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Election Project Document

Support to the 2015-2018 Liberian Electoral Cycle

2015

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME:
PROJECT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA**

Support to the 2015-2018 Liberian Electoral Cycle

Title/Number	LIBERIA - Support to the Liberian Electoral cycle		
Total cost	Total estimated cost: EUR 10,912,818.32 Total amount of EDF contribution: EUR 10 000 000 This action is co-financed in joint co-financing by - UNDP: USD 1 000 000		
Method of implementation	Project Approach Indirect management with international organization as the Contracting Authority		
DAC-code	15151, Elections	Sector	Elections

PROJECT BRIEF

The Republic of Liberia held democratic Presidential and Legislative Elections in 2005 and 2011 after 14 years of devastating civil war and decades of misrule. The 2005 elections featured extensive support from the international community under the leadership of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Though led by the National Elections Commission of Liberia (NEC), the 2011 elections received significant technical and advisory support from international partners through USAID/IFES support project and the UNDP managed Electoral Assistance Basket Fund. With two successive (and successful) post-war elections, it is clear that future electoral processes will not enjoy such broad-based international support. This means that Liberia must strengthen its national institutions and processes to conduct future elections in a credible, competent and sustainable manner. While significant work has been undertaken in the three years since the 2011 elections in strengthening NEC's institutional capacity, there is now an urgent need to consolidate and build upon these gains with specific attention on staff capacity, enhancing gender sensitization and conflict preventative work with political parties and security forces, among other priorities. This is critical for NEC in establishing readiness to conduct a possible national referendum and the national elections proper in 2017.

The successful conduct of the 2011 elections was considered a significant step in the consolidation of democracy in Liberia. To ensure success in all future elections in Liberia, a series of administrative, policy and legal reforms, together with institutional capacity strengthening measure must be addressed. This project aims to provide a platform to undertake these reforms and execute the necessary measures to ensure that NEC, as the premiere Electoral Management Body (EMB) has the ability to preside over and deliver free, fair and democratic elections for Liberia. By so doing, it will help deepen the democratization process and foster long-term stability in Liberia. The project will also help to establish links with other on-going reforms, to which it will contribute to and benefit from, such as the decentralization process, rule of law reform, and more importantly, the ongoing constitutional review process that has reached the critical stage of holding a constitutional review conference following a nation-wide consultation process. The project will also promote effective election coordination and seek to mainstream gender and conflict preventative approaches in its activities. Finally, the project will also aim to support the revitalization of the Inter Party Consultative Committee (IPCC), and in turn build the capacities of the its member political parties to play an effective role in building an open and competitive political space and building mechanisms for information sharing and resolving conflicts between political parties and NEC on the one hand and amongst political parties, on the other.

The project is designed within the framework of a “One UN”, drawing on the expertise and mandates of various UN actors, including UNMIL, to deliver assistance throughout the electoral cycle. This document also summarizes activities carried out by other key partners such as the IFES project funded by USAID and with which a close coordination will be established within the framework of a Technical Working Group to harmonize activities.

At the corporate level, UNDP has continued to make significant contributions towards strengthening electoral systems and processes and its framework for electoral assistance is well-conceived, enabling an effective response across countries. The UNDP Strategic Plan (2013-2017) identifies this as an area in which to stay engaged, seeking to introduce further improvements to ensure consistent application of UN values in electoral programming and implementation, developing sustainable solutions better tailored to country settings, managing partnerships differently given the nature of assistance in this area, and adapting UNDP’s operational procedures and performance to meet the fast-paced needs of electoral support. These principles and values will be applied in designing and rolling out of this electoral assistance programme in Liberia.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Outcome(s)/Indicator(s) 3: Democratic, accountable and transparent governance is advanced in a participatory and inclusive manner.

Expected Outcome(s): Strengthened capacity of the NEC; enhanced electoral stakeholders including IPCC; and constitutional changes adopted relating to elections.

Indicator (s): 2017 Presidential and legislative elections considered free, fair, professionally administered and credible.

Expected Output(s)/Annual Targets: Implementation of the NEC Strategic Plan and greater NEC professionalism; improved electoral processes within purview of the NEC and in which the NEC plays a key role (voter registration, civic and voter education, women’s participation strengthening of NEC/Political party and inter-party consultative process, security training, election-specific support).

Execution Modality: DIM

Implementing Agencies: The NEC, UNDP, UNMIL, Political Parties, CSOs including women’s groups, media, other key partners

Approved on behalf of	Signature	Date	Name/Title
Ministry of Finance and Development Planning	----- --	-----	Minister for Development and Finance
National Elections Commission	----- --	-----	Chairman - NEC
UNDP	----- --	-----	Resident Representative

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACPA	Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CEPPS	Consortium for Electoral and Political Processes Strengthening
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CVE	Civic and Voter Education
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
EDF NIP	European Development Fund National Indicative Program
EEM	European Union Election Expert Mission
EMB	Election Management Body
ERC	Election Resource Centre
EU	European Union
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease
GAC	General Audit Commission
GoL	Government of Liberia
GPU	Global Procurement Unit
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IPCC	Inter Party Consultative Committee
IRI	International Republican Institute
LNP	Liberia National Police
LRC	Law Reform Commission
LTA	Long Term Agreements
MoE	Ministry of Education
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEC	National Elections Commission
NIM	National Implementation Modality
PMU	Project Management Unit
ROM	Results-Oriented Monitoring
SAT	Special Advisory Team
TCF	Technical Cooperation Facility
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNPOL	United Nations Police
UNEAD	United National Electoral Assistance Division
USAID/LASS	USAID/Liberian Administrative and Systems Strengthening Program
VR	Voter Registration

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1. INTRODUCTION AND SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

1.1. Introduction

UNDP Liberia is committed to long term, sustainable support to democratic development in Liberia through the full 4 year electoral cycle, including support to key democratic institutions and processes. These include the election management body, the National Elections Commission (NEC) in their responsibilities to plan for, organize and carry out general elections every five years. UNDP partnerships with NEC and other national partners are well established based on previous support provided through the five year periods: 2010-2014. This election cycle support approach is in recognition that free and fair elections are but only one element of democratic development and democratic practice. Along with the NEC, support has been requested and can be usefully provided to other key actor's including the IPCC, the CRC, LNP, the Media, and CSOs. Unlike its predecessor, the new project will support adoption of conflict prevention mechanisms and Civil Society in terms of their interface with the electoral process, such as strengthening political party efforts to promote inclusive participation for women, youth and people with disabilities and civil society to undertake voter education and conflict management programs.

The United Nations Basket funding to the NEC, supported by the EU, SIDA and other donors, has been in place since June 2010 and was instrumental for the credible conduct of the 2011 electoral events. The 2011 election review process, which considered inputs from the lessons learned conference, the institutional assessment conducted by UNDP and IFES, a review of the electoral laws, election observation reports (EEM and The Carter Center) and consultations with stakeholders, found that the international community sees a clear need to continue supporting the NEC to enhance the capacity of its staff to implement its mandate.

The 2011 EEM report, the NEC lessons learnt, the NEC Needs Assessment, and the NEC Strategic Plan 2012-2017, each concluded that when measured against international standards, the elections were, overall, satisfactory. However, these reports did also note a number of institutional, legislative and legal shortcomings. The recommendations offered included the importance of the continued implementation of the NEC capacity building programs covering the institutional, management and coordination mechanism setup for both the headquarters and magistrate offices and strengthening of the complaints and appeals system. Needs assessment reports also identified inadequate voter education, logistical challenges, lack of consultation with key collaborating national institutions and insufficient communication with key stakeholders including political parties and CSOs.

1.2. Situation Analyses and Country Profile

The Republic of Liberia is located in West Africa bordered by Sierra Leone to its west, Guinea to its north and Ivory Coast to its east. It covers an area of 111,369 square kilometers and is home to about 4 million people. English is the official language and over thirty indigenous languages are also spoken within the country. The climate is hot and equatorial, with significant rainfall during the May–October rainy season and harsh harmattan winds the remainder of the year. The country possesses about 40% of the remaining Upper Guinean rainforest.

Liberia is the only country in Africa founded by United States colonization while occupied by native Africans. Beginning in 1820, the region was colonized by African Americans, most of whom were freed slaves. The colonizers (who later became known as Americo-Liberians) established a new country with the help of the American Colonization Society, a private organization whose leaders thought former slaves would have greater opportunity in Africa.

In 1847, this new country became the Republic of Liberia, establishing a government modeled on that of the United States and naming its capital city Monrovia after James Monroe, the fifth president of the United States and a prominent supporter of the colonization. The colonists and their descendants, known as Americo-Liberians, led the political, social, cultural and economic sectors of the country and ruled the nation for over 130 years as a dominant minority.

The country began to modernize in the 1940s following investment by the United States during World War II and economic liberalization under President William Tubman. Liberia was a founding member of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. In 1980 a military coup overthrew the Americo-Liberian leadership, marking the beginning of political and economic instability and two successive civil wars. These resulted in the deaths of between 250,000 and 520,000 people and devastated the country's economy. A peace agreement in 2003 led to democratic elections in 2005. Today, Liberia is recovering from the lingering effects of the civil wars and their consequent economic upheaval, but about 85% of the population continue to live below the international poverty line, and the country's economic and political stability has recently been threatened by a deadly Ebola virus outbreak, one of the worst such outbreaks in history resulting in a global emergency response of an unprecedented scale.

With a regional total of 23,825, Liberia had become the epi-center of the outbreak despite the first case being reported in neighboring Guinea. The EVD has had significant impact on the 2014 electoral process in Liberia, forcing the postponement of election from the constitutionally set date of second Tuesday in October. The current legal and constitutional framework on Liberia does not provide apparent alternatives and is forcing a re-think of constitutionally set elections dates without clear force majeure clauses in instances of natural disasters such as the EVD crisis.

Although Liberia has enjoyed relative peace and stability since the end of the war in 2003, it remains one of the poorest countries in the world with one of the lowest levels of human development (ranking 175 out of 187 countries in 2013), weak state capacity, and a high level of dependence on international donors. The foreseen drawdown of the UNMIL represents an important milestone in the transition to peace, as it will expose the resilience of Liberian society to maintain peace after ten years of post-war reconstruction. It will be an enormous challenge for the government to gradually take over the functions of UNMIL in such a way as to avoid major security gaps that could upset the fragile situation, and provide services across the territory.

With high levels of poverty and income inequality, there is a wide perception among many Liberians that only few are benefitting from the economic growth. Concession agreements that are bringing in needed foreign investment have often been granted without following the law or consulting communities, whose livelihood depends on the same land, exacerbating the perception of injustice and increasing tensions. Land ownership, right to land and use of land remains a tense issue. Underemployment is a critical issue with 78% of the labor force holding only "vulnerable employment", including a large, urbanized youth population. The effects of EVD have added a new dimension to this problem that the country will have to grapple with.

Governance, justice and public institutions remain weak. There has nevertheless been progress in the reform of the civil service and public financial management reform, although much still needs to be achieved in the fight against corruption and to improve transparency and accountability. There is nevertheless a strong political will and commitment to enhance governance reform and maintain peace in Liberia. Liberia has shown regular progress since 2006 in governance indicators. Liberia's ratings are above the African average for voice and accountability and political stability, but much remains to be done to improve the rule of law. Transparency International's 2014 Corruption Perception Index ranks

Liberia 94 out of the 175 countries and territories assessed. In 2005, the country was ranked 137 out of the 158 surveyed.

1.3. Background

The NEC conducted the 2005 and 2011 Presidential and Legislative elections under the Electoral Reform Law (2004) with the support of the European Union, EU member States (notably Sweden, Spain and Denmark), the UNDP and UNMIL and other members of the international community. Liberia's 2011 presidential and legislative elections were an important milestone in the political evolution of post conflict Liberia and were widely recognized as an opportunity to consolidate peace and speed up Liberia's political and economic recovery. In 2017 Liberia will be conducting its third general elections since the signing of the 2003 Accra CPA that ended fourteen years of conflict. These elections mark an important milestone in Liberia's political landscape.

Right after the 2011 elections NEC developed the six-year (2012-2017) strategic plan which presented the NEC's strategic objectives for the period and established a rational agenda and commitments to make the Commission more responsive, effective and efficient electoral institution. NEC has identified five key strategic areas, as follows: (i) improving the electoral legal framework by reviewing electoral laws and guidelines, reviewing voter registration requirements and reviewing the complaint management mechanism; (ii) strengthening the political party system and enhancing public confidence in elections and strengthening the capacity of political parties; (iii) improving public participation in elections through the development and implementation of a civic and voter education strategy; (iv) strengthening the institutional capacity of the NEC; and, (v) delivering free, fair and credible elections through voter registration and updating and reviewing boundaries where needed.

As a follow up to the implementation of the NEC strategic plan, the NEC, with support from UNDP, initiated an electoral legal reform process in early 2013 which has provided the platform for an on-going dialogue involving its key stakeholders to discuss the merits and demerits of a comprehensive electoral reform in Liberia. As a result of this process, an electoral reform bill was approved by the Legislature. The major amendments to the law provide the NEC with greater autonomy in appointing its staff, improves the process for party registration and complaints mechanisms, as well as sets the level for political party registration fees, also promotes greater gender balance by setting a 30% minimum gender representation of candidates.

A Constitutional review process is underway in Liberia, led by the CRC. However, due to the EVD outbreak, the process has been temporarily suspended due to limitations imposed as a result of a state of emergency. Despite this, the CRC operates with timeline aimed at delivering a new/revised constitution before the 2017 general elections with a referendum to be conducted possibly in 2016. Since this process is extremely important from the electoral standpoint, the NEC should coordinate with the CRC constitutional reform as it relates to elections, harmonization of electoral law reform and constitutional review process and the Legislature to ensure that discussions on the conduct of constitutional referendum are adequately executed and in a timely manner.

Following a request from the NEC, the Under- Secretary-General for Political Affairs/the UN Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) deployed a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) to Liberia from 2 to 13 May 2014. The NAM was tasked with evaluating the political and electoral environment and the capacity and needs of various election stakeholders with a view of ascertaining the parameters for future UN electoral assistance towards the 2017 elections. The NAM followed a DPKO-Ied Strategic Review Mission to Liberia in February 2014 and took note of its conclusions. The needs assessment team held consultations with various stakeholders including the relevant national authorities such as the electoral administration, the legislature, political parties, civil society and media groups, as well as the UN Country

Team, UNMIL, international partners, donors and heads of missions and bilateral cooperation. During the identification stage of the Action, the findings and recommendations of the NAM mission were used. These defined the basic areas of the electoral support in Liberia, mainly focusing on improving electoral institutions, electoral processes and communications. The NAM report, which forms the basis for UNDP's Electoral support in Liberia, included the following guiding recommendations:

- Capacity development and support to NEC institutional management reforms;
- NEC institutional strengthening including staff professional development based on management and BRIDGE training methodology;
- Civic and voter education, and related communication activities, including support to capacity building of civil society organizations;
- Support enhancement of women's political participation and leadership;
- Strengthen the electoral legal framework and the constitutional review process as it relates to elections;
- Support to fostering inclusive participation in elections: targeting women, youth and people with disabilities and rural voters.
- Operational and technical support to NEC covering various phases of the electoral process: voter registration and the general elections;
- Conflict prevention/community dialogues and support to creating a peaceful environment for the elections, including NEC/stakeholder outreach and partnership building, and revitalization of the IPCC;
- Support to the establishment of a regular election security coordination mechanism.

This project proposal, titled: "Support to the Electoral Cycle in Liberia," has been developed in response to the request for United Nations assistance from the Government of Liberia which will be implemented through the NEC with support from key national and international partners. The project uses the electoral cycle approach, which looks at the electoral process over time and seeks to engage with different actors. The activities of the project are in line with the recommendations of the domestic, regional and international 2011 election observation missions (such as the ones of the African Union, ECOWAS, European Union, Carter Centre) and the lessons learned of the 2011 elections held by the NEC in 2012. With this approach in mind, the project looks beyond the 2011 elections and will cover the period of 2015 through 2018. Substantively, the focus is on improving electoral institutions, processes and laws, mainstreaming of gender through specific support to women's political participation and enhancing conflict prevention.

2. SECTOR CONTEXT

2.1. Electoral Systems

Elections in Liberia occur solely at the national level. The head of state, the President of Liberia, is elected to a six-year term in a two-round system, in which a run-off between the two candidates with the highest number of votes is held should no single candidate garner a majority of the vote in the first round. The Legislature has two elected chambers. The House of Representatives has 73 members, elected to six-year terms by the first-past-the-post electoral system in single-member districts. The Senate has 30 members, 2 from each county, elected at-large to nine-year terms by the first-past-the-post method.

All citizens who are 18 years or older may register to vote in elections. Under Article 83(a) of the Constitution, elections are held on the second Tuesday of October every election year, with presidential run-off elections being held on the second Tuesday following the announcement of the results of the first round. Elections are managed by the NEC of Liberia.

2.2. Election Administration

Established under article 89 of the Constitution, the NEC is an autonomous body that organizes and supervises the national elections of Liberia. The primary duties of NEC include administering and enforcing all laws related to the conduct of elections throughout the Republic of Liberia. Besides, NEC proposes to the National Legislature for enactment, suspension of, and amendment to, and repeal of, any provision of the Elections Law. The Commission further provides accreditation to, and registers all political parties and independent candidates who meet the minimum requirements set by the Commission. NEC also revokes the registration and accreditation of an already legal party only upon the judicial determination by a court of competent jurisdiction, in accordance with due process. Also included in NEC's functions is conducting all elections for elected public offices, including chieftaincy and all referenda and declaration of the results thereof.

2.3. Assessing the Electoral Landscape and Electoral Stakeholders

The 2011 elections showed that NEC was still affected by operational and institutional weaknesses which must be overcome to create a more independent, professional and transparent election management body. The NEC, as a relatively young institution, is faced with a number of challenges documented in a series of reports (UNDP and IFES 2012 needs assessment reports). These include lack of capacity of the electoral administration both at headquarter level and magisterial/field level, insufficient collaboration with key electoral stakeholders such as CSOs and political parties as well as lack of the internal administrative policies and procedures. Election-specific deficiencies including the NEC's procurement, human resources and finance sectors still require substantive attention in the form of capacity enhancement and technical support. Full focus should be given to improvement of the NEC complaint adjudication mechanisms and enhancement of communication strategy with external stakeholders such as political parties and CSOs. Beyond election-specific needs, however, the NEC would benefit from longer-term professionalization as an institution to ensure that it builds the sustainable all-level internal capacity over time to administer elections in Liberia.

Political parties are in need of sustained capacity development which is tailored to the dynamics of the electoral system in Liberia. There is also need to promote dialogue and consensus building between NEC and political parties on critical issues such as legal or administrative reform and mandate and workings of the NEC.

Another key stakeholder group in the electoral process is civil society, including women and youth. Civil society is relatively vibrant in Liberia, and comprises an extensive range of pro-democracy and human rights organizations, trade unions, women's groups, religious organizations, youth and student groups, Diaspora and refugees groups. In 2011, the presence of domestic observer groups, perceived as neutral and impartial, enhanced citizen confidence in the process. However, the lack of resources and poor logistics restricted the work of many of organizations, most of which are based in Monrovia.

The 2011 elections saw a drop in female representation in the legislature from 22% to 13% due to the non-return of several female legislators. The 2005 election was conducted under a voluntary framework which saw the party of lists of major political parties with 30% female representation. This framework was no longer applicable in 2011 elections and may have contributed to the decline in elected females in the legislature. Preliminary data from the 2014 update of the voter registration for the Senatorial

elections indicated that only 37% of registered voters were women compared with the 2011 voter registration process where registered women were 49%. This correlates with the 2008 Population Census which gives the female population 49%. The 2014 Senatorial elections created expectations that women would have actively participated as candidates and that, more importantly, more women would have been elected. However only 20 of all the 139 senatorial candidates were women and only one woman was elected. It is of course a major setback in the efforts to enhance women's representation in the Liberian politics and it makes it more important to intensify work toward re-profiling strategies aimed at minimizing the gap in ensuring a gender sensitive governance system in Liberia. It is in particular important for the 2017 electoral process.

Lack of civic and voter education programs for women, absence of enthusiastic women's groups, properly functioning national institutions and weak political parties are potential challenges that prevent women from electoral participation. Strong advocacy and unanimity are required amongst civil society groups and political parties, and NEC can coordinate this work for further promotion of women participation in elections. In the gender mainstreaming efforts political parties should be encouraged to introduce affirmative measures in their policies and party structures to ensure that party lists and governing bodies have at least 30% from each gender, as specified in the recently reformed electoral law.

The media has a key role in the electoral process. Radio is the main source of information in Liberia. The coverage of newspapers and local TV stations is limited and with the exception of community radio stations, local media barely exists outside Monrovia. The civil war left most of the media with capacity and resource constraints. Several components of the project will include media elements, such as civic education, enhancing women's participation in electoral processes and will provide support for access to the information and building relation with stakeholders.

The Liberia National Police (LNP) is in the process of taking over functions and national coverage from UNMIL security personnel due to UNMIL's drawdown process. Recruitment and training is on-going but has experienced delays and challenges in planning for UNMIL drawdown. On the quota for female police officer, LNP is on track, but the police force is facing lack of trust from the population namely because of perceived corruption. LNP is operating under the Ministry of Justice. While other projects cover the security-related elements, it was confirmed the need for more specialized training for police on roles and responsibilities during the electoral cycle.

The GoL and the legislature plays a key role in the process, essentially by committing resources from the state budget for NEC's running costs and election preparations. The Government and the legislature of Liberia have committed to provide the funds to NEC's recurrent budget during financial years 2015-2017 reflecting its commitment to the elections. If the budgetary delays continue in carrying out the electoral reforms necessary for the conduct of the 2017 elections, this risks raising concerns over the commitment among some of the national authorities to the elections.

2.4. The role of the United Nations and partner organizations

The UN and more specifically the UNDP has long supported Liberia's democratization process and towards this end it has identified specific goals to improve the democratic environment in the country. These include efforts to strengthen key democratic institutions to have improved capacity to fulfill their electoral functions. Various governments, both programme countries and donors, have entrusted UNDP with the task of facilitating donor coordination and donor support to elections. UNDP has a proven track record in delivering electoral assistance primarily because it has been regarded as a trusted and non-partisan partner. UNDP has been able to implement electoral programmes in the most politically divisive countries, because it is viewed as an impartial organization. UNDP's status as an unbiased development

partner will allow for closer management relationships with donors, government, political actors and civil society partners. As indicated at the corporate level, UNDP has continued to make significant contributions towards strengthening electoral systems and processes and its framework for electoral assistance is well-conceived, enabling an effective response across countries, viewing this as a key pillar in strengthening democratic governance.

UNDP is well positioned and prepared to take the lead in managing and coordinating a new project drawing on lessons learned from previous projects, global and national experience and well established partnerships with the EMBs and others. As was the case with the previous election project, UNDP is also well placed to establish the necessary arrangements and provide expert personnel for the project's implementation, taking into account the value of early recruitment and project start up as a lesson learned from past experience and recommendations from past election evaluations.

The project has apparent links with other programs which support the deepening of democratic processes such as constitutional review process, decentralization and support to the justice and security sectors. UNDP implements programs and projects in these critical sectors and is hence uniquely placed to exploit synergies and ensure a coordinated approach to program implementation across these programs, along with the partnerships that come with this.

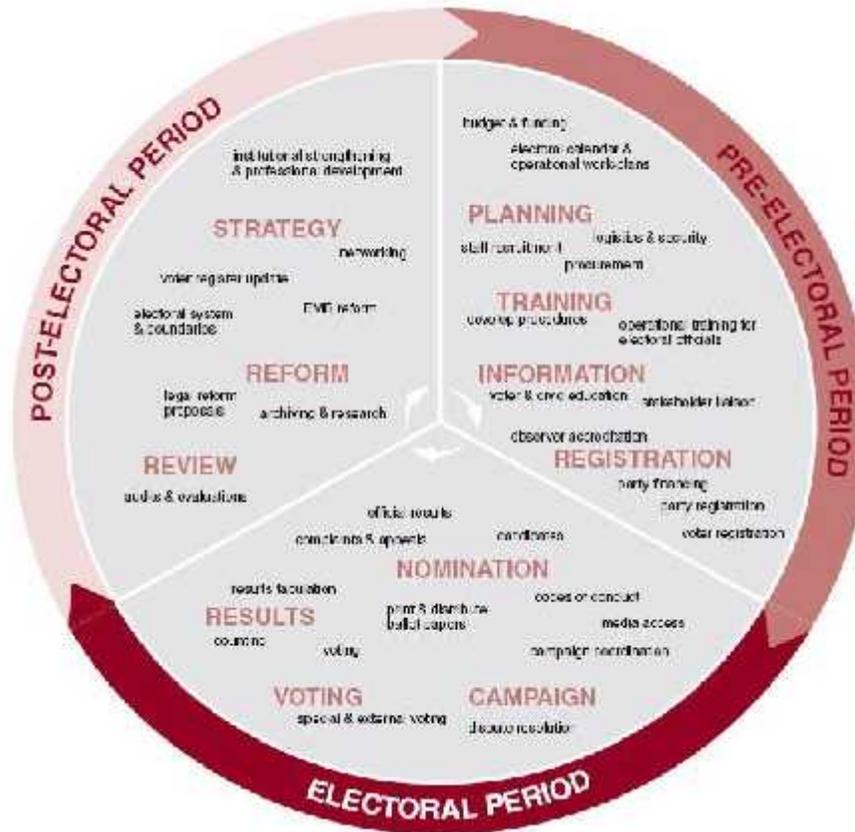
As UNMIL draws down, it is unclear at this stage whether it will be present in the country at the time of the 2017 Presidential elections, the size of the mission or their support to the electoral process. In addition, a special relationship will be developed between the project and other possible international (e.g. UN) and regional actors with a mandate or expertise in electoral assistance (e.g. ECOWAS, African Union). International donors and other partners such as Sweden, NDI, IDEA, may also collaborate on substantive activities. It should be taken into consideration that the Government may request an EU EOM for the 2017 Presidential and National assembly elections.

USAID awarded in 2015 a five-year (60 month) \$18,000,000 cooperative agreement as an associate award through the CEPPS III mechanism to the potential election partner organizations such as IFES and NDI. In particular, USAID funds will provide full support to CSO for oversight of electoral processes. Also envisaged in USAID support is specific support to NEC functions as regards human resources, procurement, and asset management and budgeting. The project also envisages working directly with strengthening political parties' capacities.

3. PROJECT STRATEGY AND JUSTIFICATION

Design Overview

To achieve the Project outputs, the electoral cycle model (illustrated below) will be followed:



3.1. Scope

The project's overall objective is to enhance the democratization process in Liberia through improved electoral institutions and processes. The project purpose is to strengthen the capacity of NEC and core electoral stakeholders to conduct their core activities in an impartial, transparent and sustainable manner and successfully carry out scheduled electoral processes within the electoral cycle 2015-2018. Towards this end, support will be provided to the NEC, the IPCC, to civil society and the media. Support to civil society and media will focus on building effective engagement in democratic processes through dialogue and peace building initiatives.

The project will also support the LNP to effectively contribute to election-related conflict mitigation and dispute resolution. A gender equality perspective will be mainstreamed through all areas of the project. The total estimated cost of the project amounts to 10,912,818 of which the EDF will contribute EUR 10,000,000 and UNDP, will contribute USD 1,000,000 (approximately EUR 912,818). This estimated budget excludes the NEC recurrent budget (GoL contribution), IFES and UNMIL support.

3.2. Justification

Liberia has shown commitment to democratic reform through a number of initiatives including recent reformation of the electoral legislation and the current ongoing constitutional reform process. Previous UNDP election project as indicated by the partners and stakeholders attested to the success of past electoral support and indicated the need for continuity in order to consolidate Liberia's democratic achievements over the last few years as well as to keep the electoral coordination mechanisms alive for partners and donors.

Unlike in 2005-2011 when the United Nations provided significant institutional and logistical support to the elections, the NEC will be the lead institution for the next electoral cycle to organize and deliver the national elections as well as the possible referendum in 2016. It is unlikely that partners will be as forthcoming with expert and funding assistance for future elections. It is therefore essential to expose the staff of NEC at all levels to continuous election management skills and institutional changes as early as possible.

The NEC needs institutional changes and capacity support in order to enhance their independence and credibility as a way of inspiring public and stakeholder confidence in their ability to deliver credible and peaceful elections including the possible referenda which may be held in 2016. Successful and transparent elections are critical for ensuring conflict mitigation and peace building especially in a country like Liberia with a 14 years history of conflict and violence. Continued electoral support will assist in building the capacity and reputation of the NEC and other democratic institutions, thereby reducing incidents of election-related violence.

The current project is furthermore informed by the principles that are central to the UN electoral assistance, including the goal of decreasing donor support as national capacity increases. Therefore in order to work towards an exit strategy, the project budget will be EUR 10,769,000 compared to its predecessor which was USD 27 million. Activities under this project are more focused on the capacity development of the NEC and national stakeholders and less on direct support to election operations.

4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

The election project's overall objective is to enhance the democratization process in Liberia through improved electoral institutions and processes. The program purpose is to strengthen the capacity of NEC and core electoral stakeholders to conduct their core activities in an impartial, transparent and sustainable manner and successfully carry out scheduled electoral processes within the electoral cycle 2015-2018. Based on the recommendations of recent reports and studies including the NAM, project evaluations and observer missions, the project will have the following eight Results:

Result 1: Strengthened capacity within NEC for efficient implementation of its mandate;

Result 2: Voter registration is updated and voter registration process is improved;

Result 3: Women's political participation and leadership is enhanced;

Result 4: Political parties' capacity is enhanced, political parties are coordinated and conflict prevention measures are in place;

Result 5: Elections security forces act is in line with international standards;

Result 6: Civic and voter education strengthened;

Result 7: Strengthen the electoral legal framework and the constitutional review process as it relates to elections and harmonization of the election law and regulations;

Result 8: Successful conduct of national elections through logistics and operational support provided to NEC and core electoral stakeholders.

Result 1: Strengthened capacity within NEC for efficient implementation of its mandate

The NEC has improved significantly over the last years, however, the 2011 elections showed that NEC still is affected by operational and institutional weaknesses which must be overcome to create a more independent, professional and transparent EMB. As a relatively young institution, the NEC is facing a number of challenges which have been documented in a series of reports (UNDP and IFES 2012 needs assessment reports). Those include lack of capacity of the electoral administration both at headquarters level and magisterial/field level, insufficient collaboration with key electoral stakeholders such as CSOs and political parties as well as lack of the internal administrative policies and procedures. Election-specific deficiencies including the NEC's procurement, human resources and finance sectors still requires substantive attention in the form of capacity enhancement and technical support. The extent to which Liberia is able to generate and sustain confidence in the democratic and in the electoral process in particular greatly depends on the ability of key stakeholders such as the CSOs, media, IPCC to fulfill their function for better democratic consolidation in the country.

A critical consideration for the NEC will be retention of the knowledge and experience that has been acquired in conducting the elections in 2011. The prime method envisaged is for NEC to retain staff that has acquired the necessary skills and knowledge both at the headquarters and field level. NEC will require conduct of staff performance as well as staff promotion as necessary. In addition, the expertise of the NEC commissioners and staff need to be enhanced and in-house training capacity needs to be developed to provide further training to newly recruited staff. NEC will need to re-visit reformation of the organizational structure, policies and practices, with due attention to gender, staff recruitment, staffing and management and budgeting. The NEC gender section, established recently, oversees the implementation of the gender mandate. However, limited financial and human capacity precludes from the implementation of the gender mainstreaming task and in promoting women participation in elections. Strong advocacy and unanimity are required amongst civil society groups and political parties, and NEC can coordinate this work for further promotion of women participation in elections.

Activities:

(1) Operational trainings and peer-to-peer missions with focus on election administration, media, CSOs, women, youth, political parties and members of the legislature

Support study missions and staff exchanges to promote experience sharing and skills transfer between the two EMBs and beyond. Peer-to-peer mission will be organized for NEC, CSOs, and members of legislature to gain exposure on the particular subject and develop the best suited road map to establish accurate electoral skills in that particular subject which will allow for updating or improving the structure of NEC prior to the conduct of elections. Missions will be organized on particular areas of election operations, such as logistics, procurement, civic education and external relations, where participants from NEC, CSO groups and IPCC will be involved in the study process and gain knowledge on how these particular tasks are dealt with in other EMBs. Study trips will be selected based on need of each group of participant and their learning requirement. A total 4 study trips are foreseen in 2015-2016 and 2018.

There is a need for the NEC to undertake comprehensive and sustained efforts to professionalize their staff, which can be done during non-election periods in particular. Therefore, special operational trainings will be organized for the NEC focusing on drafting procedures for various documents including

polling and counting manual, guides for trainers, budgets and procurement specifications. Participants will be given practical assignments to develop procedures for different processes of the electoral cycle. The project will recruit a training and capacity building specialist who will be in charge of organizing operational trainings for NEC head of sections and magisterial staff. Operational trainings are foreseen in 2016.

(2) Long-term capacity development programs

Develop NEC capacity to conduct the training of trainer's course using BRIDGE program and expand a pool of fully accredited trainers in Liberia. For more benefits and interaction with different stakeholders BRIDGE training courses will be organized not only for NEC staff but for representatives of youth and gender groups, media, CSOs, IPCC and the legislature who jointly with NEC will participate in each training course starting with the ToT program. The BRIDGE Version II will be utilized for NEC and other stakeholder's capacity development process. It is anticipated to conduct total 13 trainings courses excluding the election year 2017.

The need of the management courses for NEC staff is paramount. Having management skills developed is a critical part of the entire election operation. It is recommended to strengthen the staff skills of NEC at HQ and Magisterial level through organization of following courses: report writing, office management, planning etc. In order to ensure that the staff is trained to take on responsibilities in specialized NEC functions, agreements will be signed by UNDP with specialized training institutions in Liberia or overseas to conduct management trainings. It is recommended to subcontract implementing agencies to take care of their identification of trainings and all other necessary arrangements. The project will contract an experienced organization to deliver a series of Management skills development courses for the NEC permanent staff. A total of five (5) courses, each with duration of not more than five (5) days will be conducted in 2016 and 2018. Each course will cover specific management development skills. The contracting organization will take primary responsibility for achievement of the project output related to the organization, implementation and facilitation of the management courses. The training courses will be planned in close coordination with the USAID/LASS and will take into account also NEC's administrative needs assessment report prepared by USAID/LASS.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, a consulting organization will undertake the following tasks: conduct 5 management courses in Management skills development. Generally, training should foster key management skills for example as leadership and effective performance within team environments, effective communication, change management, procurement, human resource management and organizational values, problem solving and decision making, information and knowledge management, office management, strategic planning and report writing..

(3) Support to the NEC ERC

Document and knowledge management, which has gained credibility as the trusted way of handling records and documents within organizations worldwide, has suffered a growing challenge in many developing countries like Liberia due to the absence of effective systems for managing records/data by both government and private sector institutions.

In 2012 NEC archives were in a rather appalling state before the intervention of UNDP Liberia. UNDP elections project as part of its institutional capacity building agenda established a resource center to preserve institutional memory and to setup the resource center with an automated database system for digital and hardcopy archiving, and a library facility. Working in collaboration with the UNDP election project, NEC secured a bigger space to setup the resource center with electrical and network cables

installed and new archive racking, book shelves, furniture purchased. A database was developed, installed on NEC server and rolled out to users to facilitate both digital and hardcopy archiving.

The new election project will maintain support and seek to make further improvements of the library and the archive data bases, which was developed in 2012 and since no updates happened with the archive database to support modern requirements of online archiving of materials. The NEC IT section does not have capacity to provide programmer who would undertake this complex task to ensure the data base is user friendly and well-functional. The election project will also support re-profiling of the ERC layout and expand its usage this time around for awareness programs, for students, voters as well as stakeholders. The project together with NEC will facilitate the process of transformation of the current ERC into the venue for research and trainings and will link it up to the NEC CVE and gender sections in order to conduct joint awareness activities for deepening voters understanding about electoral processes. The project will recruit a short-term consultant and database developer to work closely with the NEC on improvement and re-profiling of the ERC. The project will support NEC ERC in expanding the library collection and will procure books that will be used by NEC staff, researchers and other interested people in electoral processes. In order to support manual archiving of NEC legal and operation documentation, the project will procure archiving boxes.

(4) Support to the magisterial offices and warehouses

It is a known fact that implementing a satisfactory Warehouse Management System is daunting. With this in mind, most Logisticians tend to hold on to outdated methods to avoid the possible effect of implementing a new system or a new way of doing things. Currently NEC possesses 19 magisterial warehouses which required re-organization to ensure security and protection of the electoral materials. Support to the warehouses outlines the design and implementation plan for the packing, accountability and protection of electoral materials stored at NEC magisterial warehouses throughout the country. It is also anticipated to reinforce security of the NEC warehouses and install fences, locks and shelves in those warehouses that lack proper safeguarding. The project also will support physical stock-taking of all electoral materials to make the operation of the warehouses safer, simpler and user friendly. The Project will provide support for improvement of the magisterial office infrastructure and will supply solar panels to 19 magisterial offices which will reduce the operational cost, provide 24 hours electricity and strengthen security of electoral materials.

(5) Development of integrated administrative system in NEC

An assessment of the capacity needs of the NEC in 2012 provided the ground for the development and eventual approval of the NEC Administration Manual in 2013. The UNDP election project continues deepening its support to NEC Institutional changes through installation of the integrated administrative systems. The proposed system is to be integrated to automate processes in procurement, HR and finance. Automation has already been undertaken for NEC assets and warehousing management hence the proposed system will be linked with these two areas. The system will involve e-requisitions, system based authorizations that will link to procurement for processing, finance for payments and to assets/warehouses for records. HR systems will link recruitment to the payroll, performed by finance. Thus, the sub-systems will be integrated.

To successfully put the integrated system in place, the following general processes will be supported by hired company/experts who will provide:

- Identification of various processes within procurement, HR and Finance that need to be automated;

- Link with assets management and warehousing procedures. This will also define information needs of each area and how that feeds to another;
- Identifying roles to be played by staff in each area (i.e. HR, procurement, etc),
- Develop clear and detailed specifications that meet the needs identified for a truly integrated system to work;
- Identify a systems developer through a competitive process to provide the services required;
- Monitor installation and implementation over time. Implementation will include training key staff prior to installation, during installation and provide post installation support.
- Test the system and begin its use, continue monitoring and provide necessary support
- Evaluate the entire process and make modifications based on lessons learned.

USAID/LASS Liberia provides funds to support the institutional changes in the NEC. This work will be jointly coordinated to achieve maximum effect and avoid duplication.

Following development of the NEC Administrative manual covering human resources, finance, procurement, warehousing and assets management, the NEC, in 2014 with the support of the UNDP has installed an assets management software to ensure accountability and good use of all materials purchased, receipt and issuance, clear labelling and production of monthly stock reports showing receipts and distribution information. At the start of 2014, the NEC begun uploading of assets information in to the system which has not yet accomplished.

After institutional assessment conducted by UNDP in 2014 and USAID/LASS in 2015 (May) was identified that some assets data has been entered in the system, however, an inventory of other fixed assets is yet to be completed. Despite of NEC's affords directed towards improvement of accountability of the assets systems, the management of it is still not forthcoming and is not consistent with the Administrative manual. Asset inventory and labelling is yet to be undertaken in order to pave way for the entry of assets details in the asset management software but more importantly, production of monthly stock summaries is lagging behind due to absence of the standard system upgrades and insufficient knowledge of the process by NEC relevant staff.

Therefore, based on the assessment reports provided by UNDP and USAID/LASS, the election project will recruit the assets management consultant (national) for the period of 8 months to work closely with the NEC warehouse and assets management teams to ensure the labeling, tracking and stock reporting systems are well functional and software is upgraded.

(6) Inclusive post-elections lessons learned & strategy review exercises following conclusion of the 2014 and 2017 electoral processes

For the better planning of future elections is required that NEC reviews and apply lessons learned from the past throughout a program's life cycle, documents any significant lessons to the Board of commissioners and all stakeholders, also reviews its 6 years strategic plan and progress of its implementation. A lesson and strategy review processes have a real or assumed impact on future operations and it identifies a specific design, process, or decision that reduces or eliminates the potential for failures or reinforces a positive result. The NEC recognizes the importance of learning from the past to ensure future mission success and will use the best practices in consultation with all stakeholders involved in elections to capture and disseminate lessons learned. The project jointly with IFES will support lessons learned and NEC mid-term strategy review activities with involvement of all international and national stakeholders to the process.

Assessment of the NEC capacity has been done by the NAM in 2014 which provided a set of recommendations that the new election project of UNDP has been built up. In 2015 USAID and IFES have jointly conducted needs assessment of the NEC and defined the steps that should be achieved for effective improvement of the NEC administrative and operational capacity. In order to avoid duplication, the UNDP election project will not deploy another needs assessment mission but instead will consider provisions of the assessment reports prepared by USAID and IFES. However, after conduct of the 2017 general elections there will be need to work with the NEC and continue the conduct of capacity building programs and enhance the NEC staff knowledge and ability to manage upcoming electoral processes. Therefore, the capacity building strategy will be re-visited in 2018 and will be carefully structured based on the institutional and management re-assessment of the NEC. The project will recruit independent expert specialized in needs assessment type of work to define areas and programs required for building the capacity of the NEC staff.

Result 2: Voter registration is updated and voter registration process is improved

The amendment of the proposed electoral law revising the population threshold for constituencies and the delimitation of those constituencies, are required for the 2017 voter registration process. At the same time, there are preparatory steps that the NEC can take with respect to voter registration to facilitate the process such as procurement of voter registration materials, training of voter registration staff and logistics. Should the NEC decide to proceed with adopting a biometric voter registration system in Liberia, proper studies will need to be carried out taking into account sustainability of the process and ensuring that the infrastructural issues (electricity and capacity of the magisterial offices), as well as the outstanding issue of administrative and constituency delimitation, are resolved.

Activities:

(1) Provide technical support and guidance for a comprehensive feasibility study on the voter registration system;

A careful study of voter registration and the use of appropriate technology would be needed in order for the NEC and other stakeholders to make an informed decision on how and to what degree the voter registration system should be modified. This should include a consideration of the cost, sustainability and environmental factors required to implement voter registration in Liberia, as well as an assessment of the real and perceived weaknesses of the current method. The project will envisage helping the NEC review the registration process overall, with a view to ensuring that the voter register is nationally owned, comprehensive, up to date, accurate, cost-effective and sustainable. The project will support consultancy to provide guidance and feasibility study on the voter registration systems.

(2) Based on comprehensive feasibility studies, support the conduct of voter registration operations before the 2017 elections

Activities in this area will provide support specifically aimed at the 2016 Voter registration process (including logistics). Support will include operational planning, procurement of essential VR IT materials and stationeries. Specialized training cascade will be implemented for the training of NEC HQ, magisterial and VR staff in use of voter registration materials as well as voter registration data base management. Trainings will be implemented three weeks before the actual start of the voter registration process and will cover entire country.

Result 3: Women's political participation and leadership is enhanced

Lack of civic and voter education programs for women, absence of enthusiastic and energetic women's groups, the absence of the properly functioning national institutions and weak political parties are potential challenges that prevent women from electoral participation. The elections saw a decline in the overall representation of women, from 9 representatives out of a total of 64 in the 52nd Legislature, to 8 representatives out of a total of 73 in the 53rd Legislature. A total of 15 out of 30 seats were contested in the Senate in 2011, resulting in a reduction in the number of female senators from 5 to 4. In the 2014 Senatorial elections only 20 of all the 139 senatorial candidates were women but only one woman was elected. It is of course a major setback in the efforts to enhance women's representation in the Liberian politics.

Women remain underrepresented in political life in Liberia, including within the Legislature, leadership in political parties, senior ranks of the public service and electoral administration. The gender sensitization needs are arguably the greatest among rural populations. The promotion of women within political parties, which serve as a training ground for future leaders, is an area needing more attention and support. Initiatives to date have also tended to focus on women's role in elections per se (as candidates and voters) rather than adopting a holistic approach that looks at the social, economic and political barriers to greater involvement by women in political life in Liberia.

The NEC has put in place a policy to more effectively mainstream gender in the electoral process. The NEC gender section, established recently, oversees the implementation of the gender mandate. However, limited financial and human capacity precludes from the implementation of the gender mainstreaming task and in promoting women participation in elections. Strong advocacy and unanimity are required amongst civil society groups and political parties and NEC can coordinate this work for further promotion of women participation in elections. In the gender mainstreaming efforts political parties should be encouraged to introduce affirmative measures in their policies and party structures to ensure that party lists and governing bodies have at least 30% from each gender, as specified in the recently reformed electoral law.

The project will carefully coordinate the gender activities with IFES, NDI, UN Women and with those partner organizations which may provide substantial support to the NEC gender section in implementation of gender mainstreaming activities.

Activities:

(1) Advocacy and training on gender issues targeting political parties, women, youth, CSOs and Media

The election project will support NEC gender unit in organization of:

- Workshops with participation of gender groups, CSOs and political parties on gender issues what will lead gender unit to develop guidelines and framework for mainstreaming gender in political parties using the 30% quota and advocate with parties to commit to applying them during the electoral processes; The election project will support total 5 workshops during the four years;
- Development and dissemination of factsheet and analyzing manifestos on women political participation from the 2005, 2011 and 2014 electoral processes as well as establishment of a database and assessment with women positions in the hierarchy of political parties; it will lead to establishment of a database which will be published on the NEC website and provide measurement tool on the progress of application of the 30% quota. The NEC gender section will

organize one Conference in order to present findings on the assessment and introduce the data base to participants;

- Jointly with the NEC Voter Registration data entry section, gender unit will coordinate and analyze elections voter turnout from 2014 and 2017 elections and present disaggregation data of male/female voters. The disaggregated data will help the NEC and other electoral stakeholders to evaluate the progress archived with the gender mainstreaming and awareness;
- Stakeholders' consultations with political parties' high level leadership on gender factsheet and analyzed manifestos. Compilation of a gender analysis on political parties' manifestos to be used in workings with political parties. Political parties will commit themselves to increase women participation at all level. The election project will support the total 6 consultations in 2016 and 2017;
- Sensitization program targeting women groups, CSOs, Youth and the Media for cross-cutting perspectives on the social, cultural, political, religious and legal challenges preventing equal participation in the electoral processes; Programs will identify challenges and develop mitigation strategies together with stakeholders. The project will recruit a short term local consultant to analyze the strategy and conduct participatory assessment with direct involvement of the gender section. The election project will support the total 6 programs in 2016 and 2017;

(2) Support NEC for institutional and internal reform targeting gender balanced initiatives;

The election project will support the NEC to:

- Gender consultant recruited to support NEC gender unit reform and policy advice. Develop policies and regulations on recruitment that promote gender balance and diversity in NEC's staff; Develop and disseminate a gender specific operational plan and budget for the 2017 elections and support unit to organize and hold gender specific election planning workshops/trainings with diverse women's groups (rural & urban) and CSOs focusing on community mobilization, community entry strategy, financial management, financial planning and reporting writing. It is expected that training workshops will lead participants to be better mobilized, empowered, sensitized to participate equally in the electoral processes; Total 6 planning workshops will be support in 2016 and 2017. It will also include professional moderator (s) in organization and facilitation of trainings.
- Establish a Gender in Elections "external coordination groups" across the country with involvement of women's groups, women's CSOs, MoG, youth which will enhance information sharing and strengthen responses to women's political participation; NEC will meet all groups on quarterly bases in 2015-2018;

(3) Capacity building activities addressing the needs of women's groups in complementarily to supplementary support measures to CSOs

- The election project will support women aspirants and women groups to empower them and give the necessary capacity to effectively participate in the electoral processes as voters as well as candidates. The project will support the NEC gender section to organize and roll out series of training courses on public speaking, networking, and resource mobilization to increase the knowledge, roles and participation of women in the electoral processes. Ministries and training institutions will be potential partners to the process. Training courses will be facilitated by the NEC gender unit and national experts in the field of gender.

- Support gender community outreach events to increase women participation in electoral processes. The project will provide sub-grants to gender focused CSOs at carrying awareness campaign nationwide to increase women's participation in the electoral processes; CSOs will be selected through competitive process after evaluation of the operational and financial proposals. Selection will be carried out jointly by NEC and the UNDP election project.

Result 4: Political parties' capacity is enhanced, political parties are coordinated and conflict prevention measures are in place

The relationship between political parties and the NEC has been quite contentious. After 2005 participation in several elections and by-elections, political parties remain quite weak in many cases without proper manifests on political vision and governance. Several major opposition parties expressed reservation about the NEC's impartiality, after appointment of the new board of NEC commissioners in 2013, even though the NEC has been widely commended for handling of the various by-elections and other electoral processes successfully. The frustration and distrust of political parties further deepened following the NEC's petition in February 2014 before the Civil Law Court for the revocation of the registration of 20 political parties due to noncompliance with requirements of the Constitution of Liberia as well as the guidelines relating to the registration of political parties and independent candidates, including the mandatory submission to the NEC of detailed statements of assets and liabilities. As a result of the petition, the Civil Law Court revoked registrations and accreditation of the 20 political parties.

There is a strong need to promote a dialogue and consensus building on critical issues of legal or administrative reform, to better sensitize parties to the mandate and workings of the NEC and to better sensitize the NEC to the needs and expectations of the political actors. The IPCC is currently the only multi-party platform available to create compromise and find consensus. Considering the contentious and unfortunate political climate of recent decades, the importance of the IPCC is evident not only to the political process but also to the citizens of Liberia who benefit from political dialogue. Political parties have recognized the value of the IPCC, in particular as a conflict resolution and prevention mechanism and suggested to explore options for developing the IPCC into a more independent forum with NEC participation through which political parties can convene, discuss and resolve conflicts.

Activities:

(1) Support the revitalization of the independent IPCC with secretariat including members for women and youth affairs

The IPCC has proven itself to be of value to both the NEC and participating political parties. Parties themselves recognize that establishing dialogue even on contentious issues allows them to engage in heated debate without having to resort to disengagement, political marginalization, or even potential violence. There is also room for parties to take responsibility for their own sustainable development while recognizing that the NEC has an opportunity to demonstrate to parties and to the public at large that the new leadership and membership on the NEC Board is fair, balanced, non-partisan and politically neutral. The election project will:

- Support the establishment of the IPCC secretariat to enable it to evolve into an effective platform for dialogue and consensus building among political parties as well as in their engagement with the NEC. The project will support IPCC to establish a secretariat with necessary materials and equipment for proper functionality. The election project will recruit a consultant who will work closely with NEC and IPCC on the revitalization of the IPCC structure and development of necessary polices, guidelines and systems;

- Support trainings as part of regular IPCC activities with participation of the Parliamentary oversight committee on elections and include such topics as: party fundraising, financial reporting, membership development, party strengthening during the intra-election period, consensus-building, conflict resolution, effective outreach to members and the electorate during (and after) the election cycle, horizontal management, change management. Trainings will be conducted by consultant (s) recruited by the election project in cooperation with the NEC political liaison office.

(2) Develop IPCC Policies and Regulations and organizational structure

Work with the NEC and the IPCC to ensure sustainability, cooperation, trust and a mutually-cordial relationship between the NEC and registered political parties and among political parties throughout the election cycle. A need has also been identified to ensure appropriate representation by all participating political parties on the IPCC on a regular basis (e.g. party chairperson and/or party secretary general):

- Organize high level conferences to encourage political party leaders to take responsibilities for deepening democracy in Liberia while investing in institutionalizing their political parties; this will also include an external and non-partisan professional moderator. An individual from a regional country with similar experience to Liberia may be well-received by participants.
- As a result of the conference support to development of IPCC Policies, Memorandum of Understanding, Code of Conduct of political parties and regulations.

(3) Support to conflict prevention and inter-party dialogue with active involvement of community leaders and youth organizations in rural and urban areas

Liberia has a considerable youth population with more than 60% under the age of 35. High level of unemployment and livelihood opportunities as well as illiteracy make Liberian youth particularly vulnerable to influence. Engagement of the youth into the social life is paramount in order to avoid feelings of politically disempowerment and economically abandoned. Factors related to a country's social structure also contribute to possible violence. It was noted that rapidly growing urban areas, which often have large populations living in poor conditions, can contribute to the likelihood of electoral violence in some circumstances. The role of the youth is highlighted in particular with analyses showing that risks of electoral violence increase in countries with a large youth population, especially when young generation are unemployed and not enrolled in secondary school. To address all these challenges the election project will:

- Establish a conflict monitoring and tracking regular forum with effective engagement of the IPCC, NEC, CSOs, LNP, community leaders, youth, ethnic, religious minorities and women organizations in conflict prevention; This venue will be linked to the NEC/LNP security coordination forum and serve as early warning mechanism prior to the 2017 elections. Total 9 monitoring forums will be supported.
- Establish the IPCC regular meetings convened to improve collaboration among NEC, political parties with media to enjoy equal access to press (once in a month during non-election period and twice in a month during election period).
- Organize 7 workshops of youth wings of political parties & youth civil society organizations on electoral conflict prevention mechanisms. Workshops will be facilitated by the IPCC/NEC and hired facilitators.

(4) Support direct engagement of political parties in consultation with civil society and the media to solidify the connection between political parties, community leaders, women and youth groups

- Support engagement of IPCC with the media, CSOs, community leaders, and women groups to ensure that once parties have established well-developed strategic plans that their public policy, platform, and non-electoral party activities are known to the public at large and information is shared with stakeholders. To complement these activities, the election project will support IPCC in presentation of their programs and decisions through media and radio shows.
- The election project will recruit a short term web page developer to engage IPCC in creation and maintenance of IPCC-themed sites and social media links. Set up an IPCC website or utilize Facebook and Twitter to establish and maintain outreach to “followers” (e.g. party members, media, citizens interested in political party activity and the NEC as well as elections). The project will support recruitment of short terms web page developer.

Result 5: Elections security forces act is in line with international standards

In a fragile, post-conflict environment as Liberia, the electoral process is a core element of establishing a democratic and stable country. NECs role in this regard is to, on the one hand, support and promote structures and institutions that reduce the tensions in society, and on the other hand, to promote a secure setting for the peaceful conduct of election. In 2012, the United Nations and the Government agreed on a three-year timeline for the next phase of UNMIL’s gradual military drawdown. UNMIL’s drawdown has proceeded peacefully since 2012, and joint planning between the Government and UNMIL remained constructive. But implementation has been inadequate, as national authorities have not allocated adequate resources to the military component. The current number of the LNP is slightly over 4,500 police personnel and may reach 5,000 by the end of the year. However, given the current situation of the state budget, which has been steadily declining over the past three years, it is a challenge for the LNP to be able to assume full responsibility for implementing security in the country before the 2017 elections.

Activities:

(1) Support to the establishment of a regular election security coordination mechanism

Support to the establishment of a regular election period security coordination mechanism chaired by the NEC which meets regularly and includes all relevant national security sector institutions and the UN. The NEC will coordinate and ensure the allocation of funds for the 2017 election security and logistics in the budgets of law enforcement agencies and security personnel act in line with the international standards. The project will recruit security consultant who will assist NEC security unit and the Board of commissioners in establishment of the security coordination meetings and developing strategies for better collaboration of the NEC with the law enforcement agencies in Liberia. Total 12 coordination forums will be organized and supported by the project.

(2) Technical and financial support to train security forces in election related issues and conflict preventive measures at community level

There is still a need for specialized training to go through the roles and responsibilities of police forces during the electoral cycle. In-depth training is recommended of security forces for 2017 elections, which will focus on strengthening of the operational capacities and effective service delivery of the LNP and

other law enforcement agencies. This activity will be funded through this project but implemented by UNMIL/UNPOL. It will require:

- Development of curriculum for training of Liberian National Police in election-related security LNP on their responsibilities on Election Day and how to ensure security of the voting process;
- Development of clear protocols for security forces management on Election Day and during Election period. These materials will be transformed into educational materials such as Manuals and Pocket guide on “Election Security.”

Result 6: Civic and voter education strengthened

In the context of this project which seeks to ensure that the NEC carries out a continuous and effective CVE campaigns and outreach nationwide, a number of key activities have been considered for implementation over the next four years starting in 2015. These activities were largely drawn from recommendations of the Elections Baseline Survey on CVE that was conducted with support from EU through UNDP in 2013/2014. Through this component, the NEC will be encouraged to deliver innovative and targeted civic and voter education for women and youth and these programs will also be tailored to the needs of each region, including the use of the best mediums to reach voters.

The implementation of these cogent CVE activities will be done on community and population specific basis so as to ensure inclusiveness thereby enhancing participation. This means activities and messages will be tailored and disseminated based on the need of target groups – people living with disabilities, first time voters, female voters, students, literate and illiterate communities.

It is expected that the implementation of this activity will, among other things, increase public understanding about the electoral process, thereby increasing public confidence in the credibility of the Commission to deliver free, fair and transparent elections. By deepening the understanding of the policy makers on the scope of elections operation with emphasis on cost implications, budgetary support from government will not only increase but will be provided on a timely basis. Understandably, the implementation of the project will enhance equitable and increased participation of first time voters and female voters (as candidates and voter) in the electoral process and eventually solidify the pillars of the country’s post-conflict democracy.

Another key component of mass media is displayed media. This includes print materials displayed portraying messages and information for the public. For the four-year period under this project, the Commission will develop and produce about sufficient numbers of posters, flyers, brochures, stickers and banners in various categories and erect billboards in the 15 counties of the country portraying important democratization messages and illustrations. Furthermore, the election project will coordinate CVE activities with IFES which provides solid support to the NEC for following 4 years.

Activities:

(1) Support the NEC in developing and implementing a comprehensive civic and voter education program taking into account the findings and recommendations of the CVE Baseline Survey with the eventual support of CSOs

The medium or channel for messaging and dissemination of civic and voter information is critical to the success of any electoral process. Thus consistent with a key recommendation of the election baseline survey, the NEC will produce a CVE toolkit that will be pilot tested and used based on results for CVE

outreach activities. The tool kit will include various types of messages and materials targeting various segments of the population as well as means and procedures of dissemination. The activities will be tailored to the needs of each region, including the use of the best medium to reach voters. The project will assist the NEC CVE section in developing a strategy and toolkits in a timely manner. The project will support:

- Development of a comprehensive strategy and toolkits on the implementation of the three-year CVE program using recommendations of the CVE; The National Elections Commission through its CVE Section will lead the development of the toolkit. The CVE section in collaboration with Gender, Communications, Field Coordination, Political Affairs and M&E sections will organize a working session for the development and subsequent adoption of the toolkit. A 5-day workshop will bring together nationally acclaimed CSOs and relevant technicians from NEC in particular from the Departments of Programs as well as M&E and Field Coordination to identify and compile the elements of the toolkit. The toolkit will be reviewed and revised as necessary after the holding of each election. The next stage of the review will be carried out right after the 2017 elections.
- The toolkit which will be a standard instrument to guide the planning and delivery of all CVE activities in the country will be appropriately rolled out following its development and adoption. It is common knowledge that the toolkit will only be effectively used by relevant stakeholders provided they understand its contents and methodology for application. Thus, with support of the election project, the NEC CVE Section will organize 3 regional workshops for Civil Society Organizations and the Media, Political Parties and Traditional Leaders to train them on the use of toolkit. This is fundamentally required in engendering efficiency and effectiveness in the overall delivery of CVE services.
- CVE consultant recruited to support NEC CVE unit in developing public outreach strategy for the upcoming electoral events such as voter roll update, 2017 general elections and possible referendum. Advising NEC on international best practices in CVE, assisting in the Assessment of most efficient communication means and partnerships for CVE, providing guidance in the design of budgets, strategic civic and voter education operation plans and subsequently advice on its implementation, assisting NEC in the development of a CVE M&E plan.

(2) Strengthen the capacity of Civil Society Organizations to support the Commission in the delivery of quality CVE programs and services

In an effort to ensure the scrupulous implementation of these activities, the program through its CVE section will conduct series of training and capacity building sessions for key national partners aimed at building collaboration for a nation-wide CVE outreach campaign. These partners include Civil Society and Religious Organizations, the Media, Youth and women groups, trade union organizations and national associations. The role of these actors in the electoral process is pivotal in promoting equitable and increased participation. Series of 10 regional capacity building training courses will be organized on the scope of electoral administration and operations and better engagement of CSOs in civic and voter education activities. Besides, the NEC will develop and catalog profiles and institutional structure of those CSOs that have potential to assist NEC in delivery of CVE activities. A data base will comprise the list of CVE as well as Gender unit CSOs. A data base will be updated after each electoral event and will aid work of the NEC in timely selection of CSOs.

(3) Engage the public at three levels, policy makers, civil society organizations, ethnic, religious minorities and youths to deepen their understanding of the electoral process and conflict prevention mechanisms

- Engagement of the policy makers: Regional engagement sessions will be organized for relevant policy makers specifically to deepen their understanding on the scope of electoral administration and operations with the aim of enhancing effective and efficient election financing. Such policy makers will be drawn from the National Legislature and Ministries and Agencies within the executive. Increased in budgetary support from government and timely availability of such support is undeniably essential in guaranteeing the credibility and integrity of the electoral process. Besides, it will also deepen understanding of participants about electoral processes and in particular will emphasize on importance of establishment of the permanent and continued CVE programs. The election project will support total 7 regional workshops.
- School based program: Sustaining Liberia's democracy requires a robust engagement of young people who constitute the next generation of voters. Equipping them with the requisite knowledge and information regarding their roles, rights and responsibilities as citizens in the electoral process is critical to the sustenance of Liberia's democracy. Thus, the CVE section will work with the MoE and selected national CSOs to ensure the successful implementation of the school-based CVE program targeting senior secondary schools. Such large-scale projects require careful planning and inclusion of pilot arrangements before execution of larger scale deployment. Since similar scale work has never been implemented in Liberia, the UNDP election project will provide funds for the Pilot implementation in certain counties of nation. Planning and development of the pilot project will be carried out in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other national or international partner organisations. The Pilot project will provide an opportunity to analyse and improve the structure of the programme for future nation once implementation. NEC accredited national CSOs will be contracted and will be given small grants to conduct school based Pilot project. Small grants will be provided based on operation and financial proposals submitted by CSOs. The project and NEC will ensure detailed financial monitoring. Duration of the project will be 4 months in 2016.
- Community CVE ambassadors: Direct engagement method is a major mechanism in any effective CVE outreach campaign. Thus, a number of steps will be taken under this project in the form of community outreach using various means. The CVE section will organize community and town hall forums, open-air concerts using celebrities, intellectual contests, sports and recreation events to educate and inform citizens about the ongoing democratization of the country with emphasis on the importance of their participation. Furthermore, about 40 traditional group of communicators such as town criers and drama and cultural groups will be hired to serve as Community CVE Ambassadors to carry out door-to-door campaigns. These groups will be carefully selected and brought from their respective communities as a means of instilling trust and confidence in the process to encourage locals for participation. CVE and Gender units will work closely to achieve a common goal in formation of more inclusive and fully participatory electoral processes in Liberia. Monitoring of all activities will be provided by the NEC CVE and M&E sections.

Result 7: Strengthen the electoral legal framework and the constitutional review process as it relates to elections and harmonization of the election law and regulations

A Constitutional review process is under way and will perhaps have implications for the conduct of the 2017 elections. The ongoing legal reform process represents an opportunity to build broad consensus among political actors on the rules of politics and promote confidence in the NEC, which will be critical for the peaceful conduct of the elections. If the proposed changes to the Constitution are approved and come into effect before the 2017 elections, a new board of commissioners will be in place to conduct the general elections. The NEC will be charged with harmonizing the electoral law and regulations with the new Constitution. Stakeholders would also need to be familiarised with the changes introduced, within

short timeframe. Therefore, the project will provide technical advice to the NEC and other relevant stakeholders on the constitutional review process and the conduct of a referendum. The NEC will be closely coordinating with the CRC and the Legislature the constitutional review process to ensure that discussions on the conduct of constitutional changes relating to the elections and referendum adequately take into account the operational implications of electoral process.

Activities:

(1) Support the NEC, the CRC, the LRC, the legislature and the Government on the referendum, constitutional reform as it relates to elections, harmonization of electoral law reform and constitutional review process and developing detailed guidelines and regulations

Deploying a legal expert as a resource within the NEC is an activity that would have immediate usefulness as well as potential impact into the post electoral period. Such an expert will help the NEC navigate the various legal and constitutional reforms being proposed/enacted, and interpret their significance for the NEC's operating procedures, including adjudication of electoral complaints. This would potentially include a review of constitutional provisions relevant to the appointment of the NEC members, proclamation of Election Day, regulations, directives and instructions related to elections. Legal expert will assist NEC in organization of public information sessions on newly amended election law.

(2) Develop efficient and credible complaints mechanisms as a tool for prevention of electoral violence

A legal expert will help the NEC in strengthening of the NEC hearing office. S/he will support development of efficient and credible complaints mechanisms which entails development and approval of the NEC complaint hearing procedures as a tool for prevention of electoral violence and violence related to intra-party conflict. Legal expert in close coordination with hearing office will organize 8 complaint adjudication workshops for the legal and magisterial staff on dispute resolution and complaints procedures. Additionally, the legal expert will support the hearing and legal sections during the 2017 electoral events and provide vital advice for timely resolution of the electoral complaints

Result 8: Successful conduct of national elections through logistics and operational support provided to NEC and core electoral stakeholders

Limited infrastructure and difficult terrain and weather conditions make logistics one of the most challenging tasks for the NEC. The Constitution stipulates that presidential and legislative elections should be held throughout the country on the second Tuesday of October, when the rainy season is the heaviest. While significantly dependent on UNMIL support in 2005, the NEC has increasingly assumed logistical responsibility for the process in 2011. Notably in 2011, UNMIL provided limited logistical assistance only where national capacity was absent. UNMIL's drawdown and loss of assets diminished the mission's capability to provide significant logistical support in 2014. As a rule in the last years, when elections operation comes closer the NEC officially requests UNMIL to provide logistical support in the distribution and retrieval of election materials and personnel to remote and inaccessible precincts in the south-eastern and north-western regions. For the 2017 general elections, the NEC should be operationally strong and confident enough to find more sustainable, good practices and cost-effective solutions to the challenge of reaching remote areas. NEC should affectively coordinate and advocate for the resource sharing with other government institutions during logistical operation.

Activities:

(1) Logistics (such as elections material) and communication support to NEC

Activities in this area will provide support specifically aimed at the election events expected during the life span of the project, namely for preparation of the 2017 national elections. Support would include operational support to the NEC, including communication, public outreach, voter education, electoral staff training and monitoring as well as support for the Run-Off. The election project will closely coordinate with IFES and NEC and co-share funds to avoid overlapping of activities and duplication of costs. While the logistical needs of the elections are not clear at this point, the operational requirements of the 2017 elections will be defined closer to the elections when the election budget and operational plans are developed by the NEC. Revision of the budget will be subject of the Project Board approval.

(2) Support to operational planning and budgeting exercises

The NEC's capacity for rational multi-year planning and budgeting is limited. Budgetary preparation for the 2014 elections showed pitfalls since the funds for the Senatorial elections were received late. It became obvious that the NEC is not proactive in preparing of long-term budget plan which could facilitate predictability in the allocation and disbursement of funds, including the mobilization of external resource where necessary. Therefore, the project finance specialist will support NEC operational planning and budgeting for the 2017 national elections including voter registration. For the budgeting exercise the finance specialist will work closely with the NEC finance section on timely development of the NEC electoral budget, advice on coordination mechanisms with national authorities including security agencies and ensure submission of budget to the executive and legislative branches for approval and timely allocation of funds.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The project's main assumptions are that the political context in Liberia will remain conducive to peace and stability, no major armed conflict or socio-political disruption will occur and that the donor community will manage to mobilize enough resources to support Liberia's electoral cycle 2015-2017. Several risk factors could bear directly on the successful implementation of the elections assistance, mainly relating to the broader political landscape and electoral reform imperatives currently under consideration:

Risk/potential adverse impact	Level	Risk management strategy/measures
Lack of capacity of the state to provide security as part of the UNMIL military drawdown	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is substantial focus on this issue from almost all donors. EU is foreseeing a state building contract (Budget support) and political dialogue that will contribute to these efforts. • Regular election security coordination mechanism (Project's Result 6).
Electoral violence triggered by lack of NEC transparency and technical capacity to prepare for elections	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of the technical team in NEC deployed by the project is critical for conducting smooth electoral operation. • The presence and training of qualified national civil observers • The eventual monitoring of an Election Expert Mission to encourage increased professionalism of the NEC
Electoral violence triggered by Insufficient engagement of youth in electoral processes	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure youth is engaged in the electoral training and awareness programs • Support to CSOs related activities in the rural and urban areas with active involvement of youth and gender groups
Political dialogue in between the new Board of Commissioners and the political parties deteriorates	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will strive to install a culture of assuring that all objective points of critics are treated in a professional manner. • Revitalisation of IPCC structure will establish the dialogue with political parties and act as conflict mitigation tool
Delay in taking decision to conduct referendum on the constitutional amendments	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities, including recruitment of staff, and procurement of materials would have to be reshuffled and reallocated at Steering Committee level.
Delay in submission of the 2017 electoral budget	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will assist in development of the calendar of activities and ensure the budget is timely submitted
Shortfall in the national budget leads to reduction in NEC budget	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will support improved budget planning and lead to more efficient allocation of funds. Complementary actions such as budget support and PFM will also contribute. Continued dialogue with government will also take place.

6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

On the basis of the partnership for electoral assistance EU-UNDP and with the follow-up and support of the Joint EU-UNDP Task Force on Effective Electoral Assistance, the project will also foster a special relationship with UNMIL, UNPOL, UNWomen and other possible UN actors with a mandate or expertise in electoral assistance as well as conflict resolution and peace building activities. International donors and other partners such as IFES, NDI, International IDEA, ECOWAS and AU may collaborate on substantive activities.

The project will function in DIM. The project will follow the best management model for an electoral assistance projects that would provide for a policy and technical oversight to ensure the project remains on track and on budget.

A Project Board (PB) is the overall authority for this project and is responsible for its overall direction. It is the highest authority of the project responsible reviewing advances of the project (activities and status of indicators) and provides strategic direction for the achievements of the objectives and project purpose. The PB which convenes once a year and will be presided by NEC and include EU, UNDP and NAO, represented through the Ministry of Finance and Development. The membership of the PB will increase if donors decide to contribute to the project. Other donors not contributing to this project can be included as observers to the PB. Decision of the board will be made by consensus. In case of disagreement, decision will be made based on the weight of the contribution to the project. Periodic (every quarter) meetings will take place between EU, NEC, NAO and UNDP to review and decide implementation and operational issues that may arise.

The Donor Coordination Mechanism will function through the Technical Working group (TWG), where NEC activities will be discussed between different donors and their support coordinated. This forum would be an important part of donor coordination, with the emphasis on high-level policy dialogue, collaboration and information-sharing and also broaden other components of potential democracy-building programs. The purpose of the TWG will be to ensure common knowledge on election activities, harmonization and to avoid duplication of programming. The agenda would include an update from the NEC on election preparations and related issues and short presentations from each group on their activities followed by general discussion on proposed or emerging issues. TWG project reviews will be made at regular intervals or as necessary when raised by the NEC or CTA. TWG will receive quarterly progress reports on NEC activities which will be prepared by NEC with the CTA support. TWG will meet at least quarterly and more frequently nearer to the Election Day as needed. The TWG is presided by the NEC, who will provide overall direction to all donor activities in line with its strategic plan. NEC will prepare an agenda for the meetings, which will happen quarterly. The membership of the TWG will include EU, UNDP, USAID, IFES, and other donors contributing to supporting elections.

A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be the dedicated unit that administers and manages the funds. The PMU will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the project and will serve as a Secretariat to the PB. The PMU will prepare issues for PB and TWG discussion and iron out in advance any outstanding controversial issues. PMU staff should include experts with proven previous comparative experiences in electoral assistance. The selection of experts shall be done in collaboration and in agreement between UNDP Country Office, the NEC and of all the donors contributing to the UNDP managed fund. A specific support can be provided by the United National Electoral Assistance Division and by the Joint EC-UNDP Task Force both maintaining rosters which can serve as source for pre-selection of experts. The selection will be carried out in conformity with requirements of competitive review and diverse applicant tools following UNDP rules and regulations. UNDP agrees that clearance for the selection of experts shall be provided in an expeditious manner and the selection of the entire set of experts required may be completed at different stages in order to allow the immediate implementation of the project. After the project ends, all assets including vehicles and office equipment will be handed over to the GoL unless otherwise decided by the Project board. Staff contracted by the project will have their project contract ended.

The project will be coordinated by a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA/PMU), recruited by UNDP, who will oversee the project implementation. The project will also recruit a Training and Capacity Building and Finance Specialist. During the election operation (year 2017) the project will additionally recruit procurement specialist (UNV) to support the NEC in delivery of the 2017 electoral procurement. Other project staff will include short term experts in the field of communication who will develop the project's

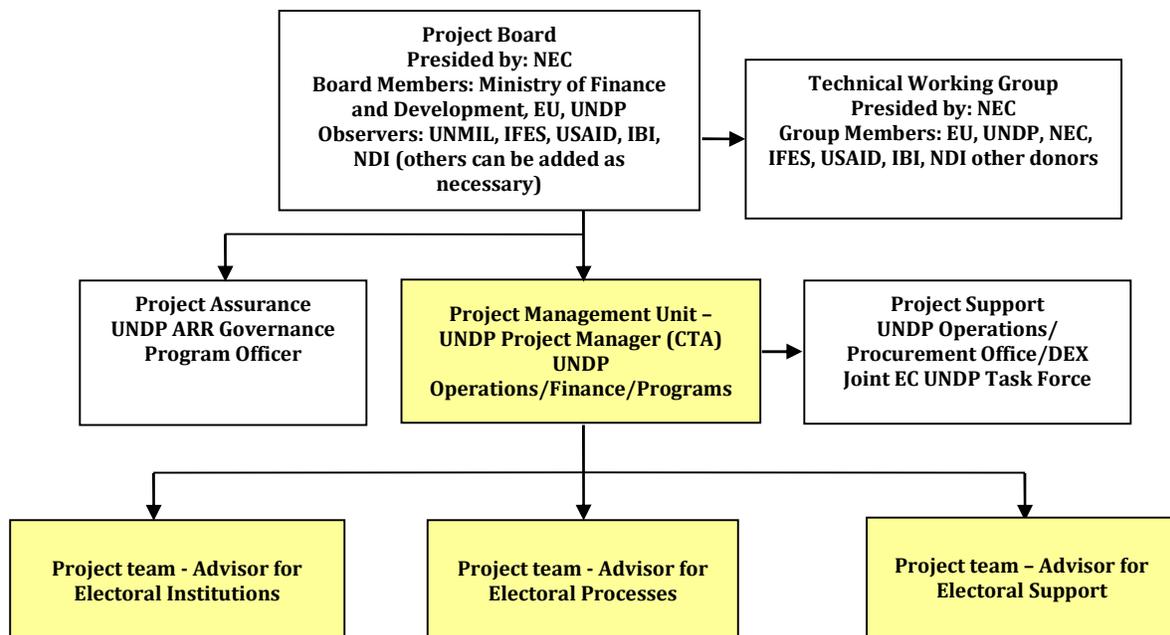
visibility and communication strategy for the following 4 years, voter registration, legal, records management, IPCC/conflict prevention, voter education and gender. The CTA will be responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the project, as well as ensuring that the project produces the results specified in the project document. The full TORs for these three key positions are attached.

Regardless of reporting lines, all advisors working to implement the project should be coordinated by the CTA but will retain their reporting and supervisory lines. The CTA will report to the Project Board which, as indicated above, comprises the following members:

- Representative of the NEC and GOL;
- Representatives of the development partners to the project EU, UNDP, IFES, UNMIL, USAID, NDI, IBI.

There is also a need in the project organization for a means of assessing all aspects of the project’s performance and products which are independent of the CTA. This is the project assurance that will be the responsibility of the designated Team Leader of the Governance Unit of UNDP Liberia. The project will receive the support and follow up from the EC and UNDP’s members of the Joint EC UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance.¹

Project Management Structure



¹ The JTF is formed by EC and UNDP staff dealing with Electoral Assistance at HQ levels among Brussels, New York and Copenhagen and soon in Ghana, Dakar, Johannesburg and Bangkok. The overarching purpose of the JTF is to further strengthen and facilitate the EC-UNDP partnership in the electoral assistance field and aims to improve the overall efficiency and adherence of the projects to the common EC/UNDP strategic approach. The focus of the JTF is to provide identification, formulation and implementation support for joint EC-UNDP projects on electoral assistance whenever needed and requested by EC Delegations and/or UNDP Country Offices. The specific support that the JTF will provide include: Operational Guidance and implementation strategies Liaison and Interactions with the different services involved, at headquarters and field level, throughout the operations cycle to ensure the application of the recommended quality standards.

6.1 Project Reporting Schedule

The following reporting schedule will apply:

Quarterly Progress Report to the members of the Project Board:

Activity Report:

- Activities carried out during reporting period;
- Difficulties encountered and measures taken to overcome;
- Changes introduced in implementation;
- Progress towards achievement of expected results, assessed against indicators specified in the Annual Work Plan and log frame;
- Work-plan for the next period;
- Financial update.

Annual Progress Report to the Project Board:

Activity Report:

- Summary and context of the Action;
- Difficulties, challenges and risk mitigation measures;
- Recommendations for revisions in the scope and focus of project activities, with budget implications;
- Financial Report submitted quarterly;

Final Report:

- The Final Report to be submitted within six (6) months after the end of implementation period of the project. It must include
 - Summary and context of the project;
 - Activities carried out during the project;
 - Difficulties/risks encountered and measures taken to overcome;
 - Changes introduced in implementation;
 - Lessons learned and best practices;
 - Results achieved by assessing indicators outlined in the logical framework;
 - Financial Report;
 - Summary of expenditures by category compared;
 - Recommendations, lessons learned and exist strategy for follow-up assistance projects.

Reports should be produced in a timely manner, with drafts sent to partners at least a week before the meetings.

The election project will procure an independent consultant(s), to carry out the midterm and final project evaluation. It will be funded by the project itself.

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

An indicative Logframe including performance indicators for all objectives is included as an annex. It is itself based on the Country's Agenda for Transformation and NEC's 2012-2017 Strategic plan which presented the NEC's strategic objectives for the period. Due to outstanding limitation in the country's and the sector's M&E framework and capacities, the project will be subject to UNDP's monitoring and

evaluation procedures. In parallel, this project and other EU and donors projects are and will support the improvement of the M&E systems in the country in order to achieve sustainability.

Performance monitoring will be subject to yearly review by the PB. Follow-up missions to be carried out by the EU-UNDP Joint Task Force may complement the monitoring activities/mechanisms of the project. In addition, a ROM mission may be carried out by the EU. EU will be part of the project's overall oversight mechanism and shall be invited to participate in the main monitoring and in the evaluation missions relating to the performance of actions that have received funding from the Commission. The results of such missions shall be reported to the Commission. The EU Delegation may take on additional responsibilities in the project and increase efforts to follow technically the implementation of the programs/projects, also with the support of external expertise. The EU Delegation may consider recruiting electoral operations experts through the TCF that would liaise with the NEC and the UNDP in the follow up of the project

Tracking of the achievement of benchmarks/indicators for each activity will monitor the performance of the project. The project activities will be closely monitored by UNDP Country Office. To this effect a Program Officer from the Governance Unit will backstop the project and support the CTA, PMU and the NEC in planning and monitoring project outputs. The mechanisms that will be used to monitor the annual work plan will include:

- A project logframe;
- Quarterly progress and financial report prepared by the PMU/project office;
- Annual progress report and financial report prepared by the PMU/project office at the end of the year;
- Field visits undertaken jointly by donors, the NEC and the United Nations; and
- An outcome or project evaluation.

8. PROCUREMENT

Over the years, UNDP has developed an extensive understanding and experience in providing technical assistance and support to the conduct of democratic elections, through either UNDP headquarters or its country offices. UNDP has become a major actor in the procurement of electoral materials, ranging from ballots and ballot boxes, stationery and digital voter registration equipment. In addition, UNDP has recently increased its focus on the crucial pre-polling period of planning and budgeting for procurement of electoral material.

UNDP has reinforced the procurement function and related higher-level advisory services by revamping and restructuring the Procurement Services Office in New York and Copenhagen. One unit deals directly with elections, the GPU, which represents the operational arm of procurement. At the same time GPU has an integrated SAT on elections, covering advisory services.

UNDP/GPU hold LTAs for the most strategic and essential electoral materials. The purpose of the LTAs is to ensure efficiency in the procurement turn-around time and to limit repetitive tendering exercises within the boundaries of UNDP procurement rules and regulations. LTAs also provide guaranteed quality assurance and quality control, as well as the benefit of economy of scale, both in terms of products and logistics.

The procurement of any goods, works or services in the context of this Action shall be carried out in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures adopted by the United Nations Development Program. The project shall be subject to the internal and external auditing procedures laid down in the Financial Regulations, Rules and directives of UNDP. A copy of the audited financial statements of UNDP

issued by its external auditors shall be submitted to the European Commission's Central Services by UNDP.

9. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU. This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan for the Action, to be elaborated before the start of implementation and supported with the project budget.

10. EXIT STRATEGY

The project will formulate the exit strategy in close collaboration with NEC and donors and review gradually the progress with the NEC administrative system and policy development, staff capacity enhancement and the level of NEC's interaction with political parties, CSOs and partner organizations. It will also identify which activities may go on without external support, which activities may need further external support and which donors may step in to replace EU. It will also explore the options and challenges to the NEC after 2018, based on the post-election assessment.

11. LEGAL CONTEXT

The country program action plan shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of Liberia and the United Nations Development Program, signed by the parties on 27 April 1977. Revisions may be made to this project with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative only with relation to those aspects which do not require EU's prior approval based on the General Conditions, Annex 2 of the EU-UNDP agreement and provided he or she is assured the other signatory of the project have no objection to the proposed changes, in the case of revisions which do not involve significant changes in the immediate objectives, output or activities of the project, but are caused by the rearrangement of inputs already agreed to or by cost increases due to inflation.