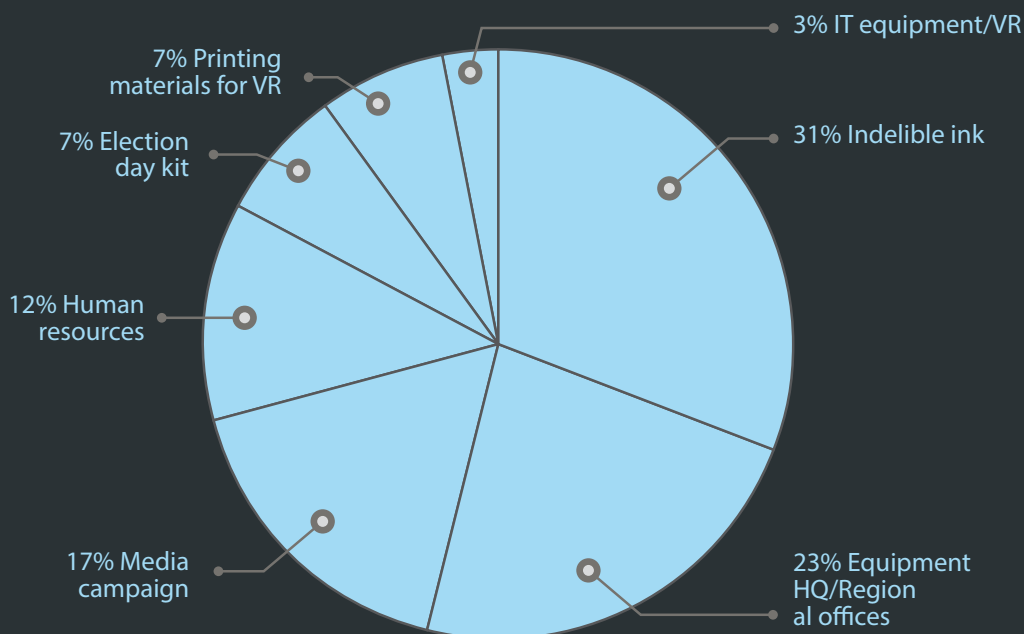
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7 December 2011

8 Approximately 21,000 metal voting booths were repaired. The number and location of the booths to be repaired were agreed upon in consultation with the SCER. Approximately 26,000 cardboard voting booths were procured. This was the first time that cardboard VBs were used in Yemen, and the number of booths was determined in consultation with the SCER. The repair of the metal VBs and procurement of the new cardboard VBs were both sourced with Yemeni vendors.



## SETP Expenditures



### Lessons learned and recommendations

There has not been overlapping of expenditures from the different projects thanks to the good coordination between the project teams. The list on procurement was shared among projects. On the contrary, the strategy of complementary and “gap-filling” among projects showed a great success. For instance, at the polling station level, while the SCER had the ballot boxes, IFES provided the voting booths, SETP provided –inter alia- the election kits and the ink. Sharing the different lists of procurement among international projects proved efficient and is a good practice that could be extended to the future projects.

While a close cooperation with the beneficiary is a standard good practice in defining the needs in terms of procurement, those should be based on a defined strategy and consequent operational plan. Given the short amount of time available, this was not possible for the EPE but should be implemented in the future. The SCER would benefit of wider and more intensive exposure to training and capacity building experiments in terms of strategic planning and operational planning.

Applying and checking for the presence of ink on voters finger is a safeguard against multiple voting that participates in increasing confidence in the integrity of an electoral process. However, to be efficient, the procedure implies different pre-requisites: a) the ink should be of a certain level of quality so it is not easy to wipe it off during election-day; b) the ink should be consistently applied and applied in a specific manner (the cuticle should be covered) which requires specific attention to the training of

polling station staff; and c) the presence of ink should systematically be checked prior voting, which again requires specific attention during the training of polling station staff. For an election management body, the procedure implies sufficient and adequate resources at storage and transportation level and, most of all, sufficient budgetary resources.

The choice of the level of quality of an ink is a fraud mitigation process depending on factors such as the level of budgetary resources, level of public trust in the electoral process and particularly of trust in the voter register. In the case of the 2012 elections, the level of trust in the voter register was low. Due to decisions by the SCER to allow voters who are not on the register to vote with one form of identification, inking was the main safeguard against multiple voting. This explains why the SCER opted for a very high quality of ink (or better said, an ink with a very high percentage of silver nitrate) that resulted very expensive (USD\$1.2 million) whilst this level of concentration of silver nitrate (25%) would not have been necessary.

However, whilst the EU EOM 2006 report indicated that the ink procedures were correctly applied in the vast majority of the observed polling stations (92%), reports from domestic observers (YEMN) on the 2012 presidential election indicate that the check was sometimes not consistently done (11% of observed polling stations) or the ink was not applied or the print of the voter's thumb was not taken (14% of the observed polling stations). One reason lies probably on the fact that the polling staff was new in its vast majority, and they were political appointees.

On a different ground, there was a serious issue with indelible ink procured by UNDP for the 2008 elections, which became not re-usable for later electoral events. All main stakeholders are now aware of this problem, and there is no need to abound on it. Nevertheless, as a lesson learned, it should be noticed that the handling of problems like this one may create a confidence gap between donor and provider as well as between provider and recipient. Independently on how the financial aspect of the problem is finally set<sup>9</sup> the trust problem could be harder to overcome, and may affect future cooperation engagements.

On retrieval and storage of electoral materials, the SCER looks in a better shape than many other electoral bodies working under similar circumstances. They operate under a differentiation between durable and transient materials; the former mainly referring to ballot boxes, screens and computers, and the latter relating to less durable and disposable materials like paper stuff and similarly disposable items. As of now, the SCER has preserved in almost its entirety ballot boxes from previous elections as well as 20.000 metal screens and the 350 laptops, intended to be used in the special polling centers reserved for non- resident voters, which were left from a total of 385. IFES provided for repair of metallic screens and delivery of brand new cardboard screens. Both metal and cardboard screens have already been retrieved from the field. If another electoral event is held in the short term (e.g. a referendum) maybe the cardboard materials could be re-used jointly with the metal ones. If elections would come later in time, it seems unlikely that cardboard materials can be re-used. But some items SETP purchased were not necessary or were underused. The most significant example concerns the decision to purchase 385 notebooks that had been taken on demand of the SCER before the SETP electoral team arrived.

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<sup>9</sup> López-Pintor, R. (2005). *Post-conflict elections and Democratization: An Experience Review*. Washington DC: USAID. For a global view and statistics on voter turnout and voter registration, López-Pintor, R. and Gratschew, M. (eds.). (2002). *Voter Turnout since 1945. A Global Report*. Stockholm: International IDEA.

## Recommendations

- Not overlapping of expenditures among the different projects is a good practice, which should be maintained.
- Regarding the use of indelible ink, two recommendations are pertinent: a) Given the impact on the electoral budget, the necessary percentage of silver nitrate could be re-assessed; and b) polling station staff should receive more training on procedural matters.
- Related to the ink issue initially provided for the 2009 elections, a recommendation would come to the need for early timely information and communication about the problem between the relevant affected agents, as well as on technical diligence in ensuring that the product provided meets the technical specifications anticipated in the bid for procurement.<sup>10</sup>
- Related to retrieval and storage of materials by the SCER, an inventory of SCER warehouses should be conducted.
- An inventory of the goods procured for this process at the SCER should be conducted as a base for future cooperation.
- Regarding the voter lists, there are serious problems associated with the current voter registry, which should be resolved within the context of the upcoming referendum and parliamentary elections. In a longer perspective, ideal as it might look, it is important that permanent voter registry is built up, which could be automatically updated upon the basis of a single national ID card. It is one of the more effective ways to reach several goals through a single instrument. Modern technology allows for this type of instrument at a lower cost and time effectiveness than just a few decades ago when Yemen came out of civil war and reunification of the country took place in 1990. It is also cost-effective to keep a single national ID card stemming from birth certificates from the civil registry as the basis for not only the voter lists but also the variety of economic activities and public services management of a modern nation and state (e.g. labor contracts; bank accounts; health, education, tax, and a host of other social services being managed by either government or other agencies).

### c) Communication, engagement and advocacy

#### Brief description of content of assistance

Along with procurement of election materials, communication, engagement, outreach and advocacy were amongst the most visible outputs of all three projects (JEAP, SETP, and NDI). They delivered an intense, multi layered, innovative, creative and high-impact set of interventions taking an encompassing approach to the concept of media and moving beyond traditional print and electronic media engagement to also include billboards, theatre, mobile media, music, posters, face-to-face engagement in Change Squares as well as SMS, websites and other social media initiatives. These latter modalities also helped address the challenge of reaching communities with high illiteracy rates and balancing contrary views about the election process. The approach taken by the international assistance buttressed the SCER's responsibilities for 'educating the public about the importance of elections' in order to "invite them to participate therein".

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<sup>10</sup> UNDP has confirmed that no donor would bear the consequences of the ink issue.

Despite the very tight timeframe, an impressive array of outreach and awareness-raising activities were achieved, in turn encouraging an unexpectedly high turnout, including of women. The implementation period was, however extremely brief with some aspects funded only days before the election allowing in some cases for less than five days implementation period at best, with sustainability therefore being rather doubtful.

This area benefitted greatly from the coordination of activities between JEAP, SETP and IFES with the latter taking responsibility for the setting up and equipping of the media center along with election-focused media training and engagement with SCER and support to accreditation while JEAP and SETP concentrated on messaging and media space and time production and placements for voter awareness and support to the CSO sector.

Prior to the election period, SCER's Media/Education and Gender Sections had been supported by two very skilled JEAP advisors. The Media Department had been fairly traditional in its approach to media, being limited to print and broadcast outlets with provision of SCER information being fed through the Ministry of Information. SCER noted however that the advisory support encouraged more creative planning including the use of the dove as a symbol of peaceful elections along with key message development. The SCER reported that planning for election media engagement was impaired by the late decision in January 2012 on the consensus candidate and by the challenges of counteracting the boycott campaigns being waged in social media. The innovative approaches generated by the JEAP/SETP/IFES interventions have been a source of pride and inspiration to the SCER media unit whose approach to media relations and outreach has been significantly changed as a result of this experience. Reinforcement of this new approach and enthusiasm through continued training and technical support interventions, based on a capacity assessment and a strategic plan that also reviews the professional skills base, training needs and responsiveness of the media unit is strongly recommended.

There were two key voter awareness campaigns implemented, one throughout the UNDP/JEAP initiative under the banner of "Your vote protects Yemen", the other supported by USAID/NDI/YEMN under the motto "Vote for a new Yemen". There was close collaboration and cooperation between both initiatives in order to avoid duplication.

As already explained, the JEAP project was realigned in December 2011 to support the elections with a specific focus on awareness raising, utilizing its prior work on civic education and women's participation to inform the programming. JEAP worked in close liaison with SETP throughout this period. JEAP's key focuses of activity were in a) voter education, civic education and training especially targeting youth, disabled and marginalized communities utilizing a variety of media; b) enhancing the participation of women; c) training of local monitors; d) training of election officials and judges on electoral disputes; and e) media coverage and outreach. The training of judges did not take place.

Among the outputs, JEAP supported the production of a short film on women's participation that was repeatedly broadcast on three TV channels; TV ads, radio dialogues, panel discussions, theatre, billboards, an internet campaign and promotional materials as well as support to ten NGOs focusing on participation of marginalized communities.

SETP essentially pulled together the coordinated approach with JEAP, IFES and SCER, helping to allocate tasks through a three-pronged set of objectives; a) to focus on marginalized groups; b) through a cascade training process in order to reach as many people in the short time available; and c) through an NGO partner Programme.

SETP identified a broad-based awareness campaign to promote public participation in the elections, the product elements of which have been described above and which were supported by an intensive two week awareness campaign preceded by some TOT training of local coordinators and facilitators. Engagement with youth was supplemented by a post-election training initiative to foster longer term leadership skills and effective participation in transition period dialogue.

IFES provided strong, skilled and targeted support to SCER with the establishment and equipping of the Media Centre in the Movenpick Hotel. The Media Centre concept is not new for SCER which has previously used the Police Club location in Sana'a for this purpose. However the combination of new initiatives such as provision of high speed internet; liaison with authorities for accreditation and the rapid turnaround of visas for international media and importation of broadcast equipment; the provision of facilities for live broadcasts and the use of the Centre by other stakeholders including the UN's Special Adviser, together with targeted training on media skills to SCER staff, expanded the concept considerably. A women's education team from SCER was also based in the media center distributing materials on women's education and awareness. The IFES media advisor also provided much targeted support to SCER's media department and identified in his exit report particular areas for future technical, training and advisory support that will encourage a more independent and self-contained media presence by the SCER rather than relying on implementation of media outputs through the Ministry of Information. This will be an important part of the assertion of SCER's independence and impartiality.

NDI's Get-out-the vote (GOTV) campaign supported by the Responsive Governance Project of USAID and implemented through the Yemen Election Monitoring Network was another element of the outreach and civic education activities. A voter education and GOTV expert was recruited to provide training to civil society organizations in planning and implementing volunteer voter education and GOTV campaigns. Focus groups discussions held in December 2011 to gauge public opinion on the elections and transition process and test messaging were followed by a further trainings in January and the subsequent preparation and distribution of 1.2 million promotional products as well as pro-election messaging via the MTN mobile network. A lesson learned exercise after the election identified time constraints as having an impact but noted the increased understanding and participation of some who had originally intended to boycott the election.

## **Lessons learned and recommendations**

Civic education campaigns before and for this election clearly had a positive effect on voter mobilization in general and of women in particular. The table in the next section gives an idea of the extent of women's mobilization throughout the years.

Voter education for this election was more intensive and of better quality than in previous elections in the opinion of experts who have been in the country for a long period of time (NDI). Concerning voter education campaigns, all the successful components of the campaigns should be retained in order to capitalize on them at phase (for example the motto "Your voice protects Yemen" plus the jingle which became very popular.)

Relationships between international stakeholders as well as the SCER with political parties have been an almost empty chapter in the past elections. Closer relationship with parties as the main actors of the electoral competition should be looked for.

Regarding media relationships, the SCER seemed not to be fully aware of the importance of media

relationships. They started quite late to engage in media activities until a media center was established 10 days prior to the elections.

## Recommendations

- A needs assessment and robust strategic planning exercise that embraces coordinated and harmonized media as well as civic and voter education approaches, and that helps to identify skills gaps should be conducted early in Phase 2. It should be followed by long-term engagement with media and the community especially targeting regions outside Sana'a, women, young people and other marginalized sectors of society.
- Technical assistance that leverages the pre-election experience; focuses on reform of the approach to media engagement in SCER; builds on the new vision encouraged by the election experience, and that enhances the SCER's independent, professional, and transparent capacity in media strategy and planning and the use of media as a tool of education and social change is a recommended focus in Phase 2.
- The skills building, education, media strategies and participation of women, young people and other communities that will be required in the ongoing national dialogue and transition process should build upon the momentum, relationships and successes of the election period and should proceed without significant gaps.
- At this time, taking into account other priorities of the transition process, the evaluation team is not convinced of the need for the establishment of a permanent media center.

### d) Women's participation

#### Brief description of content of assistance

As identified in much research including that of the Yemeni Women's Union, an organization founded in the 1960s, deeply embedded cultural, traditional and other impediments to the participation of women in politics are a deterrent to women nominating and standing as candidates and engaging in public life, despite the increasing rates of the participation of women as voters. Women's participation was therefore a core pillar of the JEAP Programme from the outset (and will be evaluated separately) and the use of media and other outreach strategies to encourage the participation of women in the elections was a deliberate short term focus of the JEAP and SETP.

While SCER has a Women's Unit, it does not have the status of a department or section but rather is an office attached to the office of the Chairman. Gender mainstreaming is not reflected either in the staffing of the SCER, in the gender balance of SCER appointees or in its Programming. A significant impact of the targeted support to women's participation both in the JEAP pillar and more so in the focus on women in the pre-election education, media and awareness raising activities, has been to shine the spotlight on the need to pay attention to SCER's institutional approach to women's participation including the harmonization of initiatives, policies and approaches within SCER.

The section above on communications, outreach and advocacy has already identified a number of outreach activities as they pertain to the participation of women. While the media and awareness activities afforded creative, positive visibility and prominence to women, unfortunately the perception of a tokenistic longer-term support to women's organizations and the impossibly short timeframes for

delivery of objectives does not reflect positively on the actual commitment of international assistance to women's engagement in the electoral process.

In addition to the election-related activities outlined above, JEAP focused in this period on the continuation of the training of women in public relations and political promotional skills and on its Women's Political Education Project which produced a manual, training Programmes for 71 female university students, a website and various promotional materials. In addition the JEAP/SCER work with the Ministry of Endowment which included training in early December on encouraging women's participation in political life along with the publication and dissemination of the "Endowment booklet" which proved to be a "great hit" was very effective.

JEAP supported the Yemeni Women's Union in voter awareness, a hotline for election information and transport for women to attend polling centers. The Union reported however that while its proposal was with JEAP well in advance of the election, funding was received only four days prior, thus seriously impairing effectiveness. The frustration of not being able to deliver on anticipated outputs was also somewhat demoralizing.

In January and February in the lead-up to the election, in partnership with the Ministry of Endowment and Guidance, JEAP also supported training of female religious leaders to activate the role of female guides on the importance of women's participation.

SETP's focus and outputs were on ensuring visibility to women's participation as elaborated in the previous section. The high turnout of voters and the very acceptable rate of women's participation, along with the momentum generated by the innovative and hopefully agenda-setting education and promotional strategies to engage women in the electoral process should be leveraged in Phase 2.

Under Responsive Government Programme (RGP), NDI voter education/GOTV campaign placed heavy emphasis on women participation. For example, two-thirds of all print materials depicted images of women taking part in elections. Moreover, in its training of monitors, NDI ensured a 50% gender balance with YEMN.

### **Lessons learned and recommendations**

This is an area of political life where gender balance leaves much to desire. Male and female voters are getting close to the gender distribution of the population countrywide. Nevertheless, women participation in the electoral operation at any level is extremely limited. Women candidates for parliament in previous elections were few. For the first time in the history of the country there is a female commissioner at SCER.

It is to be noticed that voter turnout figures other than those recorded in the table below are not available yet. The SCER has only reported, and seemingly recorded at the moment, nation-wide statistics, which remain to be broken by constituency, polling station and gender.

Election	Parliament 1993	Parliament 1997	Presidential 1999	Presidential 2006	Presidential 2012
Total registered	2.638.323	4.737.701	5.621.829	9.248.456	10.331.435
Women registered	478.379	1.273.079	1.702.777	3.900.565	4.360.383
Women registered as % of total registered	17.8 %	26.9 %	30.3 %	42.2 %	42.2 %
Total voter cast	2.271.185	2.843.216	3.772.941	6.025.818	6.660.093
Voter turnout as % of votes cast	86.1 %	60.0 %	67.1 %	65.2 %	64.5 %

**Note:** Voter lists at the February 2012 elections were the same as those prepared for elections in 2008.

**Source:** Data for the period 1993-1999 comes from Jamal Adimi, "Voter registration in Yemen" in López-Pintor, R. and Gratschew, M. (2002). Voter Turnout since 2005. Global Survey. Stockholm: International IDEA, p. 64. Data for 2006 come from SCER and for 2012 from the observer report by YEMN.

## Recommendations

- The continued strong support of advocacy for women's political rights, voter mobilization and sharing in the electoral administration and operation in a fair manner is strongly urged.
- SCER will benefit from a more integrated approach to gender mainstreaming that cuts across human resources and personnel, media and outreach, training, operations and other departments. A capacity assessment can help provide direction as to the best means to achieve this within a structural reform process.
- The SCER Women's Unit should be elevated to department status and led on cross-cutting and mainstreaming gender across SCER activities.
- SCER workshops should have a policy of 50 per cent women's participation.
- It is strongly recommended that Phase 2 technical assistance include continued provision for a Gender Advisor.

## e) Election monitoring

### Brief description of content of assistance

The SCER accredited more than 16,000 domestic monitors, although it is hard to figure out how many of those were more properly political party poll watchers. At least in the urban areas, it was witnessed the presence of at least one domestic observer per polling station.

NDI activities concerning election monitoring mainly consisted of supporting civil society organizations for the monitoring of elections (training and deployment by using standard statistical methodologies) as well as an international expert team in support of the election. This was the only international group closer to an observation mission other than Embassies' staff engaging on observation activities on elections day.

As for domestic monitoring, NDI was connected to the Yemen Elections Monitoring Network group (YEMN) since 2006, and they helped them this time to set the networks of monitoring organizations, develop a monitoring manual and a data base for the conduct of cascade training of monitors. NDI leveraged its global staff network to provide technical support and on-site operational assistance to YEMN. There were 42 governorate coordinators as trainers of trainers (always 50% gender balanced) and then 1175 monitors being trained all over the country.

NDI also trained more than 200 monitors of the Resonate organization upon request. Additionally, training was also given to people from other 15 monitoring organizations.

### **Lessons learned and recommendations**

An asset is the NDI continuing presence in the country (12 years), always engaging in training and advising for the deployment of domestic monitors around Yemen and their preparation of very professional observer reports. Additionally, NDI has deployed international observer missions at certain elections, whose reports were made public in and outside the country. Continuity was beneficial for all main stakeholders: NDI itself, civil society organizations and the electoral administration, which could benefit from the measure of legitimacy positive observer reports may provide on the conduct of elections.

The presence of domestic monitors around the country has worked, as at other occasions, as a tool of transparency, confidence building and learning for improvement at future electoral events. This allowed to not only knowing the nice face of the electoral event, which everybody praises fairly enough, but also the flaws and irregularities, which can be corrected and surmounted in future events.

### **Recommendations**

- In this context, it is worth making a reference to some recommendations by domestic monitors, which might be of special interest for future support activities by the international community other than to domestic monitoring itself. These are mainly the following: a) Electoral reforms to develop the election law in order to improve the democratic process; b) reconsider the electoral system and redistribute the polling centers and constituencies equally with taking into consideration the electoral and administrative divisions; c) facilitate the process of the civil register (electronic ID) to benefit from it when updating the voter list; d) spread and raise electoral awareness among people through holding continuous voter education Programmes and encouraging people to participate constructively in the elections; e) implement the quota system for women participation in the Supervisory and main committees; f) benefit from the new technology in managing the electoral process to achieve precise results in a short time; g) build the administrative and technical capacity of the SCER employees and developing an effective mechanism for protecting the electoral materials and distributing allowances in a transparent manner and in accordance with a clear timeframe; h) set up mechanisms for training heads and member of the supervisory, main and sub committees to improve their skills and performance to activate the punishment and reward principle; i) train

and raise awareness of security committees to perform their duties efficiently and impartially; j) pay attention to the environment of the polling centers to be accessible by the elderly and people with disabilities; k) provide all polling stations with sufficient quantity of the indelible ink; l) provide all polling stations with voting booths and oblige the poll workers to set up them in a place ensuring the secrecy of voting; m) encourage audio and visual media to cover the elections professionally and impartially (These recommendations come from the YEMN observer report).

- Regarding international observers, a recommendation is that, like in other elections prior to that of past February, the presence of some standard international observer mission would help as an instrument of transparency and confidence building.



## Other Areas of Consideration

### a) Engagement with Media

Section 5 c of this report outlines the work done with media including the media-focused voter education/information campaigns which were found to be innovative and effective in encouraging voter participation. This section concentrates more on media responses to election processes and on attitudes towards media as a source of information.

The IFES Yemen Survey Briefing report (a post election survey) notes that “talk shows and news Programmes both on television and radio are the preferred method of receiving information for most Yemenis. Informal channels such as word of mouth or Qat sessions still rank as one of the highest methods for citizens collecting information. The most common source of information is television. Eighty four per cent of survey respondent said they received election information through TV, and TV and radio are also cited as the media sources believed to be most helpful in learning about election-related issues. In contrast, internet use is very low, even among younger Yemenis, and probably not an effective method of reaching potentially disenfranchised groups.” (p19) Newspapers also rank very low on utility as a source of information. The survey concluded that a majority of Yemenis (69%) heard information messages or activities aimed to inform citizens about voting ahead of the elections. Of these 28 per cent found the information abundant and helpful; 49 per cent felt it was satisfactory but would have liked to receive more information and 20 per cent felt they needed more information. Men were more likely to receive information about the election (75%) than women (64%) and younger citizens more likely than older.

Discussions with media representatives reflected the generally positive perceptions of the election. Despite the uncontested nature of the event, one newspaper editor said that “the election was the only

way out of the debacle – the country needed to be pulled out of a very difficult situation.” Others likened it to a referendum, or even a totalitarian, no-contest experience, jokingly saying “we had a totalitarian election to get us out of a totalitarian regime.” Reflecting the IFES survey, media representatives noted that other country indicators such as economic growth or stability have not been impacted by the election and continued dissatisfaction with the state of the economy will be a challenge in maintaining stability.

Overall, media reported a positive relationship with SCER who were judged to be fair and transparent. Some weaknesses were noted in the capacity of SCER staff to effectively engage with media - a factor that can be addressed as part of the SCER capacity building in the future. All media utilized the Media Centre at the Movenpick Hotel and some media would like to see a permanent media centre able to be used to training and other events. A serious weakness within SCER as noted by media relates to the lack of historical data – especially results data held by SCER on results by polling place - and the feeble levels of information reported on SCER’s website. This needs attention over the next twelve months.

More critically, media representatives judged themselves to be in need of training especially in relation to electoral systems and reporting. They noted the absence of any viable code of conduct for media and the lack of sanctions in regards to offences and also noted the outdated legal framework for media in Yemen which still makes it an offence for media to, for example, criticize the President. They agreed that the media environment for 2012 is not comparable with that in a competitive election period and that in future, a more structured relationship via a Media Forum or similar with SCER, the provision of media training and monitoring of media for balance and fairness will be useful. Media monitoring could be outsourced to an NGO, one of the specialised media and elections service providers such as BBC Media Action, Internews or International IDEA for example or otherwise supported by expert technical advice.

Media representatives have noted a change in the media environment since the last election with a lessening of censorship and a more free environment in which to work. During the elections they said newspapers were besieged by supporters of the former President and it was very difficult for opponents of the regime to report to work as pro-Saleh editors dictated editorial lines. This situation has now loosened up significantly and the “space and freedom” given to journalist now is “very significant”. The impact of cultural change outside and within media institutions - the chicken and egg debate - was a point of some discussion with interlocutors.

## b) Engagement with Political parties

In the uncontested election of February 2012 the UNDP-supported programmes did not have a substantive engagement with political parties. The key providers in this case were NDI and to a lesser extent, IFES, and the efforts of these organisations were commended. In the context of the representative role of political parties in the national dialogue process in which the UN through the Special Adviser is playing such a prominent role, some caution has been expressed regarding the appropriateness of including direct support to political parties in the next phase of the transition programme. This may be a point of discussion between the stakeholders in Yemen. Such consideration should not necessarily preclude election-specific training such as that provided to the electoral committees / party agents, nor should it preclude furthering the engagement between the SCER and political parties as part of the outreach programme and in the interest of the increased transparency of the SCER.

Political party representatives interviewed for this report expressed general respect for the way in which the SCER conducted itself and managed the electoral process in February 2012. There was some

criticism of the lack of training to electoral committees in regional areas but noted that parties generally used people with experience in these roles so the minimalist training did not pose major problems. There is universal mistrust of the voters register, criticism of the lack of provision of an electronic copy of the VR to parties, and in some cases very clear preferences for the way forward (based on a national ID card for which time may not favour such an approach). There was some criticism regarding the lack of a formal dialogue mechanism for parties with the SCER, a state that parties felt required immediate remedy, and a number of parties indicated they were unaware of the Media Centre at the Movenpick Hotel. The SCER's poor data and information services in SCER particularly in relation to historical election data and results records were noted by all interlocutors.

As with media, party representatives are mindful of the inadequacy of the electoral legal framework and of the perceptions of the politicisation of the SCER through prior appointment mechanisms. There remains a legacy of distrust between parties and the SCER as an institution which has not always enjoyed respect for impartiality and independence.

They are also mindful of the role of parties in promoting conflict.

Parties are clearly very engaged in the national dialogue and hailed the work of the Special Adviser.



# Value for Money and Effectiveness

## Brief Background on Value for Money principles and assessment criteria

'Value for Money' (VfM) has emerged as a key criteria in project management practice with specific VfM assessment criteria now applying to DFID-funded projects globally. The UK's Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) oversees DFID and is empowered to conduct its own discrete Programme evaluations. It reports directly to the Parliament and its views and recommendations are taken very seriously.

Good value for money is defined by the British National Audit Office as "the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcome". VfM is not only about money and costs however, nor is it about simply focusing on getting the cheapest product. VfM is a set of assessment practices as well as initiatives and schemes, and forms part of performance management systems including outcomes. VfM is also used as an auditing tool as well as a process in economic appraisal to help decide whether to invest in a proposed scheme or not.

VfM is focused on four areas: economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity. In assessing projects for compliance with VfM policy, four questions are applied:

- Does the Programme have realistic and appropriate objectives and a clear plan as to how and why the planned intervention will have the desired impact?
- Does the Programme have robust delivery arrangements?
- Is the Programme having a positive, transformational and lasting impact on the lives of the beneficiaries and is it transparent and accountable?

- Does the Programme incorporate learning to improve aid delivery?

These are questions that should be reviewed in consultation with donors as the elaboration of Phase 2 of SETP progresses.

A helpful outline of the VfM assessment criteria framework has been developed by ICAI whose own assessment processes start with the M&E data in tracking progress towards outcomes “via accurate, meaningful metrics”, asking whether the Programme is targeting and reaching intended beneficiaries as well as collecting data on cost-effectiveness. These methods are supplemented by on-the-ground observation, direct engagement with individuals and groups; literature reviews, auditing and targeted investigations. Ratings are based on the green, green-amber, amber-red and red systems.

ICAI's guiding principles (below) to assessing effectiveness and VfM are another helpful guide to project development:

- The intended beneficiaries come first ie the impact of the Programme on the ground. Are beneficiaries involved in Programme planning, rollout and monitoring for instance?
- Aid should always be delivered with sustainability in mind and avoid the creation of dependence.
- What matters is not always easy to quantify (eg accountability). It is acknowledged that elements of governance Programmes where change relates to attitudes and behaviours rather than quantifiable results is often more challenging.
- Waste and corruption must be addressed robustly.
- VfM does not necessarily mean choosing the cheapest option.
- Well-managed risk taking is encouraged.
- Transparency and accountability matters.

## The February 2012 process and VfM

International support to the February 2012 election was mobilised in an extremely short period with only three months lead time available and had been preceded in the JEAP Programme by operational and delivery complexities exacerbated by the shifting political sands and timetables. Adequate ‘electoral cycle’ preparation was not in place prior to the decision to hold an uncontested election as the first phase of the transition process although a good working relationship with the SCER was in place and a degree of training and capacity building had been done with the SCER and civil society. As was reinforced by interviews with interlocutors, the elections were key to pulling Yemen back from the brink of civil and political collapse, providing a breathing space for broader consultation and dialogue.

The very short preparatory period was by necessity focused on operational and election delivery priorities with no pretence that the Programme would contribute in any meaningful way to capacity development and institutional learning in the short term. In an ideal electoral support environment this would be unacceptable, but the circumstances left no choice but to focus on election delivery with a view to a more sustained, development-focused engagement to follow.

In the context of the time pressures; in the light of the extremely serious political crisis facing the country, and despite the lack of focused learning and capacity development, the international support to the

2012 election process nonetheless can be assessed positively against the four key questions above:

***Does the Programme have realistic and appropriate objectives and a clear plan as to how and why the planned intervention will have the desired impact?***

The objective was to ensure the election was conducted in a transparent and accountable manner with the result acceptable to Yemen citizens as the first major event in the transition process. This was achieved.

Among responses from political parties, civil society and media to the impact of the elections and the manner in which they were conducted, responses often noted the uncontested nature of the process indicating that this will not be the same in 2014, but nonetheless adding comments such as:

"The elections were important because they shifted constitutional legitimacy to the new President thus avoiding the revolutionary uprising which could have led the country into a dark tunnel."

"The process was very satisfactory to a large extent."

"The process of transition is critical to stability...things would not have settled without the elections."

"The high turnout shows the people want peace and stability."

"Smooth elections helped the transfer of power to a new regime."

"The elections were a circuit-breaker that allowed the process of national dialogue to start."

"The SCER conducted itself very normally."

"People started to breathe after the elections."

"The most positive aspect was change itself...and that the country took itself out of a crisis."

The IFES Yemen Survey Briefing Report of May 2012 (funded by USAID) aimed to ascertain levels of confidence in the 2012 Presidential election and to identify needs for the coming election. As another source of verification regarding the impact of the election it is quite useful. The survey sampled 2000 respondents in 17 governorates with equal numbers of men and women. The report states (p15) that a majority of Yemenis felt the 2012 election was both free and fair, although many found the uncontested nature of the election "problematic". It is noted that Yemenis in the south and east have a much lower perception of the election and view the poll with suspicion. "Most instances of specific problems practically disappear when that region is removed" [from assessment considerations]. (p 9) This was the region where complaints of violence were highest.

The survey found that women participated in far lower numbers than men, but voters felt that administration of the election was smooth, that polling stations were easy to locate and that electoral procedures were followed properly. Respondents noted that the election was a "good political solution and prevented Yemen from a big trial" (p10) and that the results reflect the will of the people and everyone had the chance to participate.

In addition to reflecting on the February 2012 election the IFES survey also sought views on Yemeni's intention to participate in the constitutional referendum. Sixty nine per cent of respondents indicated an intention to do so. Eighty five percent of those who voted in February 2012 said they planned on

voting next time. Men are more likely to vote next time (80%) than women (57%) which is indicative of the need to focus even more strongly on gender equity issues and women's participation in the next Phase. Eighty per cent of respondents reported being very or somewhat likely to vote in the next elections. With regards to the SCER the survey found a generally high level of confidence in the EMB.

***Does the Programme have robust delivery arrangements?***

UNDP established a number of working groups both for donors and collaborative forums focusing on technical and operational matters. These high level working groups provided for shared decision and policy making processes and were effective communication forums. UNDP put in place fast-tracked procedures in order facilitate rapid recruitment of technical experts as well as special measures including delegated authority to ensure procurement progressed without delays. Noting the timebound nature of elections, UNDP's cumbersome administrative procedures have long been a source of complaint and were addressed specifically in the August 2012 Review of UNDP Election Support. However the experience of the Yemen 2012 election project was extremely positive, demonstrating a capacity for the effective the application of rapid response mechanisms. No delays in election rollout were experienced as a result. It is acknowledged that some procurement was premature, and that grants to some civil society organisations were so late as to be virtually ineffective. It is recommended that relevant technical advice always be sought on election procurement to mitigate against the potential for inappropriate or wasteful spending.

As is covered elsewhere in the report, the Programme was not centred in a robust M&E framework and baseline data was largely absent. It is recommended that a more rigorous M&E framework be established for Phase 2 that provides for measurable Programmes on results and impact against verifiable indicators. See pages 25-27 for a more detailed discussion on M&E approaches.

***Is the Programme having a positive, transformational and lasting impact on the lives of the beneficiaries and is it transparent and accountable?***

The election was the first step in the dialogue process which will conclude with competitive elections scheduled for early 2014. At this stage, while the elections were conducted successfully in a transparent and accountable manner with the outcome acceptable to Yemen citizens, it is too early to determine the transformational and lasting impact. It is true to say a longer term impact of the three month period of intense support to the election process is the fact the preparations for the national dialogue due to commence in November 2012 have been ongoing, supported by the highly respected Special Adviser to Yemen. These are positive indicators of progress.

***Does the Programme incorporate learning to improve aid delivery?***

The support to the February 2012 elections was not geared up to nor was there time to focus on learning in the sense of capacity development. However, that is not to say that intense and sustainable learning was not embraced within the 2012 effort and will be built on and embedded into Phase 2 planning.

From the perspective of constructive criticism, interlocutors volunteered myriad problems and challenges with the election including almost universal distrust with the voters register; concerns about the impartiality of the SCER as appointees of the previous regime; the inability of voters in security-affected regions to participate; poor communication and provision of information from SCER and the lack of structured dialogue with political parties, media and civil society; inadequate training provided to election committees; an almost total lack of data (especially historical data) available (for

media research purposes, among others); ; poor web-based information; the inability to interrogate results in any detail and the continued lack of access to results; no provision of electronic version of the voters register provided to parties; outdated electoral and media legal frameworks. Concerns were also voiced regarding the destabilization efforts of certain political interests; the lack of capacity of media to report knowledgeably on electoral and governance matters; the tendency in a competitive electoral environment for the media to exercise bias and the absence of any moderating influence such as media monitoring; codes of conduct or sanctions.

It is recommended that these reflections also inform priorities for future support.



## Concluding Remarks

The early presidential election of February 2012 was called in an emergency situation under exceptional circumstances. It could be interpreted not only or mainly as a peculiar election with only one candidate running, but also as an exit from a grave political crisis, with armed conflict included, towards peace and reconciliation. In this sense, the electoral exercise constituted a most relevant political event; and as such seems to have been envisaged by the bulk of citizenry. This fact would help explaining the rather unexpectedly high voter turnout as many Yemenis may have looked at the election as a peace making instrument more than just the choice of a President.

A broad consensus has been shown by all relevant stakeholders involved at international assistance on that this assistance was instrumental for the success of the elections. Some international electoral support to elections in Yemen has been provided since the first elections of 1993 after the reunification of the country. As for the past elections, they would have taken place anyway once an international agreement was reached for the launching of a peace process. Nevertheless, without international assistance, the elections would have been harder in getting properly organized, and voter mobilization especially among women might have been less massive. Some indicators –hard to put into direct connection with impact by international assistance as they may be– can be mentioned on this regard. One is the statistics on women registration over the years as illustrative of a continuing effort in supporting civil society organizations on women advocacy. Another illustration directly related to the past elections might come from survey research to be forthcoming from an IFES sponsored post-election opinion survey where results shall speak on people awareness and political participation, which largely may have stemmed from internationally supported public outreach Programmes. Moreover, and most importantly, the past elections would offer a rare opportunity to look at performance by donors and implementing agencies from an instrumental rather than a substantive perspective. It was an occasion

where the way **how** things were done may be considered more enriching than **what** kind of things were done.

A successful event as the last election was, it should be kept in mind that next and more competitive elections –even referenda- will most likely not be the same. Keeping momentum at public awareness and democratic enthusiasm at establishing a representative system of government and the rule of law constitutes a big challenge and a hard undertaking. In what comes to elections, comparative international experience of the last few decades shows that –particularly after armed conflict but not only- the bulk of the people consider that the most significant political change is achieved once a new government has been established by popular vote; once the most dangerous stage of the conflict seem to have been surmounted. This is why voter turnout after armed conflict tends to be very high (1). Then political interest tends to decline and political affairs (e.g. constitution drafting, legal reform, etc.) remain in the less open circles of the elites.

Hence the need for donors and other stakeholders of not indulging on the past, but looking forward with a spirit of continuing engagement at sustainability of the electoral management bodies as much as enhancement of public awareness through civic education campaigns, influencing school curricula, updating of voter list, modernizing of civil registries etc. The fact that Yemen has had multiparty elections for near 20 years did not avoid the country from suffering new and serious political crises.

History shows that democratic progress and consolidation takes time. It is not a matter of years, but of decades or even longer. Elections are a crucial step towards democracy. In the case of Yemen there were multiparty elections since 1993, and we still talk about a transitional stage towards democracy. Consequently, donors' attitudes and support should be thought of as strategies and activities within a long-term framework. It is only with this kind of approach that donors would feel encouraged and committed to maintain an institutional memory on past assistance experiences and be prepared to operate in an efficient manner –as they did in February 2012- for single electoral events hopefully within forthcoming electoral cycles in Yemen.



## Annexes

# Annex 1

## Table of Support to Early Presidential Elections

1. SCER	Thematic Area	Input USD	Objectives: Key target areas	Imp. Agency	Outcomes	Time-line	Impact
	Procurement* of electoral commodities (excl. procurement of media purchases)	2,758 697 USD (SETP)	SCER resourced for conduct of elections with necessary equipment including ink; IT equipment and election kits	UNDP through SETP and IFES <sup>b</sup>	All necessary equipment procured and delivered on time. No overlapping of purchases thanks to good coordination among project staff.	3 months	Dedicated effort and fast track procurement in tight timeframe ensured SCER resourced through SETP to conduct elections. Cost efficiencies would have benefitted from operations expert input at time procurement decisions being assessed. Pre Nov 2011 procurement (JEAP) suffered from delays and quality shortcomings, poor management oversight of issues affecting donor confidence and relations.  Absence of strategic and operational planning hindered timely and considered procurement planning.
	Support to Electoral Processes	-	Revised JEAP strategy in December 2011 focused purely on delivery of electoral support but not procurement. <sup>c</sup>	UNDP through JEAP	In the context of the electoral cycle approach, the project and period under evaluation fully supported the election event.	Full project period	Absence of needs and capacity assessments, baselines and strategic planning a key lesson learned for future phase. Some electoral legal reform analysis contributed under JEAP but that component withdrawn with Revision of Oct 2010. Will nonetheless remain a useful input to Phase 2 of SETP.
		-	SETP Phase 1 focused purely on early presidential election event and support to civic education and voter awareness with a view to achieving a legitimate and acceptable transition step through the early presidential election.  Phase 2 intends to support follow on transition process.	UNDP through SETP	GIS mapping of polling stations carried out and SCER website created.  Other contextual areas remain substantially unaddressed to be the focus of Phase 2.		Electoral cycle approach through JEAP was seriously impacted by external events, revisions and a degree of unsatisfactory donor/UNDP relations, communications and collaborative management. To be assessed separately.  SETP targeted the election event and effectively achieved its objectives.
	Capacity Development	-	As an emergency response SETP Phase 1 was not designed as a capacity building project. This will be the focus of Phase 2. Nonetheless various trainings for SCER staff and CSOs were carried out.	UNDP TA through JEAP and SETP; IFES, particularly in security and media strategy interventions. <sup>d</sup>	Absence of capacity baselines do not allow for adequate assessment on capacity development achievements.  Trainings in initial VR development with SCER and training to NGOs carried out.  BRIDGE trainings conducted under JEAP.  Capacity development in context of SETP Phase 1 is by its nature ancillary.	3 months	Initial JEAP targets revised substantially in October 2010 and December 2011 to focus on the 2012 elections.  SETP focused on delivery of procurement and electoral support, not capacity development. Phase 2 plans to focus on targeted institutional support including the development of a reliable VR as well as electoral legal framework reform.  A capacity needs assessment to inform training, and strategic planning exercise as baseline activities in Phase 2 is recommended.

a Processes for procurement through SETP and JEAP for SCER equipment is elaborated and assessed separately.

b USAID through IFES supported repairs of metal voting booths; procurement of 26,000 cardboard voting booths; armbands for security personnel as well as technical assistance/expertise in Operations Room and to Media Centre and the Media Directorate in SCER.

c EU as JEAP donor determined that due to prior experience with procurement issues, balance of JEAP contribution to 2012 elections would avoid equipment procurement commitments.

d Due to the tight timeframe and late start, IFES was able to provide limited security and operations support but has made recommendations for strategic development in this area. IFES interventions in media strategy support were innovative and effective but need targeted follow up in Phase 2 to embed new skills and deepen newly introduced professional capacities

1. SCER	Thematic Area	Input USD	Objectives: Key target areas	Imp. Agency	Outcomes	Time-line	Impact
	Communication, Engagement and Advocacy	630,946.00 (SETP)	Adequate level of participation to ensure process deemed acceptable as step in transition process.	SCER and sub-contracted NGOs procured through UNDP (with small IFES contribution to enhance and support existing PI process through SETP/ SCER)	Voter turnout suggested to be as high as 64% exceeded expectations.  Well coordinated outreach and VE through SCER, SETP, JEAP and sub contracted partners as well as NDI through GOTV and YEMN projects.	3 months	Innovative, effective and high impact. SETP TA well targeted. Sustainability doubtful without continued international input.  Positive impact of international assistance well recognised within SCER and CSOs.  Need for enhancing internal and external communications capacities of SCER identified for future phase as well as training in utilising media as tool of education and social change.
		Additional funds through USAID;  Restorative Governance Project.		NDI			
	Training	N/A to SCER in Phase 1 of SETP.	E-day training of polling officials including Basic and Supervisory Committees.	UNDP through SETP and JEAP.	Very brief training workshops conducted	Full project period	JEAP provided BRIDGE and other trainings pre Nov 2011 (not the subject of this evaluation).
		E-Day training  Limited training was embedded in some CSO activities.  NDI provided training to domestic observers and CSOs through the GOTV campaign	Enhanced presence of Women's Unit and gender mainstreaming and women's participation.	JEAP          NDI	Gender training through SCER Women's Unit and training with Ministry of Endowment on  Women's participation.     ToT for YEMN CSO. Design of a training manual used by many other CSOs. Support to Resonate observers. training with Yemeni Women's Foundation and Youth Leadership Dev Centre conducted.  GOTV project conducted many short term awareness raising trainings. Domestic observer reports produced.		JEAP Gender training was the first such experience for most of the participants. "Endowment Booklet" on Islamic perspectives of women's participation a 'big hit'.  Training was an added 'unplanned' benefit of Intl TA in, for example, media strategy interventions and VE and awareness.  E-day training was short term and not part of a broader training or capacity development approach.  A future capacity assessment and capacity baseline will provide more targeted direction regarding training needs and future interventions.

Thematic Area	Input USD	Objectives: Key target areas	Imp. Agency	Outcomes	Time-line	Impact
Women's Participation	<p>An objective of Phase 1 SETP VE.</p> <p>Pillar focus of JEAP.</p>	<p>Increased women's informed participation.</p> <p>Enhanced women's participation in political process was limited through EPE to focus on participation as voters.</p> <p>Sub contracted NGOs including Yemeni Women's Union and others aimed to encourage participation of women in 2012 EPE.</p>	<p>SCER and subcontracted groups procured through UNDP JEAP and SETP initiatives.</p> <p>JEAP</p> <p>NGOs sub contracted through JEAP.</p>	<p>Vibrant, diverse use of media with prominent focus on women's participation.</p> <p>First ever gender focused training in SCER.</p> <p>Despite weak and very limited delivery on this component, women's turnout was high.</p>	<p>Less than one month</p>	<p>Intended specialised programming input from JEAP was almost non existent. Women's engagement benefitted more from media and VE activities and from UNDP civic-ed TA expert input. Delays in subcontracting NGOs prior to 21 Feb 2012 resulted in delivery period of less than one week in some circumstances thus limiting impact. Clear need for future SCER focus on gender.</p> <p>Profile of Women's Unit raised; delivered record number of communications and products including 'Endowment Booklet'; highlighted need for gender reform in SCER.</p>
Technical Advice	<p>TA embedded in JEAP and SETP.</p>	<p>TA aimed to support coordination and implementation of limited support objectives for Phase 1.</p>	<p>UNDP to SETP and JEAP.</p> <p>IFES and NDI.</p>	<p>Higher than anticipated voter turnout; acceptability of EPE as critical transition step;</p> <p>Innovative approaches implemented (payment of SCER staff, armbands for the security forces, SCER communication strategy)</p>	<p>JEAP and NDI on-going. SETP and IFES less than two months.</p>	<p>Despite arriving less than two months before election, SETP Phase 1, TA was well targeted through CTA and Adviser appointees and established positive relationships for Phase 2 at all levels.</p> <p>JEAP locally engaged TA in Communications and Gender of high quality with dedicated staff.</p> <p>JEAP TA unable to contribute to procurement decisions in absence of SETP TA due to limits of project scope.</p> <p>Effective TA from IFES to SCER in media are contributed to very positive SCER profile and through NDI to domestic observer presence.</p> <p>Continuity in UNDP TA presence is strongly urged.</p> <p>Consultation with SCER on TA and Advisor posts recommended.</p>
Media Centre		<p>Advice on VE, media relations strategy; contribute to more open media environment and establishment of media centre used for early presidential elections.</p>	<p>IFES</p>	<p>Temp Media (not results) Centre well utilised; targeted TA supported capacity and positive profile of SCER;</p>	<p>Jan/Feb 2012</p>	<p>Effective interventions contributed to positive electoral process perceptions and standing of SCER and to legitimacy of process; sustainability of this standard of media centre in absence of Intl support is doubtful.</p>
Operations Room/ Security Support		<p>Capacity building of SCER security sector.</p>	<p>IFES</p>	<p>Future security planning priorities elaborated.</p>	<p>Jan/Feb 2012</p>	<p>Security interventions highlighted gaps, needs and future programming priorities.</p>

	Thematic Area	Input USD	Objectives: Key target areas	Imp. Agency	Outcomes	Time-line	Impact
2. CSOs	a) Media, Outreach and Elections Awareness.	See note below. <sup>e</sup>	Enhanced awareness of electoral process and satisfactory level of participation.	SCER strategies supported through SETP and JEAP procurement and TA.  IFES through Media Centre.	Multi-dimensional awareness campaign utilised diverse media, PSAs, theatre, music, sms, new media and other strategies.	3 months	Highly visible and well received media campaign contributed to higher than expected turnout.
	b) Women's Participation		Through JEAP, increased participation of women in all aspects of political life; enhancement of SCER women's office in liaison with NWC. <sup>f</sup> Approach dropped in final pre-election focus on procurement.	SCER through JEAP.  NDI through GOTV campaign.	Outreach and media campaigns developed by SCER were mindful of gender access and participation issues.		Vision for more effective use of media centre, technologies and processes as well as media skills needs embedded in SCER.  Higher than anticipated turnout of women attributable more probably to outreach and awareness campaign than to the women's participation project activities or pillar inputs.  SCER structure does not reflect gender equity or balance principles.

	Thematic Area	Input USD	Objectives: Key target areas	Imp. Agency	Outcomes	Time-line	Impact
3. Election Observation	a) Domestic	USAID input through NDI via CEPPS and the Restorative Governance Program.		a) NDI	YEMN Final report		Presence of large numbers of domestic observers increased confidence in the process. Reports document the quality of the process for future interventions.
	b) International <sup>g</sup>			b) N/A	Resonate Final Report		

	Thematic Area	Input USD	Objectives: Key target areas	Imp. Agency	Outcomes	Time-line	Impact
4. Donor Coord.	Project management and coordination architecture.	UNDP CO support to donor coordination and mobilisation.	Adequate funds to deliver on procurement and other costs on time.  Appropriate information-sharing and coordination architecture.	UNDP (SETP)	Mobilisation efforts resulted in SETP contributions to Phase 1 of \$7,454,831.33.  Actual expenditure in Phase 1 on HR, ink, IT equipment and support to VR, media campaign, equipment for HQ and regional offices and printing materials for VR totalled 3,846,943.93. <sup>h</sup>	4 months	Elections Working Group and other coordination structures ensured effective information flow and participatory decision-making between UNDP, other implementing partners and donors, and was welcomed and endorsed by donors.  Use of term MDBF not endorsed by donors whose contributions were specially earmarked outside the basket framework.

<sup>e</sup> The expenditure breakdown on media, outreach and elections awareness does not distinguish between direct media interventions and those supported by CSOs such as the banners and messages produced through the Yemeni Women's Union, for example.

<sup>f</sup> These activities were not the subject of the current evaluation and will need to be assessed separately as part of an overall JEAP evaluation.

<sup>g</sup> No full-fledge, countrywide, international observer missions were mounted for the Early Presidential Election (EPE). Embassies, NDI and two experts from the EU were accredited to observe but did not issue public formal reports or assessments. Only NDI issued a report on its observation mission.

<sup>h</sup> This does not include the USAID contribution through IFES and NDI.

# Annex 2

## Annex 2: Discussion Frameworks

### Political Parties Issues for Discussion

- Goal: to understand perceptions of effectiveness of the preparations for and management / conduct of the February 2012 elections.
- Your overall view of how the elections went in terms of achieving the first phase of the transition process?
- Did the conduct of the election meet your expectations of organisational and Programmeing priorities?
- What is your awareness of any differences in the way the elections were conducted in Sana's compared with more remote locations
- Were you satisfied with the level of information received from SCER on election planning including the electoral calendar, voter education, voting processes and your general contact with them? Do you think the SCER did a good job and were impartial and efficient in their management of the process?
- Awareness and perception of the fairness and balance of media coverage of the elections?
- Awareness of the role of the Special Adviser to Yemen and your opinion of his contribution?
- Awareness of mobilisation of voters through media, outreach, CSOs etc. Were political parties approached by the SER or others with voter ed or other materials / information for distribution? What about awareness of slogans such as "You Vote Protects Yemen"?
- Training / preparedness of party agents. Were you engaged at all in the formal training of your party agents present at poling stations? Was any training offered to political parties for this purpose?
- Were you aware of any domestic observation at polling places?
- What were some positive aspects of the electoral process?
- What improvements / changes would you make for future elections?
- Awareness of international support to processes?
- Did you use the media centre at the Movenpick Hotel and if so what was your view of this facility?
- There was a degree of euphoria in February that the elections went off without violence and delivered the outcome anticipated. What has been the impact if any of the elections on stability, progress

towards the national dialogue process, confidence in elections as a democratic process and so on?

- What recommendations would you make for engagement with / support to political parties in the future?

### **NGOs: Issues for Discussion**

Goal: to understand your perceptions of effectiveness of the preparations for and management / conduct of the February 2012 elections.

- Your overall view of how the elections went in terms of achieving the first phase of the transition process?
- Did the conduct of the election meet your expectations of organisational and Programmeing priorities?
- What is your awareness of any differences in the way the elections were conducted Sana's compared with more remote locations?
- Were you satisfied with the level of information received from SER on voter education, voting processes and your general contact with them? Do you think the SER did a good job and were impartial and efficient in their management of the process?
- Was there an opportunity for NGOs to meet with SER on a formal basis from time to time to discuss issues of observation, voter education and so on?
- For those that were engaged in observation, was there any formal training provided by SER to observers? Were you in receipt of information on election planning? Were you able to engage with the SER adequately for your observation purposes?
- Awareness and perception of the fairness and balance of media coverage of the elections?
- Awareness of mobilisation of voters through media, outreach, CSOs etc. Were NGOs approached by the SER or its staff or others with voter ed or other materials / information for distribution? What about awareness of slogans such as "You Vote Protects Yemen"? What was the quality of interaction with the SER?
- What were some positive aspects of the electoral process?
- What improvements / changes would you make for future elections?
- Awareness of international support to processes? How efficient was this support? Was funding adequate and received in time to conduct proposed activities?
- Did you use the media centre at the Movenpick Hotel and if so what was your view of this facility?
- There was a degree of euphoria in February that the elections went off without violence and delivered the outcome anticipated. What has been the impact if any of the elections on stability, progress towards the national dialogue process, confidence in elections as a democratic process and so on?
- What recommendations would you make for engagement with / support to NGOs in the future?

## Media

### Issues for Discussion

Goal: Noting that this was an uncontested election, the purpose is to understand your perceptions of effectiveness of the preparations for and management / conduct of the February 2012 elections.

#### General:

Your overall view of how the elections went in terms of achieving the first phase of the transition process?

Did the conduct of the election meet your expectations of organisational and Programmeing priorities?

What is your awareness of any differences in the way the elections were conducted Sana's compared with more remote locations?

Awareness of the role of the Special Adviser to Yemen and your opinion of his contribution?

#### SCER

- Were you satisfied with the level of information received from SER on voter education, voting processes, results etc and your general contact with them? Do you think the SER did a good job and were impartial and efficient in their management of the process?
- How did you find out the results? (How do you generally get results in an election?)
- Did you use the media centre at the Movenpick Hotel and if so what was your view of this facility?
- Was there an opportunity for Media to meet with SER on a formal basis from time to time to discuss issues of observation, voter education and so on?
- Media Environment
- What is the regulatory environment in terms of election coverage: Code of Conduct for Media?; what sanctions apply to breaches of the Electoral Law or code of conduct?
- What is the level of professionalism in journalism and broadcasting in Yemen? What kind of training needs exist in terms of electoral knowledge etc?
- Awareness and perception of the fairness and balance of media coverage of the elections? Was any media monitoring done in February? Is media monitoring generally done in an election period?
- How different will media coverage and approaches be during a contested election?
- What is the level of coverage of perspectives from smaller parties, NGOs, civil society etc? Do these groups know how to access media? Know how to write for media and get your attention? Is there much buying of media space and time by parties?

## Conclusions

- What were some positive aspects of the electoral process?
- What improvements / changes would you make for future elections?
- Awareness of international support to processes? How efficient was this support? Was funding adequate and received in time to conduct proposed activities?
- There was a degree of euphoria in February that the elections went off without violence and delivered the outcome anticipated. What has been the impact if any of the elections on stability, progress towards the national dialogue process, confidence in elections as a democratic process and so on?

# Annex 3

## List of Documents Consulted

### 1. Project documents

#### Multi-Donor Basket Fund: “SETP” project

- Project proposal
- Project Board Report report Phase 1
- Global Procurement plan for early election 2012

#### JEAP

- Project document
- Substantive revision n#1
- Annual review 2011
- Minutes of Meeting no .5
- JEAP table on pre-election activities
- Final project review report (2012)

#### IFES

- Report of the Senior Election Security Advisor, March 2012
- End of Assignment Report of the Media Advisor, March 2012

### 2. UNDP and other UN documents

- Needs Assessment Mission Report, EAD/UNDP 1-5 December 2011
- Consolidated Common Results Framework

### 3. Other documents

- EU EOM 2006 Final report on Presidential and Local Elections
- EU EEM 2012 Final report on Presidential Election
- NDI EOM 2012 Final Report on Presidential Election
- Yemen Elections Monitoring Network (YEMN) 2012 EOM Final Report on the Presidential election
- RESONATE and ERSOD “Election assessment report” available at ([http://ersod.org/?page\\_id=235](http://ersod.org/?page_id=235))
- Implementation Mechanism of the GCC Agreement.

# Annex 4

## List of Persons Interviewed

### UNDP

Mr. Gustavo Gonzalez	Senior Country Director, UNDP Yemen
Ms. Randa Aboul-Hosn	Country Director, UNDP Yemen
Dr Vahram Abadjian	Chief Technical Advisor, EC-UNDP Joint Election Assistance Project (JEAP)
Mr. Walid Baharoon	Programme Analyst (Governance) UNDP Support Project
Mr. Darren Nance	Elections Coordinator, SETP, UNDP Yemen
Mr. Said Sanadiki	Operations Adviser, SETP
Mr. Edward Christow	Head of Governance

### Government

Mr. Mohamad Said Al-Sa'adi	Minister of Planning and International Cooperation
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### Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER) and government

Judge Mohammed bin Hussein Al-Hakimi	President, SCER
Dr Abdulwahab Al-Qadasi	General Director, External Relations
Judge Dr Ali Suliman Ali	Head, Foreign Relations Sector
Judge Sahl Mohammed Nasir	Head, Media and Elections Awareness Sector
Mr. Abdullah Al-Dorafi	Director General for Election Operations
Mr. Nabil Al-Selwi	Director General, Media and Elections Awareness
Mr. Mohammed Salah	Director, Media and Elections
Nabil Mohammad Ahmed	Director, Voter Education and Awareness

### Missions

Mr. Katsumi Moriyasu	Counselor, and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan, Sana'a
Mr. Hiroki Haruta	Second Secretary, Embassy of Japan, Sana'a
Mr. Danny Shimmin	Governance Adviser, DFID, British Embassy, Sana'a
Mr. Robert Wilson	Mission Director, USAID, Yemen
Mr. Philippe Jacques	Counsellor, Development Cooperation, EU Delegation to Yemen

Ms. Mary Horvers	State Building, Governance and Human Rights Programme
Mr. Holger Green	Ambassador of Germany to Yemen
Ms. Stefanie Scharf	Counselor of Development Cooperation, Embassy of Germany
Mr. Philip Holzapfer	Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Germany
Emily Poskett	Statistics and Evaluation Adviser, MENA Department, DFID London
Alex Hazelgrove-Planel	Deputy Programme Manager, DFID, DFID Yemen (London)

### Implementing partners

Mr. Grant Kippen	Chief of Party, IFES Yemen
Mr. Hani Alodhari	Deputy Country Director, IFES Yemen
Wafa Ahmed A Al-Fakih	Head of Projects and Training, Yemeni Women Union (YWU)
Ms. Jalilah Al-Lahbi	Head, YWU
Ms. Iman Al-Hamzi	Project Coordinator, YWU
Ms. Heather Therrien	Country Director NDI Yemen
Ms. Zafaran Zaid	Foundation for Yemeni Women's Empowerment (YWEF)
Ms. Altaf Shgen	Executive Secretary, YWEF
Mr. Fouad Thabet	Official Programmes, YWEF
Ms. Bodoor Shaaban	Executive Director, YWEF
Mr. Ayman Mofadhal	Executive Director, Youth Economic Development Center (YEDC)
Ms. Nawal Dubies	Executive Director, YEDC
Mr. Osama Al-Faqih	Programme Coordinator, YEDC
Mr. Rafat Al-Akhali	Executive Director, Resonate
Mr. Sahl Al-Junied	Project Manager, Resonate
Mr. Saleh Al-Jabal	Financial Director, Yemen Election Mentoring Network (YEMN)
Mr. Ali Al-Golesi	Media Director, YEMN
Mr. Mabkhout Mohammed	Programmes Director, YEMN
Mr Ibrahim Al-Hair	Head of the Electoral Department of JMP and Chair of the Technical Committee of the Islah Party
Mr. Ahmed Haidrah	Head of the Electoral Department of the Yemeni Socialist Party
Mr Mohammad Al-Radai	Assistant Secretary-General, Chairman of the Technical C'ee, Nasserite Unionist Popular Organisation
Mr. Ahmea Al-Kuhlani	Head of Foreign Relations Sector in GPC (General Popular Congress)

Ms Sabah Mohanmmad	YEMN
Mr Ali Al-Golissi	YEMN
Ms Olfat Jaman	Global Change Makers
Mr Sahl Al-Junaid	Financial Manager, Resonate
Mr Mohammed Al- Maqtari	Dep Exec Director, Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights
Dr Abdulqader Al-Banaa	Exec Director, Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights
Mona Al-Harethi	Democratic School
Mr Jamel FAdel	Deputy Managing Editor, Al-Thawra Newspaper
Mr Abdullrahman Mutaheer	Deputy Director, Al-Jumhuriyah Newspaper
Mr Hassan Al-Warith	Deputy Director, General News, Saba News Agency
Mr Rajeh Badi	Managing Editor, Al-Sahuah Newspaper, Advisor to Prime Minister for Media Affairs
Dr. Mohammed Zabahr	Deputy Director, Suhail TV
Mr Ahmed Zabibah	Al-Aqiq TV
Ms Zafran	Al-Aqiq TV, Director of Channel
Abdulhakeem Hilal	Managing Editor Al-Masdar

# Annex 5

## Assessment Team Profiles

### **RAFAEL LÓPEZ-PINTOR:**

Currently a freelance international electoral consultant mainly involved in electoral processes in the Arab World (i.e. Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen). Born in Spain (1942) and Spanish national. Ph.D. in Political Science by the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, and Doctor of Law by the University Complutense of Madrid, Spain. Former tenured professor at the University Autónoma of Madrid. Senior Election Cycle Specialist for IFES (2008-2011). Has been UN Director of Elections in El Salvador and Mozambique, and Deputy Chief Observer in EU observation missions in number of countries including Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Ivory Coast, and Nicaragua. Consultant on election organisation and monitoring to the UN, EU, OSCE, USAID, IFES, IDEA among other organizations in more than 30 countries of all regions of the world, including Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Cambodia, Egypt, Honduras, Iraq, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, and Yemen. Among his recent publications, Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance (New York, UNDP, 2000); and (with J. Fischer) Getting to the CORE. A Global Survey on the Cost of Registration and Elections. New York: UNDP, 2006).

### **MARGIE COOK:**

For the past twelve years Margie Cook has managed complex electoral/ governance Programmes in Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, Cambodia and Afghanistan where she was the UN's Chief Electoral Adviser. She currently heads the DFID/DANIDA/CIDA Drivers of Accountability Programme (DAP) donor basket in Kenya focusing on M&E and Learning, capacity development, fiduciary oversight and managing for results. She has worked extensively in the design, implementation and oversight of election Programmes embracing support to media development, monitoring and training; with NGOs, political parties, electoral management bodies and police and in areas including civic and voter education, advocacy, public affairs and grants management. She has extensive experience in project needs assessment, design, implementation, management and evaluation and has led key evaluations/assessments for the UN, DFID, EU and other donors in Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Tanzania, Fiji, Afghanistan and elsewhere. She has been the senior electoral adviser to the National Nine TV Network Australia continuously since 1987 and prior to her work with the UN in electoral management was Director of Public Affairs of the Australian Human Rights Commission for five years, doing extensive training with the UNHCHR during that period. She holds a Bachelor degree in Arts and post-graduate qualifications in public sector management.

### **DELPHINE BLANCHET:**

A French citizen, Delphine has been working with elections since 2000. Since then, she has observed or assessed around 25 electoral processes and electoral reforms in North and South America, Europe, the Caucasus, South East Asia, Africa and recently in Lebanon and Tunisia gathering a wide range of electoral experiences and identifying best practices. Delphine was deputy head of mission in election observation missions in Lebanon Sri Lanka, Latvia and Italy, for the EU, the OSCE/ODIHR, or the Carter Center, and is specialised in legal, political and electoral analysis. Familiar with project cycle management tools, Delphine participated to design and evaluate technical support to electoral processes mostly in Lebanon and in Rwanda for the EU and the UNDP. An experienced trainer, Delphine participated to the design and the delivery of the EU-sponsored NEEDS project 1 and 2 and to numerous OSCE/ODIHR, ZIF, ERIS, SIDA, SSSA trainings in the field of elections. Delphine graduated in History and holds a Master in International Relations and has previously worked for the European Commission external relations in designing, implementing and monitoring assistance projects (1992-1999). In between missions, Delphine lives in Beirut and dedicates herself to try to learn Arabic.

# Annex 6

## United Nations Development Programme

### Terms of Reference

#### Post-Early Presidential Election Evaluation Mission

#### Republic of Yemen

Mission Composition	The evaluation mission will be composed of two-to-three independent international consultants appointed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in consultation with the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division (UNEAD), in addition to an independent local national consultant. It is envisaged that one international consultant shall be the Team Leader and hold overall responsibility for the submission of the final report and findings. The consultants will be supported by a local national assistant/translator(s) and receive logistical support from UNDP Yemen.
Type of Evaluation	External
Duration of the Mission	22 days with approximately 15 days in-country
Tentative Starting Date	April 2012
Location	Sana'a, Republic of Yemen (with the prospect of travel outside of Sana'a, dependent on security assessment at the time of travel)

### I. Context

The UNDP in Yemen is commissioning an external evaluation on behalf of the international community support to the February 2012 early Presidential Election process. This term of reference outlines the background and scope of the evaluation, the specific focus, the expected deliverables, the required expertise of the consultants, and the approximate timeline of the evaluation.

### II. Background

In the wake of other mass protests in the Middle East, popular demonstrations started in Yemen in January 2011. These demonstrations initially focused on unemployment, poor economic conditions and corruption, and then resulted in open calls for the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Transition Initiative, brokered by the GCC with United States (US) and European Union (EU) backing, envisions the safeguard of the unity, security and stability of Yemen and respect for the aspirations of the Yemeni people for change and reform. It also calls for a smooth and safe transfer of power to avoid anarchy and violence and for an immediate stop to the protests.

The implementation steps of this plan, known as the “GCC Mechanism”, include the transfer of power to the Vice President and the formation of a government of National Unity. In accordance with the GCC Mechanism, Phase 1 required the Vice President to call for presidential elections within 90 days, and he thus set the date for 21 February, 2012. In accordance with the terms of the GCC Mechanism, the Vice President issued a decree appointing a Prime Minister from the opposition, tasking him to form a government of National Unity. The Vice President also set up a Military Committee for establishing safety and security. In phase 2 of the Mechanism, which began following the 21 February, 2012 election of the new president, the Government of National Unity will take steps to undertake constitutional reform, electoral reform, a conference of national dialogue, and new elections according to the terms of the new constitution. The early presidential elections will be a key measure of the transfer of power, and necessary for the establishment of an interim government to safeguard the transition process. The GCC Implementation Mechanism calls on the United Nations Secretary General, in cooperation with other agencies, to provide ongoing assistance for the implementation of this agreement. The UN is also requested to coordinate the assistance from the international community to implement the initiative and mechanism.

### **III. Yemen's Democratic Experiment**

Since the establishment of the new Republic of Yemen (ROY) on 22 May 1990, and the devastating civil war of 1994, the Government of Yemen (GoY) has prioritized efforts to reform the management of the national economy, as well as to strengthen democratic structures and processes. The introduction of a multiparty system, the creation of an independent electoral body, the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER), as well as the promotion of civil society participation and the giving of full legal rights to women in order to facilitate their participation in the political life of the country, have been important steps toward democracy building. Central to these efforts have been the holding of several electoral processes.

Yemen's second presidential election was held in SEPtember 2006, and was considered largely free and fair. The election campaign was marked by the relative freedom afforded to the press and the raucousness of the debate. Importantly, the election was unusual in the region in that the incumbent head of state was presented with a real challenger. The Joint Meeting Parties (JMP), a coalition of parliamentary opposition parties (Islah, Yemen Socialist Party, the Union of Popular Forces, the Nasserite Popular Unionist Organization, the Arab Socialist Baath Party, and the Al Haq Party) agreed to put forward a single candidate, Faisal bin Shamlan, who was well respected in the country for his stance against corruption. The election saw Mr. Saleh return to power with a reduced majority of 77.2% of the vote, down from 96,3% in 1999, and Mr bin Shamlan received 21.8 % of the roughly 6 million votes cast. The EU election monitoring mission endorsed the poll, calling it an “open and genuine contest” and declaring it a major milestone in the democratic development of Yemen. Although the EU observers voiced some concerns over “procedural irregularities”, they judged the voting process as “good or very good” in over 82% of polling centers.

Since the last electoral process, many conflicts between the Ruling Party and Opposition have surfaced. The ruling party and the opposition signed the famous February agreement for changing the elections law. However, the ruling party insisted on conducting the elections from its point of view, changed the elections law and refused all demands from the opposition. This resulted in the building of distrust between the ruling party and the opposition parties.

#### IV. International Support and Partners to be Evaluated

The international community has continued to support the implementation of the GCC Initiative and Yemen's transitional process and as part of this commitment donors provided significant financial support for the early Presidential elections through various funding mechanisms. The following international support to the early Presidential elections is to be evaluated:

1. The UNDP Multi-Donor Basket Fund - a pooled contribution including funding from Denmark, Germany, Japan, United Kingdom, UNDP, and the UN Peace Building Fund.
2. The Joint Electoral Assistance Project (JEAP) funded by the European Commission (EC), through UNDP.
3. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding channeled through its implementing partners, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI).

#### V. Objectives of the External Evaluation

The main objective of the external evaluation is to analyze the results of donor support of the electoral process in Yemen in terms of supporting the SCER and February 2012 electoral process. The evaluation will look at the quality, sustainability, relevance, coordination, coherence, implementation rate and involvement of stakeholders during the 2012 early elections period. A secondary objective is to reflect on the impact of the donor support Programme in terms of the quality of the early elections and how they fit in the process of enhancing democracy in Yemen and transition to a stable and secure Yemen.

The evaluation should provide analysis leading to conclusions and relevant recommendations for formulating and executing elections assistance projects in Yemen. The evaluators should identify any problems and constraints, if any, which may have hampered the implementation of the project and the work of the SCER. They should provide recommendations for donors and participating stakeholders for assuring medium and long-term viability and sustainability of SCER and integrity of the electoral process, particularly during the transitional period. Special attention should be given to devising means to strengthen women's participation, support the role of civil society, and increase citizen information and participation.

#### **Specifically, the evaluation will examine:**

**Relevance** – the extent to which donor support to the early elections was able to respond to and address:

- The organizational and Programmemeing priorities of the SCER, participating media and political parties;
- Pre-election requirements for voter outreach/education;
- The different situations of women and men, youth, and of other segments of the population that may have been hampered in their participation in elections for reasons of disability, level of literacy or remote location;
- Cultural acceptability and feasibility of activities.

**Coherence** – the extent to which donors worked together to deliver a coherent package of support to the elections, including:

- Mechanisms put in place to ensure donor coordination, how effective they were and why;
- Satisfaction of SCER with donor support and coordination;
- Any evidence of duplication of activities, gaps, or conflicting advice from different donors, and if and how these were resolved.

**Effectiveness** – the extent to which donor support yielded expected outputs and contributed to expected outcomes, e.g. improved:

- Performance of the Electoral Institutions and Processes in planning and managing the elections;
- Understanding of the elections process among voters;
- Coverage by the media of the elections;
- Knowledge of political party functionaries and activists of their rights and responsibilities;
- Cost-effectiveness: to what extent are the inputs to the project sustainable, for future elections, particularly large procurements and investments?
- Value for money: Was the cost of project components justified in light of results achieved?

**Efficiency/Value for Money** – the extent to which project funds, expertise and time were used judiciously to achieve desired project results – i.e. with minimal duplication and redundancy. Were project inputs procured in a timely way and with intended results?

**Sustainability** – the extent to which any legislative and policy innovations, as well as strengthened human capacities and management systems are likely to benefit the SCER into the future with a view to the next elections. In particular, sustainability should be assessed with regard to the following:

- Skills and expertise development;
- Capacities for voter education;
- Improvements in the media environment;
- Capacities for supporting a peaceful environment;
- Future use of other key procurements.

**Impact** – the evaluation should seek to approximate or estimate the project's contribution to quality elections in terms of:

- Election Administration
- Election Campaign
- Media and Elections
- Election Day

## VI. Evaluation Questions

The evaluators will develop a work plan and approach that addresses the following key indicative evaluation questions:

1. Were the three donor support Programmes designed in a coordinated way, and in close collaboration with key stakeholders? How relevant were they to the needs of the SCER?
2. Were the project objectives of the three Programmes stated in their various monitoring plans / log frames achievable given the time and resources available?
3. Were inputs from the various projects mobilized in a timely manner and to the levels anticipated?
4. Were the management arrangements appropriate for this project?
  - a) Was the UNDP basket fund Programme implemented according to UNDP (Direct Implementation Modality) DIM standard procedure? Were management arrangements responsive to the requirements of different donors?
5. How did the different projects add value to the elections process, and to what extent were they responsive and harmonized in providing assistance?
6. Did the projects operate with the right number of staff, the appropriate skill sets in place and with a proper distribution of personnel across the various project functions?
7. To what extent were stated outputs achieved? Could they have been achieved to the same extent with the outlay of fewer resources?
8. To what extent was the election good quality:
  - a) To what extent was SCER able to discharge its responsibilities in a responsible manner?
  - b) To what extent were unregistered but eligible voters able to vote?
  - c) To what extent was the election campaign open?
  - d) To what extent did the election take place in a satisfactory manner?
9. To what extent did the election impact the population's awareness of elections, feelings of trust in the change process, feelings that progress is being made towards real transition, etc? How does this vary among different groups of the population (Women, Youth, etc)? What factors led people to vote or not vote?

## VII. Methodology

The evaluation should use a combination of the following methods for data collection:

1. Document Review –documentation to be examined include:
  - Documents that constitute formal agreement among project partners and/or record progress covering the UNDP Multi-Donor Basket Fund, USAID Programme with NDI and IFES, and UNDP / EC JEAP Programme. To include project documents, M&E frameworks, progress reports, training reports, consultants reports and other internal documents.

- Election plans from SCER, notes of meetings between SCER and donors, etc....
- Information from opinion polls, reports from independent observers that document electoral performance (including those supported by NDI), media reporting;

**Key Informant Interviews** – the evaluation should include interviews with key stakeholders:

- Senior management and other key focal points in SCER;
- Key managerial and advisory staff in UNDP, USAID, donor partners contributing to the Multi-Donor Basket Fund, EC, etc...;
- Project staff working in UNDP, NDI, IFES, etc...
- Representatives of sub-contracted parties of major components;
- Other national stakeholders with a mandate related to the elections (e.g. political parties, government bodies, etc...);
- National electoral expert commentators, for example in academia, media, CSOs, electoral observers;
- Members of the Elections Working Group and Technical Coordination Group.

**Structured surveys and semi-structured telephone interviews** can be used, i.e. project staff and key informants no longer in the country could be approached by telephone, e-survey or both.

**Stakeholder Consultations** – Consultations with groups of stakeholders i.e. media, CSOs Development Partners, Political Parties, National Observers etc.

In conducting data analysis and presenting the findings, the evaluation should use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. While the evaluation is expected to estimate project impact, it is understood that the evidence of impact may not be available for all components; and further that the methodological rigor usually associated with impact evaluation may not be applicable to this evaluation.

In addition to being guided by recognized international standards for free and fair elections as well as the project monitoring and evaluation frameworks, the evaluators are required to apply substantive expertise to distinguish key indicators of electoral fairness, transparency, and credibility.

## **VIII. Deliverables**

The two evaluators are expected to deliver the following:

1. To submit within six days of completion of mission, a 15-25 page (excluding annexes) draft report addressing the objectives of the mission as stipulated above.
2. Upon completion of UNDP's comments on the draft report (returned within one week of receipt of draft report), the evaluators shall submit the final report within two working days.

## **IX. Payment Schedule**

The evaluators shall be paid a lump sum that will cover DSA and travel expenses. Upon satisfactory completion of the final report, all remaining payments shall be made.

## X. Qualifications and Experience<sup>11</sup>

1. Advanced university degree in Social Sciences, International Relations or Law.
2. Extensive work experience related to electoral processes in developing countries.
3. Previous evaluation experience with electoral and/or other Programmes in similar contexts is a plus.
4. Familiarity with the Arab region, with specific Yemen political/electoral context experience an asset.
5. Good drafting and organizational skills.
6. Ability to work under demanding circumstances.
7. Timeliness and reliability of delivery.
8. Proficiency in English. Knowledge of Arabic is an asset.<sup>12</sup>

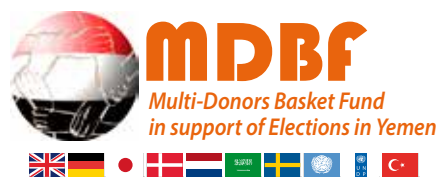
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<sup>11</sup> Team Leader will be selected per experience and will hold overall responsibility for the submission of final report and team findings.

<sup>12</sup> Fluency in Arabic and English is a prerequisite for the independent local national consultant.







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