UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Project Title: LIBERIA ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT

Project Number: 00123923

Implementing Partner: UNDP

Start Date: September 2020 **End Date:** July 2024 **PAC Meeting date:** 22 September

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Cognizant of the fragile political and economic environment, the UNDP Electoral Support Project (ESP) seeks to support the Liberian Government through the National Elections Commission (NEC) to conduct credible, transparent, inclusive, and peaceful elections, leading to accountable and confident public institutions, and prosperous Liberia, in line with the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 on *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions*, and a comprehensive UNDP Governance Portfolio. The Project adopts a human rights-based approach, and strives to Leave No-One Behind (LNOB) by focusing programs on the most vulnerable and marginalized. It will be adaptable and flexible to changing and unforeseen circumstances, addressing structural issues for lasting results, and ensuring sustainability. A conscious gender lens is applied throughout to fully consider the differentiated needs, roles and access to and control of resources by women and men and push for gender equality.

The overall objective of this Project is to continue strengthening the electoral institutions and processes. It specifically seeks to apply novel approaches to mark a qualitative difference and further progression in electoral assistance in Liberia, while embarking on the fourth consecutive cycle of electoral support in post-conflict. As an overreaching goal, this cycle should be marked by further enhanced national ownership as well as continued progress towards peaceful, credible, inclusive and transparent electoral processes in Liberia. Consequently, the main strategy of the project will be based on a workplan established along broader conceptual areas/outputs of inclusion, transparency, integrity, capacity, and programming for peace. Whereas individual actions target diverse and expanded electoral stakeholder group with the aim to enhance and supplement the technical electoral assistance with broader targets, working towards a more conducive electoral environment and better democratic governance. This approach is thematic as well as multi-stakeholder that offers a more holistic response to observations and recommendations by stakeholders and partners, including election observation missions, as well as to equip NEC to build capacity of other electoral stakeholders.

The project will be delivered under three outputs:
Output I focuses on strengthening inclusion and transparency of the electoral process. The Project will support strategic approaches to communication, comprehensive civic and voter education through the electoral cycle, as well as right and opportunity to vote and to participate in democratic processes for the vulnerable and marginalized groups.
Output II focuses on enhancing institutional capacity and accountability of electoral stakeholders. Employing comprehensive approach to capacity-building at system, organizational, and individual levels, this Project will focus on further strengthening the capacity of electoral stakeholders in more advanced areas of electoral operations. The support will also be tailored towards more sustainable, transparent, and cost-effective organization of elections.
Output 3 targets peaceful conduct of elections, with specific focus on early warning mechanism, conduct of security forces, and violence against women in election.

The Project will be implemented jointly with its main counterpart, NEC, in collaboration with development partners in Liberia, government institutions and stakeholders such as the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive; Law Reform Commission and the Peace Building Office (PBO), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and political parties. It builds on the previous Election Support to 2015 – 2018 Electoral Cycle Project, funded by the EU, Sweden, Ireland, and Canada, and earlier Japan and Germany. After extension, the project ended on the 31 August 2020. The Project will foster collaboration at the level of knowledge and information-sharing, synergies with previous and future activities, reflecting established priorities for development support. The implementation period of the Project is four years from 1 September 2020 till 31

July 2024, covering the 2020 and 2023 Liberian electoral cycles.

Contributing Outcome (UNSDCF/CPD, RPD or GPD):
UNSDCF (Liberia) 2020-2024 Pillar 3 Sustaining the Peace; 4 Governance and Transparency Liberia's Strategic Road map for National Healing and Peace-building 2013-2030 Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) 2018-2023 Sustainable development Goal No.5 & 16 Africa's blueprint Agenda 2063 Goals 11, 12, 13, 17 & 18

Total resources required:		**16,180,764 USD**
Total resources allocated:		
	UNDP TRAC:	1,700,000 USD
	Donor:	
	Government:	
	In-Kind:	
Unfunded:		14,480,764 USD*

* Donor funding yet to be officially confirmed.

AGREED BY (SIGNATURES):

Government: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning	**UNDP: Resident Representative**
Print Name: Samuel D. Tweah	Print Name: Pa Lamin Beyai
Date: 11/03/2020	Date: 19-Oct-2020

Government: National Elections Commission
Print Name: DAVIDETTA BROWNE LANSANAH
Date: 19 October 2020

ACRONYMS

BPPS	Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (UNDP Africa)
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
DPA	UN Department for Political Affairs
ECA	Electoral Cycle approach
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CFM	Citizen Feedback Mechanism
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
CVE	Civic and Voter Education
EDR	Electoral Dispute Resolution
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FPI	Flagship Programme Initiatives
HOR	House of Representatives
HQ	Headquarters
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IPCC	Inter-Party Consultative Committee
IUNV	International United Nations Volunteers
LAVI	Liberia - Accountability and Voice Initiative
LERN	Liberia Early-Warning and Response Network
LNOB	Leave No-One Behind
LPAC	Local Project Appraisal Committee
LMPTF	Liberia Multi-Partner Trust Fund
LNP	Liberia National Police
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NAS	Network Access Storage
NCCRM	National Center for Coordination of the Response Mechanism
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEC	National Elections Commission
NIR	National Identification Registry
PAPD	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
PBO	Peace-Building Office
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SES	Social and Environmental Screening
SSC/TrC	South-south and Triangular Cooperation
PUNO	Participating UN Organizations
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNMIL	UN Mission in Liberia
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development and Cooperation Framework
VAWIE	Violence Against Women in Elections

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I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

1.1 Development Context

The Republic of Liberia held democratic Presidential and Legislative Elections in 2005, 2011 and 2017, after 14 years of devastating civil war. The conduct of 2005 elections were led by the international community under the supervision of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Also, the 2011 elections received significant technical and advisory support from UNMIL. The third general elections in 2017 were the first post-conflict elections entirely managed by Liberians. They were supported by the UNDP Strengthening Liberia Electoral Cycle Project 2015-2018, with financial contribution by Canada, European Union, Germany, Ireland, Japan and Sweden. International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) funded by USAID and ECOWAS equally provided technical expertise to these elections.

UNDP Elections Project focused on the entire electoral cycle, beyond the immediate electoral period, including capacity-building and institutional strengthening. It has helped consolidate Liberia's democracy through the conduct of three successful general elections under the auspices of a well-functioning National Elections Commission (NEC). Given the successful conduct of the third electoral cycle, the future electoral assistance needs to continue support to further enhancing national ownership in supporting electoral and democratic institutions in more advanced areas of electoral operations.

Generally, Liberia's political environment remains stable but increasingly polarized and unpredictable.[1] The country is one of the poorest with a world ranking of 176 out of 189 on the 2019 Human Development Index.[2] Rising economic inequality, youth unemployment, high inflation, weak state capacity in general to figh corruption and poverty, contribute to the fragility of the Liberian political context. Possible further economic decline following Covid-19 pandemic may lead to aggravation of economic situation in country and related public response. It is important to continue supporting both immediate Covid-19 response and the attendant economic recovery.

The Constitutional provisions resulting in proliferation of various elections increase electoral costs exponentially and put periodic electoral process at risk, often undermining confidence of the electorate in the NEC.[3] Holding of the Constitutionally mandated 2020 Special Senatorial Elections has been equally at risk due to the lack of timely government budget and most recently, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. To address the overall sustainability and costs-effectiveness of the Liberia electoral cycle, a full Constitutional reform is necessary.[4]

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[1] The aggravated economic situation has caused the "Council of Patriots" a group composed originally of civil society organizations and pressure groups, and joined by opposition parties, to stage first protest on 7 June 2019 to call for reforms aimed at improving the country's living standards. The protests continued in January 2020 when the opposition rallied against a deepening economic crisis in the impoverished country.

[2] http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf

[3] For example, in 2019, NEC has been highly criticized by observers and political parties for postponing constitutionally mandated by-elections due to the delay of arrival of electoral material caused by late release of funding to the process. At the same time, the current constitutional and legal framework does not provide apparent options to postpone elections due to the force majeure and instances of natural disaster such as health crisis.

[4] The constitutional reform that has been ongoing in parallel failed to fully benefit from public consultations. The proposition of the text to be considered in the constitutional referendum had been published in the National Gazette already on 8 October 2019 before the public consultations completed. The propositions address three areas: (1) the issue of double citizenship; (2) tenure of elected representatives; and (3) election date. The propositions do not address the issue of proliferation of various elections and by-elections or electoral dispute resolution system[4],. The election date is only moved one month from early October to early November, which according to many interlocutors will not have significant effect on the electoral preparations outside of the rainy seasons.

Frequent criticism by the opposition and civil society criticisms of several issues appear to aggravate the current politico-electoral environment. Some of these include; lack of transparency and alleged financial corruption, the accuracy of the voters' roll, perceived lack of neutrality and independence of the electoral dispute resolution mechanisms, NEC's deficiency in sustained internal communication and coordination (within NEC and with its field offices) and external communication strategy with civil society, media; and the Inter-Party Consultative Committee (IPCC), distrust of NEC borne from postponement of past by-elections, insufficient civic and voter education, and an overall lack of a level playing field for candidates, particularly women. The proportion of women at the Ligislature is a mere 9.7%, with the danger this reducing further. The struggle for gender balanced representation has been elusive despite several attempts to introduce an Equitable Participation and Representation Act.[5] It remains necessary to adopt key electoral reforms to address these concerns in order to strengthen public confidence in the upcoming 2020 Special Senatorial Elections and the 2023 General Elections.

The 2019 reform of the Election Law has been largely consultative. Nevertheless, due to delays in finalizing the propositions emanating from these consultations, ahead of tabling them with the Legislature, the process lost its momentum. As such, the draft is yet to be adopted by the Legislature, and the reform will not affect the 2020 Special Senatorial Elections (SSE). For it to apply in the SSE, it should have been adopted six months prior to the SSE, as required in the Election law and defined by international best practice. The final text of the propositions drafted by the NEC does not address some of the key concerns raised above, especially in relation to the electoral dispute resolution, division of administrative responsibilities within NEC and related transparency issues. The reform is a good start to ensure improvements, in line with the recommendations by international and national observers to the 2017 electoral process. However, for a more efficient and transparent administration of the electoral process, further reforms will have to be initiated.

1.2 Current Challenges

Following the continuous decrease in funding for international electoral assistance, NEC has been increasingly seen as assuming national ownership of its electoral process. NEC appears to be genuinely striving to become a trusted and professional institution, with capable staff willing to learn and address any election-related shortcomings. They have also put in place a strategic plan to guide their work.

The NEC Strategic Plan (2018 – 2024), has been developed based on lessons learnt from previous elections, consultations with stakeholders, and recommendations provided by electoral observers and stakeholders. The overall objective of the Strategic Plan is to contribute to the consolidation of nascent democracy through delivery of inclusive, transparent and credible elections. It stands on three key premises of inclusive participation, availability of resources, and retention of qualified and motivated staff. It focuses on five pillars: (1) Legal Framework; (2) Electoral Stakeholders Engagement, (3) Civic and Voter Education and Public Information; (4) Institutional Strengthening, and (5) Election Operations.

The strategic planning exercise also helped NEC to identify numerous challenges, including but not limited to:

- Inadequate technical skills of staff, limited capacity building opportunities, and low staff motivation;

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[5] In 2016, the Senate passed a version of the Act establishing 21 new seats, 15 of which were to be reserved for women; the version subsequently passed in the House established only seven new seats, 5 of which would be for women. The amendment lowering the number of seats "*was made in the light of budget constraints*".

- Weak communication between the NEC HQ and the Field, exacerbated by inadequate ICT infrastructure;
- Insufficient division of authority between the Board of Commissioners and the Secretariat and related unmet expectations on both sides;
- Weak asset management systems;
- Gaps in electoral dispute resolution system often exploited by actors aiming to undermine electoral process;
- Lack of infrastructure and rainy season impacting electoral preparations;
- Growing economic uncertainties, limited capacity of the government to fund elections,
- Weak institutional capacity of political parties;
- Low literacy of the voters;
- Imminent threat of electoral violence and political instability.

Consequently, support to institutional strengthening, remains critical for the consolidation of fragile Liberian peace; this remains on top of NEC's strategic priorities. Well-coordinated and carefully planned UN assistance is important to leverage the UN's role and complement donor participation, while ensuring national ownership, respect for national sovereignty, promotion and protection of human rights, and strict impartiality.

The key electoral challenges stemming from the fragile political, economic situation and electoral system in place include but are not limited to:

Planning and budgeting: The timely allocation of resources for electoral process remains a challenge. Serious efforts have so far been made to cut down electoral costs; in response to the current economic challenges the country faces. In light of decreasing donor support, cost-cutting is an important strategy for the sustainability of the electoral funding, and the electoral process overall. Furthermore, the recent Covid-19 pandemic puts additional pressure on the Government budget and by extension, electoral budget, as implementation of health response is more of a priority over elections funding. Timely strategic planning of the entire electoral cycle will be critical to maintain the integrity of NEC.[6] Lack of resources to support elections also impacts on activities of civil society, political parties, and other actors critical to creation of a vibrant democratic space. To preserve and further democratic gains, support needs to be extended to the areas beyond the capital Monrovia.

Electoral violence: Currently there are 26 Registered Political Parties with NEC. This political fragmentation generally characterizes the electoral campaigns, often leading to electoral violence. While the Inter-Party Consultative Committee (IPCC) structure managed to bring the parties together to discuss electoral violence prevention, the institutionalization of the IPCC is yet to be achieved. The 2019 Montserrado by-elections exposed the vulnerability of Liberia's elections to violence. The national early warning and response mechanisms, which may provide early detection of violence, are not well linked to the NEC and the general electoral process. Furthermore, violence against women in elections continues to be an issue in Liberia and requires targeted response.[7]

Voter registration: The last national voter registration exercise was conducted before the 2017 presidential and legislative elections, with more than 2.1 million registered voters. However, there

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[6] The operating costs of the institution also remain significant challenge.

[7] Ahead of the October 2017 general elections, nude images purported to be those of a female candidate were circulated publicly through social media channels. At least one verifiable incident of physical attack against another female candidate was revealed by three women's organizations (Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia, New Narratives, and the Liberia Women National Political Forum). The organizations also reported that "*a male candidate in Montserrado County watched as his supporters ransacked the offices of a female candidate in electoral district #13. In another district, there is also the case of a female candidate whose supporters have been threatened*" by those inciting tribal differences (https://unmil.unmissions.org/newsletter-07-october-2017).

remains mistrust on the credibility of the current voters' roll.[8] NEC would like to consider the introduction of biometric voter registration before the 2023 general elections. While a careful introduction of technology remains critical, for Liberia to maintain a voter register trusted by stakeholders. In the meantime, the dire economic situation requires exploring and evaluating less costly options, that can be linked to the civil registry.

ICT infrastructure: The recent assessment of NEC's ICT infrastructure revealed critical vulnerabilities in existing infrastructure as follows: (1) ICT was not aligned with management, organizational planning, and culture; (2) weak ICT asset management and maintenance, including software licencing, power downtimes, lack of internet connection, and file storage facilities; and (3) aging, inadequate security and back-up for the voter registration, result management system and other databases. Between elections, funding is usually reduced, skills lost, and the registration system falls into disuse and disrepair. The reverse is the case when elections are due. During this time, donor funding becomes available, and new systems replace obsolete ones. Strategic and long-term planning should be strengthened to address vulnerabilities of the results, and affect the credibility of the process.

Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR): NEC is the place of first instance for adjudication of electoral disputes. NEC has been facing numerous challenges in this sensitive role, including the incoherent timelines for filling and adjudicating complaints, limited training for the Magistrates and Hearing Officers, and difficulty to find and retain trained EDR temporary staff, notably in the counties. Public information and outreach during EDR remain limited, with a challenge to reach remote areas of the country. Moreover, the limited capacity of the political actors to understand the complicated aspects of a formal EDR mechanism continues to pose challenges to the credibility of the process.

Communication: NEC has a professional Communication Department Team to direct, manage, and implement its mandate. They have an open-door communication policy where information can be shared freely, complemented by a website and social media pages. Nevertheless, the lack of strategic approach in reaching out to electoral stakeholders, and lack of comprehensive communication framework throughout the electoral cycle to ensure an increase inclusion of all voters --- women, youth, and marginalized groups --- in the electoral process is key to building confidence of the electorate and ensuring overall integrity of the electoral process.

Gender: While women make up 48% of voters, they are under-represented in the Legislature, leadership and decision-making.[9] NEC is committed to promoting "opportunities for equal participation of men and women", and has reaffirmed its commitment to gender equality through efforts to promote women's participation as voters, candidates, electoral officers and observers, among others.

II. STRATEGY

UNDP is committed to long-term sustainable support to democratic governance and development. The Project supports and is aligned to the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) 2018 to 2023, and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)

[8] Opposition parties highly criticize the accuracy of the voters' roll, referring to duplications of voters' cards, difficulties with identification of allocated registered voters per precinct, "trucking" of voters across internal and international borders during registration and polling. Conversely the ruling coalition considers the voters' roll managed by the NEC to be reliable.

[9] In 2017, out of a total of 1,026 individuals qualifying as candidates to contest in the 2017 elections, only 163 were women, constituting 15.9% https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UN%20Women%20Liberia%202nd%20Quarter%20Newsletter.pdf).

2020-2024. The underling objective of the Project is to build a capable and trusted state institutions that will lead to a stable, resilient, and inclusive governance.

The strategies and interventions are built around Outcomes 2 & 4 of the Liberia UNSDCF 2020 – 2024:

- Promoting cohesive society for sustainable development (Strengthening the peace);
- An inclusive and accountable public sector for shared prosperity and sustainable development (Governance and Transparency).

In line with Government priorities and UNDP Country Programme Document, the Project will adapt a human rights-based approach along with the 'Leaving No-One Behind' principle by focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalised. The project will be adaptable and flexible to cater to changing and unforeseen circumstances, addressing structural issues for lasting results, and ensuring sustainability. This is important to ensure that citizens exercise their democratic rights. A conscious gender lens is applied throughout to take into consideration the differentiated needs, and roles, in terms of awareness and equal participation and representation of women and men in elections. There will equally be a deliberate effort to ensure the engagement and contribution of young people to the outcomes of this Project. Meaningful participation of women, young people, vulnerable and marginalised groups in the electoral and democratic process are key to ensuring sustainable gains.

Cognizant of the fragile political and economic environment, the Project seeks to support the Liberian Government to conduct credible, transparent, inclusive, and safe[10] elections, leading to accountable and confident public institutions in Liberia.

In line with Liberia's PAPD, UN SDCF 2020 – 2024, and the Strategic Plan of the National Elections Commission (NEC) 2018 – 2024, UNDP will continue to provide expertise to NEC to facilitate electoral law reforms, promote women's political participation and prevent electoral violence. It will support renovation of the electoral infrastructure and establish an integrated online e-governance platform to enhance transparency and accountability in governance. Youth organizations will be engaged to boost voter registration and turnout and ensure peaceful elections. Renewed efforts will be made to improve women's representation and participation in politics.

2.1 Theory of Change

Theory of change for this project is aligned to UNDP Liberia's Governance Portfolio and is based on the logic that; comprehensive legal and regulatory framework, strong electoral and democratic institutions and transparent and inclusive processes would lead to credible outcome of elections and hence contribute to consolidation of peace, stability and democracy in Liberia. While NEC remains the key implementing partner and direct beneficiary, increased focus should be placed on other actors in the process, to ensure their knowledge and understanding of elections and democracy is enhanced towards more inclusive and meaningful participation. To ensure sustainability, technical assistance shifts more and more towards capacity building, notably in more specialized and advanced areas of electoral operations, to ensure retention of qualified staff and stronger institution. The Project will further aim to decentralize the assistance as much as possible to build greater capacity of NEC Magisterial Offices and stakeholders at the grassroot levels. The notion that elections are national process should be an underlining factor of the UN electoral assistance. Coordination among various actors remain key to decrease costs and deliver credible outcomes. Finally, setting the electoral assistance firmly within efforts of democratic governance and SDG 16, it seeks out the natural synergies and magnify the mutually reinforcing benefits.

[10] Amidst Covid-19 pandemic, all national processes, including elections, will have to be adapted to the Health Protocols, to ensure public safety.

2.2 Inclusion, transparency, integrity, capacity and programming for peace

With the overall objective to continue strengthening the electoral institutions and processes, this Project seeks to apply novel approaches to mark a qualitative difference and further progression in electoral assistance in Liberia while embarking on the fourth consecutive cycle of electoral support. This cycle will be marked by further increased national ownership as well as continued progress towards peaceful, credible, inclusive and transparent electoral processes in Liberia. The overreaching strategy of the Project will therefore be based on a workplan established along broader conceptual areas/outputs of: inclusion, transparency, integrity, capacity, and programming for peace,[11] whereas individual actions targeting diverse and expanded electoral stakeholder group will aim to enhance and supplement the technical electoral assistance with broader targets, working towards a more conducive electoral environment and better democratic governance. This thematic as well as multi-stakeholder approach will also offer a more holistic response to observations and recommendations by stakeholders and partners, including election observation missions, as well as to equip NEC to build capacity of other stakeholders in the electoral process.

The main objective of this Project is to support Liberia in its achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 16 – *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.* Understanding that SDGs are interlinked and cannot be fully realized independently, SDG 16 creates a sound basis for overall progress in the implementation of Agenda 2030 given its concentration on strengthening key pre-conditions for sustainable development.

This Project also highlights that SDG 16 cannot operate in a silo, as targets set in other SDGs are intrinsically linked to advances in strengthening institutions, promoting meaningful and inclusive participation and increasing access to justice. Hence, the term SDG 16+ has been adopted to underline the Project's broad focus recognising targeted effort towards the realization of SDG 16, but acknowledging the interlinked nature of SDG goals including, SDGs 5, 10 and 17. Progress on SDG 16 and 5 will affect outcomes in the area of youth, women and persons with disabilities as it works towards meaningful participation and ensuring accountability, including gender responsive remedies for rights violations.

In particular, the proposed approach based on broader areas of inclusion, integrity, transparency, capacity and programming for peace is aimed to reinforce the synergies with the objectives of SDG 16. The approach focuses on improving:

- **Inclusion:** In line with SDG 16, target 7, to "ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels" and B "Promote and enforce non-

[11] The Programming for Peace component is designed to directly address the risk of electoral violence that has characterized Liberian politics in recent years. While the Electoral Institutions and components of this project addresses some of the underlying causes of political violence, the Programming for Peace component focuses on ensuring conflict mitigation across the electoral cycle. The Programming for Peace framework seeks solutions relating to the prevention of electoral violence and to support stakeholders in formulating conflict sensitive electoral strategies. In the recent years, a range of electoral conflict prevention activities have been developed and implemented in Liberia and those will be further amended and adapted to the challenges of the upcoming electoral cycle. These activities can broadly be divided into (1) analysis and mapping; (2) monitoring and early response; (3) activity and training design. The analysis and mapping component ensure the development of conflict-sensitive and evidence-based prevention strategies. Monitoring and Early Response is key to guaranteeing accurate and publicly accessible information to inform response and mitigation strategies. Activity and Training Design encompasses a range of context-specific electoral conflict prevention activities based on the analysis and monitoring, foreseeing capacity building with trainings as a vital component. The project will continue providing support to the Liberian police service to ensure security and respect for human rights and freedom of expression, particularly during electoral campaign periods and electoral operations but it will also expand its outreach to other stakeholders concerned with election related violence. Building upon the existing mechanisms and institutional partnerships, in collaboration between governmental actors and civil society, the project will aim to strengthen the response at provincial and local level.

discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development" as well as SDG 5 and 10 to end discrimination and promote equality.

- **Transparency:** In line with SDG target 6 to "effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels", and target 10 to "Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements".
- **Integrity**: In line with SDG 16 target 6, "effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels".
- **Capacity:** In line with SDG 16 target to "strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime".
- **Programming for peace:** In line with SDG 16 target 1 "significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere".

2.3 Mainstreaming gender and diversity

Liberia's electoral system[12] does not predispose the few women in electoral contests to win against men candidates, notably within the context of historic barriers and unlevel playing field for women and men. Whilst the Electoral Law of 2014[13] has established voluntary gender quota provisions on nominations which are worth leveraging in efforts to promote participation of women in elections and political life in Liberia, the Law does not make the provision to influence for quota on results, neither does it provide for handling and addressing of Violence against Women in Elections (VAWIE). The past electoral assistance and institutional strengthening efforts of NEC, supported by UNDP and UN Women, accomplished establishment of the Gender section with a Gender Policy[14] for the EMB and a mainstreaming strategy. The NEC has managed to carry out several key gender-sensitive interventions including sex disaggregated data collection in the 2011 and 2017, outreach and civic – voter education (CVE) specifically targeting. However, structural limitations and barriers to meaningful participation of women in elections and politics in Liberia remain.

The gender approach to elections borrows from the UNSDCF pillar 4 and UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives (FPI) theory of change, which defend that the gender sensitive capacity strengthening of Liberian institutions will lead to delivery of women's participation and leadership in elections and politics in line with the law, policies, standards, norms, frameworks ensuring that the rights holders have the knowledge, service seeking behaviors and capacity to utilize them.

Aligned to the UNSDCF is the UN Women's theory of change for women's political empowerment and leadership, based on the achievements of women in politics and lessons learned to date, envisions a four-pronged strategy: (1) support development and implementation of robust legal frameworks and administrative arrangements that promote gender balance and facilitate women's participation; (2) expand the pool of qualified and capable women to run for election; (3) transform gender norms so that women are accepted as legitimate and effective leaders; and (4) support women leaders in gender-sensitive political institutions to attract, promote and retain women leaders, and highlight the constructive contribution they make to decision-making. Within the broader governance portfolio, the Project will ensure a close collaboration with other projects

[12]Sinde 2005, Liberia has been electing the House of Representatives and Senate through single-member plurality, First-Past-the-Post electoral system. The President is elected in two-round system.

[13] http://www.necliberia.org/doc_download/New%20Elections%20law%20Amendments.pdf

[14] NEC Gender Policy.

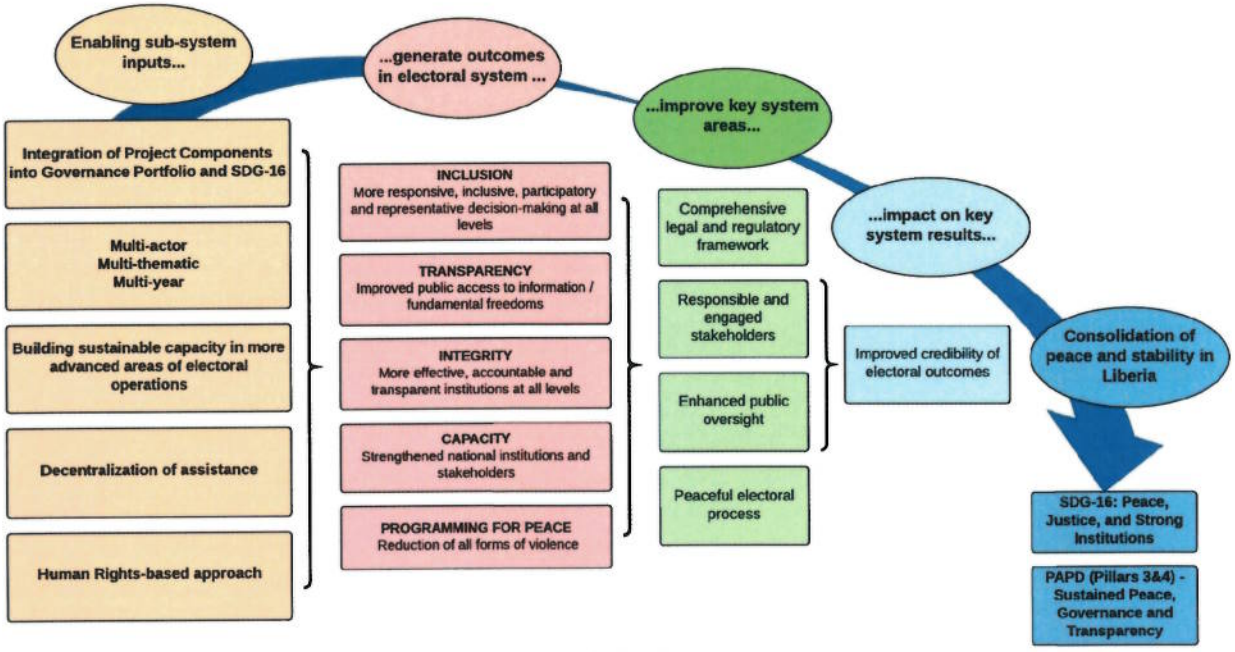
and partners, notably UN Women to leverage expertise in a joint effort to mainstream gender in the electoral cycle and democratic processes.[15]

Moreover, Liberia is one of the countries in Africa where majority of population is young (63% of population is less than 25 years old). At the same time, the youth are faced with significant challenge, especially young women. The extreme poverty and early parenthood leave young girls without the opportunity to become managers and leaders. The project mainstreams youth throughout its activities, including direct engagement in electoral administration, and capacity-building, and civic education.

Furthermore, persons living with disabilities face many challenges in Liberia as cultural approaches to disability remains largely negative. Persons living with disabilities are often excluded or not considered for employment and their specific needs are often not catered for. Specific focus on inclusion allows to promote diversity throughout electoral assistance with particular focus on eliminating obstacles to participation for persons living with disabilities, rural population, and other marginalized groups.

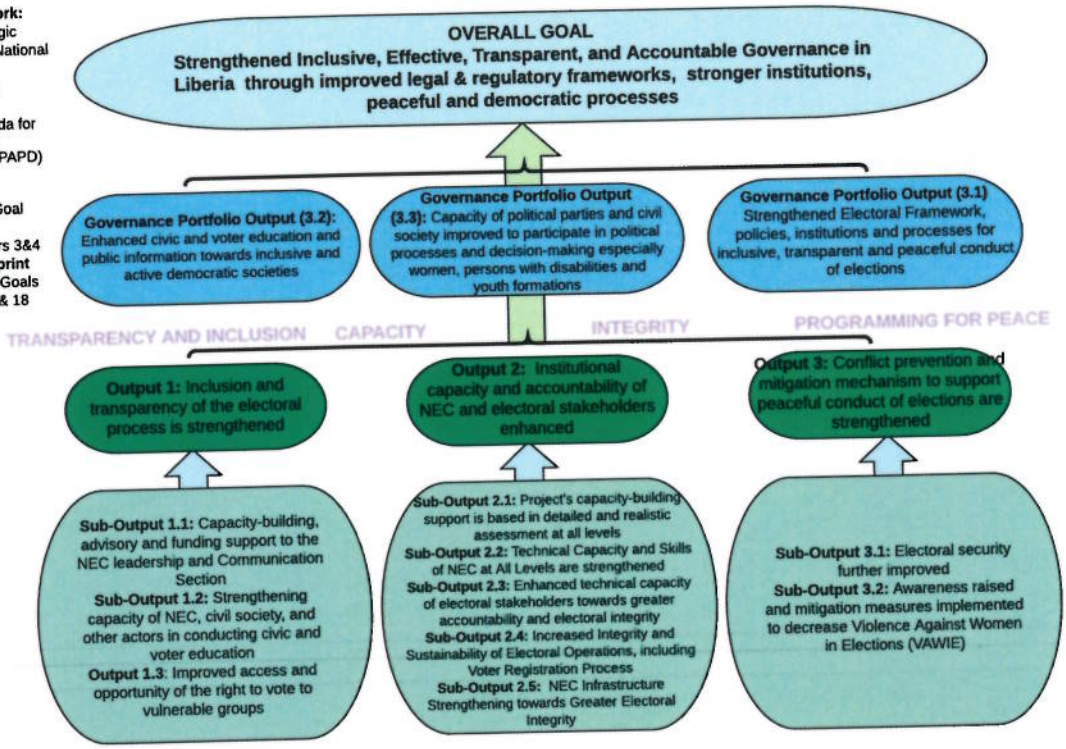
[15] Liberia also has commitments to implement provisions of the below international and regional instruments that the country signed up to in order to promote women's political participation and leadership, namely: *The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), *The Beijing Platform for Action*, *The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa* (known as the Maputo Protocol), *The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*, and *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.*

Theory of change diagram



LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Legal framework:
Liberia's Strategic Road map for National Healing and Peace-building 2013-2030
Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) 2018-2024
Sustainable development Goal No.5 & 16
UNSDCF Pillars 3&4
Africa's blueprint Agenda 2063 Goals 11, 12, 13, 17 & 18



III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The overall goal of this Project is more inclusive, effective, transparent and accountable governance of Liberia. In line with the UNDP Governance portfolio and SDG-16, this goal will be achieved through improved legal and regulatory frameworks, stronger public institutions, more engaged and responsible stakeholders, and peaceful electoral and democratic processes.

3.1 Expected Results

OUTPUT 1 – INCLUSION AND TRANSPARENCY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IS STRENGTHENED

Output 1 is implemented within the framework of Governance Portfolio output area 3.2 *Enhanced civic and voter education and public information towards inclusive and active democratic societies* and 3.3 *Capacity of political parties and civil society improved to participate in political processes and decision-making especially women, persons living with disabilities and youth.*

Sub-output 1.1 NEC strategic approach to communication, external relations, and disinformation management is strengthened

NEC Strategic Plan – Key Communication and Staekholder Engagement Goals

- ✓ Increase public confidence in NEC's work
- ✓ Enhance Collaboration with Stakeholders
- ✓ Promote Gender Equality in Electoral Participation
- ✓ Enhance media's participation in Elections

Electoral Stakeholders' engagement, Election Education and Public information have been identified among the two key areas in the NEC Strategic Plan 2018 – 2024. The commitment to improved communication is also mirrored in the recent (2019) update of the NEC Communication Policy. While the Electoral Observers to the 2017 General Elections noted genuine efforts by the NEC to keep stakeholders informed throughout the electoral process, the opposition parties and civil society criticized NEC for its poor management of communication and the lack of two-way dialogue.[16] To ensure comprehensive, timely, and accurate information about all stages of the electoral process towards the variety of electoral stakeholders in all areas of the country, it is critical that communication related to the electoral process is integrated into every function of the NEC.

Activity 1.1.1 Capacity-building, advisory and funding support to the NEC leadership and Communication Section

The NEC Strategic Plan (2018 – 2024) stresses the need to strengthen the Information Management system as well as enhance internal communication within the NEC HQ and from NEC HQ to the magisterial office. This is a critical initial step to ensure that accurate information is primarily well-understood at all levels of the NEC, and subsequently picked up by the relevant section (Communication, Political Parties' Liaison, ICT), as well as NEC Senior Management to accurately, timely, and effectively communicate to electoral stakeholders. The information further needs to be strategically assessed to allow two-way dialogue with the stakeholders, developing a culture of participation and inclusion.

[16] EU Election Observation Mission Final Report p. 55.

Actions involved in this activity include expert support to the communication section focused on:

- Developing effective communication flow within the NEC structures and external relations to strengthen timely, effective, and accurate information sharing e.g. development of stakeholder engagement meetings calendars, support to organizing regular engagement activities, advice to enhance two-way-communication);
- Consolidating communication and information sharing framework within the NEC to allow robust approach to NEC external relations;
- Improving existing NEC communication channels (website, call center, social media) to carry out electoral messaging accurately, timely and effectively;
- Exploring innovative strategies for open governance and information- sharing
- Strengthening NEC relations with media and improve NEC capacity to carry out effective media trainings to ensure accurate coverage and enhance capacity of media to effectively communicate about electoral process and decrease instance of misinformation;[1]
- Funding support to improve communication capabilities of media section: equipment (hardware, software), staff training; and
- Conducting two public perception surveys to inform strategies aimed at enhancing public confidence in the NEC.

Activity 1.1.2 Infrastructure and tools to improve election-related communication and combat misinformation at national level

At the same time, the quality of media reporting on electoral issues appears poor with journalists reporting without proper verification and fact-checking. Increased politicization of media further decreases independent reporting. Internews, with the support of USAID, has provided numerous trainings to journalists, to enhance quality reporting. Building synergies with the work already done in this area, the Project will seek to support NEC information-sharing with the media, on one hand, including raising awareness and capacity-building on different phases of the electoral process and related issues, and further strengthening capacity of media on the other.

NEC Communication Policy has been updated along with Media Strategy in 2019. The Project will support implementation of these strategies with additional focus on building necessary capacity and awareness of electoral stakeholders to manage disinformation and strengthen responsible electoral reporting. This support will translate through the implementation of a national level multi-stakeholder platform equipped with IT tools to coordinate and strengthen identification and mitigation of disinformation phenomena. This mechanism will have a general mandate and aims at providing a long-term solution to disinformation issues. The activity will also provide targeted mitigation of disinformation related to the electoral process. This support will be provided by the EC-UNDP Joint Taskforce for Electoral Assistance (JTF).

Actions involved in this activity:

- Assessment of national level infrastructure for the monitoring of online disinformation phenomenon;
- Design and development of national level infrastructure;
- National consultation on the development of a national level platform to combat disinformation;
- Customization of IT solutions to support the coordination of identification and mitigation of disinformation phenomenon;
- Training for the national level platform on the identification and response to disinformation;
- Five trainings for media to improve communication on electoral issues;
- Two trainings for electoral stakeholders on misinformation and false reporting;
- Toolkit for NEC, media and other stakeholders (IPCC, civil society) with relevant knowledge and tools to identify and combat all types of false reporting, intentional or not.

Sub-output 1.2 Strengthening capacity of NEC, civil society, and other actors in conducting civic and voter education

Effective Civic and Voter Education (CVE) is critical to ensure that voters have the necessary information and understanding to exercise their right to vote. The concept of CVE encompasses the wider aspects of meaningful and inclusive participation in a democratic society. The need for civic and voter education at a grass root level, targeting all populations including Persons living with disabilities, women, youth, particularly in rural and less accessible areas remain critical in fostering broad confidence in elections and their outcomes. The Evaluation of Support to 2015 – 2018 Electoral Support Project as well as the Observer Reports revealed that marginalized groups and the poor, urban and rural populations continue to face challenges to meaningful participation.[17]

Activity 1.2.1 Expert and financial support to CVE related to electoral events

NEC is tasked to inform, educate, and communicate effectively to the public on the electoral processes, against the backdrop of the environment characterized by high levels of illiteracy and huge infrastructural deficits. Understanding of civic responsibilities and the importance of civic authority are known only to few. Given the wide-ranging tasks of the NEC, CVE goes beyond information related to Election day and voter registration. The electorate needs to be informed about the activities and programs of the NEC throughout the electoral cycle, while NEC needs to seek electorates' view on its processes and performance. Moreover, meaningful citizen participation does not entail only electoral rights but also the ability of the people to monitor their government and hold it accountable through the electoral process.

NEC Strategic Plan – Key Civic and Voter Education Goals

- ✓ Enhance citizen´s understanding of elections and their democratic rights
- ✓ Increase voters´ participation in elections
- ✓ Enhance media participation in elections and democracy education

NEC enjoys a good relationship with CSOs, but the relationship has never been formalized. The NEC, nevertheless, established a good ad hoc coordination mechanism during 2017 elections, which should be replicated. The Project will support NEC in exploring existing initiatives to increase volume and impact of its CVE activities and decrease costs.

Actions involved in this activity:

- Expert support to timely planning and delivery of public outreach and CVE specifically targeting women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- Advisory and funding support to CVE coordinating platform, including coordination between the NEC and partners carrying Covid-19 – related messaging;
- Financial support to Covid-19 preventive items for CVE events;
- Establishment of county-based CVE cells (equipment, training);
- Translating CVE into local languages; and
- Joint NEC – UNDP Monitoring Teams to oversee CVE Activities.

[17] *Inter alia,* in 2017, campaigns were mounted, for example, to avoid nomination of Muslim candidates. The 30% quota on women participation cannot yet be effectively enforced.

Activity 1.2.2 Support to sustainable and long-term CVE and public outreach

NEC maintains that its focus is on electoral education, while general civic education is out of its mandate. NEC, however, remains committed to collaborate with various partners in advancing further democratic education. Interlocutors from CSOs, academia, and the NEC stressed that civic and voter education should be more robust and take place between electoral periods.[18] While CSOs in Liberia remain vibrant and active, they have limited capacity at the grassroots level and lack financial resources to carry out sustainable civic education efforts.

The intervention of the project seeks to design a robust multi-year civic and voter education program, involving NEC, civil society, and political parties. The actions involved in this activity include:

- Development of CVE toolkit targeting various stages of the electoral process, with particular focus on youth, women, persons with disabilities, vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- Continuous support to County-based CVE centers/cells through identification of the CSOs, CBOs, and FBOs (one per county), based on performance and coverage, to carry out electoral and civic education throughout the electoral cycle with Project's financial support;
- Support to platforms enhancing NEC interactions with electoral stakeholders based on two-way dialogues and principles of inclusive governance, integrating youth, women, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable groups;
- Initiating dialogues with the Government and development partners to enhance sustainability of civic and voter education (possibly also through the renewed dialogue on the school-based CVE curricula); and
- Joint NEC – UNDP Monitoring Teams to oversee Civic Education Activities

Sub-output 1.3 Improved access and opportunity of the right to vote to women, vulnerable and marginalized groups

While all intervention by the Project will consider carefully human rights approach and mainstream vulnerable groups in its interventions, specific activities will be designed to improve meaningful access and opportunity of the vulnerable and marginalized groups to electoral and democratic processes.

Activity 1.3.1 Support to NEC Gender Section in developing formative influence over the NEC to mainstream gender-related policies

NEC has taken positive step to establish Gender Section and adopt Gender Policy, nevertheless, the mainstreaming of gender in all electoral process is still lacking. The 30 percent voluntary gender quota are not fully enforced by political parties. NEC candidates' nomination handbook does not mention this provision in the New Election Law. The ongoing reform has a chance to introduce 30 percent quota as obligatory, the implementation will likely remain a challenge.

During the 2017 elections, NEC also managed to carry out several key gender and vulnerable and marginalized groups-related initiatives, such as sex disaggregated data of registered voters and the use of tactile ballot guides. The NEC also lacks the directory of political parties' women wings or keep track of women in leadership positions within these political parties. Similarly, to communication, the coordination among sections is lacking, hence the gender is not prioritized within the NEC and gender lenses are not applied to NEC's activities. The stronger policies and guidelines developed and duly implemented by NEC on promoting women in elections and politics, not only as voters and candidates but also as electoral administrators or observers are key to

[18] EU EOM 2017, p. 31.

enhance women participation. Gender needs to be mainstreamed in all NEC procedures and policies. The 2020 designation of the new Board of Commissioners with a female Chair and majority women Commissioners (four out of seven Commissioners are women) presents an opportunity to strengthen women's participation in the electoral process.

In close collaboration with UN Women, the Project will support gender section in developing its formative influence within the Electoral Management Body. It will strengthen NEC gender section and its positioning within the institution to enhance coordination and mainstreaming within the NEC programs and processes. The Gender Section is well positioned to incorporate gender into all electoral activities. The section can, therefore, be an important factor to push for reforms into the legal framework and to influence the policies of political parties to incorporate more women in the structures of the parties as well as promoting women as voters, candidates, observers, and electoral administrators.

The actions involved in this activity include expert and funding support to gender section, in close coordination and collaboration with UN Women:

- To enhance coordination and mainstreaming of gender within the NEC;
- Implementation of the Gender Policy and Strategy to ensure prioritization of gender in the work of all NEC departments and sections;
- Comprehensive review of NEC laws, procedures and regulations to identify specific obstacles to women participation and seek redress;
- Collection of gender disaggregated electoral data and development of repository and databases; enhance NEC capacity to review the data
- Implementation and enforcement of 30 percent gender quota and, if applicable, monitoring of compliance by political parties through the collection of gender desegregated data and on the development of national database;
- Advocacy for enforcement of temporary special measures for women's participation in electoral processes, appointment of women in leadership positions; and
- Development and dissemination of gender-sensitive CVE.

Activity 1.3.2 Promoting inclusion and eliminating obstacles to inclusive political participation

While some procedures and policies to facilitate participation of persons with disabilities were introduced during the last electoral cycles, they need to be further streamlined and fully implemented.[19] The access of persons with disabilities to the electoral process need to be facilitated through the ensuring better access to polling places and voter registration process, through the re-assessment of polling places and their layout, introduction of mobile registration. Better training of polling staff and voter education campaign should be afforded to the measures in place, including the use of tactile ballot papers.[20] The effective inclusion of women, youth and vulnerable and marginalized groups requires their full participation in the NEC consultation platforms.

Support under this activity will be provided to:

- Political party liaison within NEC in implementation of Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol, and national laws provisions by NEC and political parties
- Awareness raising and gender- sensitive trainings for NEC staff and other electoral stakeholders (BRIDGE, VAWIE, disability inclusion trainings)

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[19] EU EOM 2017, p.3.

[20] The National Union of the Disable noted that CVE messages were not produced for visually and hearing impaired. Other than that, the CVE material was not translated in the minority languages.

- Continuous support to awareness raising and trainings on women and PWDs participation in electoral and political processes
- NEC to strengthen and adopt the draft policy on disability with its implementation plan;
- Integration of women, youth, disability-based organizations in NEC consultations for electoral planning
- Multi-stakeholder Lessons Learnt consultations following the completion of each electoral cycle and further support to identified reforms of the electoral legal framework to ensure positive enforcement for participation of women, youth and vulnerable and marginalized groups in electoral process
- Expert support to Human Resources Department in improving existing policies and strategies to ensure gender, youth, PWD-sensitive recruitment
- NEC to use tactile ballots/ballot guides and ensure that extensive training on its usages is carried out with targeted stakeholders

Activity 1.3.3 Promoting inclusion at the Liberia House of Representatives (HoR) through the implementation of a citizen consultation platform

The project will support the set-up of an online citizen consultation platform which enables interactions between the Legislature of Liberia and the citizens. The platform will also allow citizens to exchange views on ongoing debates through online tools for petition and consultation on the same website as the Legislature. This activity will be initiated following the Special Senatorial Elections of 2020 and ahead of the 2023 elections to ensure newly elected representatives delivering efficiently on their mandate and enhance citizens' involvement and interest in the electoral system in the long-term. This support will be coordinated through the UNDP Joint Task force on electoral assistance.

The Project will also support gender-responsive participation, with special focus on meaningful participation of women as well as promoting their increased access to the information on on-line activities and facilitating for grassroots involvement. UNWomen will support the specialized committees in the legislature and liaise with various CSOs and networks including rural women for close collaboration between the women and the legislature on the online platforms.[21] Noting, however, the electricity gap and low internet penetration, triangulation remains very key to ensuring inclusive and meaningful women's participation. Mock parliaments or the utilization of existing Citizen's Feedback Mechanism (CFM) remain among other possible methods to reach desired outcomes.

Actions involved in this activity:

- Assessment of National Assembly's specific needs for citizen consultation;
- Development of consultation features and access components
- Support to the Legislature for the deployment of the platform and conduct of information campaigns
- Training of House of Representatives (HoR) and Senate's communication staff and awareness raising sessions to newly elected representatives on citizen consultation tools implemented

[21] UN Women intend to involve the women networks especially African Women Leaders Network - Liberia (LWLN) chapter who have access to internet and have had various consultations with women CSOs, Association of Rural women, political parties women's wings, Coalition of Political Parties' Women in Liberia (COPPWiL) and other like-minded networks. The rural women structure is very organised and have representation, which vibrantly work well with various stakeholders.

OUTPUT 2 – INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF NEC AND ELECTORAL STAKEHOLDERS ENHANCED

In line with Governance Portfolio, output area 3.1 *Strengthened electoral framework (laws, policies, institutions, and processes) for inclusive, transparent and peaceful conduct of elections*, the Project will support institutional capacity and accountability of the NEC and electoral stakeholders.

Sub-Output 2.1 Project's capacity-building support is based in detailed and realistic assessment at all levels

The building of institutional capacities to conduct credible and peaceful election process is a key focus of the project.

At the system level, the capacity development includes reforming electoral institutions, policies and laws as well as enhancing the ability of civil society, political parties and all eligible voters, including the marginalized groups, to fulfil their role in the electoral process.

At the organizational level, capacity support is provided to assist the NEC to plan, conduct and manage different electoral cycles in a professional, independent, and sustainable manner. The Project will focus on the establishment of procedures and knowledge management services to enable the institution to face sudden loss of key personnel and changes in the Board of Commissioners. The Project will also promote strong organizational culture for the NEC to build the trust of electoral stakeholders by displaying strong adherence to transparency, neutrality, and professionalism.

NEC Strategic Plan – Key Goals for Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening

- ✓ Enhance human resource capacity
- ✓ Strengthen management systems
- ✓ Improve campaign finance monitoring
- ✓ Mobilize resources
- ✓ Strengthen legal and regulatory framework
- ✓ Enhance stakeholders' understanding of the legal and regulatory framework

At the individual level, capacity development is provided to voters and candidates to play constructive long-term role in a democratic society. The Project will support NEC to enhance quality and impact of Civic and Voter Education (CVE) during elections and throughout the electoral cycle. This will be done in a close collaboration with other partners, including international and domestic civil society organizations, with the overall aim to strengthen meaningful participation of Liberians in electoral and democratic process.

The levels are closely interlinked. The Project will design robust capacity-development program targeting all levels to ensure sustainability and involvement of all relevant stakeholders. To ensure the national ownership and parallel development of the NEC and electoral stakeholders, NEC will continue playing a central role in delivering CVE for elections and trainings for electoral stakeholders.

Activity 2.1.1 Conduct capacity assessment of NEC and electoral stakeholders at all levels

The Project will seek to promote institutional capacity of the NEC and the key institutions involved in the electoral process. The Project will focus on capacity development at the system- (country), organizational- (NEC), and individual-level, targeting more advanced and specialized areas. To ensure sustainable approach to this complex activity, the Project will first have to realistically map and assess the existing capacity of electoral stakeholders at all levels. All capacity-building activities of the project will be based in this assessment.

Under this activity, the Project will support:

- Conduct of capacity assessment of electoral stakeholders at all levels nation-wide
- Design of a robust multi-layered, multi-actor, multi-period capacity-building and training plan

- Conduct mid-term review of the NEC Strategic Plan
- Conduct final review of the NEC Strategic Plan and development of the 2025 – 2031 Strategic Plan
- Lessons learnt conference after 2020 and 2023 elections

Sub-Output 2.2 Technical Capacity and Skills of NEC at All Levels are strengthened

NEC Strategic Plan prioritizes strengthening of human resource capacity, management system, campaign finance monitoring, and resource mobilization for financial activities, along with development of credible voter registration system for capacity building intervention. The project will be specifically targeting these areas with ensuring continuous assistance and technical advice to voter registration, operational support, legal affairs, training, electoral dispute resolution, ICT, gender mainstreaming, electoral operations and logistics, knowledge management (notably records and research), and capacity-building of electoral stakeholders. At the same time, in execution of its mandate, NEC relies heavily on other national actors, such as Police, to provide security of the electoral process; National Legislature and Ministry of Justice to carry forward electoral legal framework review and reforms; Ministry of Finance to allocate necessary budget to the process; justice institutions to ensure the right to effective remedy in electoral complaints and petitions, among others. The support is foreseen through the provision of technical and advisory support to the NEC in the above-mentioned areas.

Furthermore, NEC administration is highly centralized, with Field Offices often lacking necessary guidance.[22] The Project will seek to decentralize its assistance and target, as much as possible, Field Magisterial Offices and electoral stakeholders in the counties. Institutional strengthening towards achieving professional electoral workforce at all levels towards enhanced accountability and transparency in election management cannot be sustained without improved communication between NEC HQ and magisterial offices.[23] Communication must be also integrated into electoral operations to achieve transparent, inclusive, and credible voter registration, candidate nomination, voting, and other processes.

Activity 2.2.1 Developing capacity of the NEC in advanced areas of electoral operations

NEC's institutional and human capacity still require further strengthening. There is also a likelihood that NEC will lose qualified staff due to the inability to meet financial expectations.[24] The issue needs to be addressed strategically, through the long-term planning of training and capacity-building programs and affordable staff motivation schemes. The planning will be supported in two phases – outside of the immediate electoral period (long-term capacity building) and immediate electoral period (support to electoral operations trainings for the NEC permanent and temporary staff).

Support under this activity will be provided to:

- Identification, development and implementation of strategies and adoption of policies for retention of trained electoral staff
- Specialized trainings for NEC staff in professional areas (TBD in capacity assessment)
- Enhancing NEC capacity to organize BRIDGE trainings for electoral stakeholders to advance their knowledge in more specialized areas of electoral process
- Strengthen NEC capacity to deliver regular trainings and briefings for electoral stakeholders on individual phases of the electoral process, including at the county level (voter

[22] EU EOM 2017, p. 27.
[23] EU EOM p. 26.
[24] Summative Evaluation of the Support to 2015 – 2020 Electoral Cycle, first draft report, June 2020.

registration, candidate nomination, campaign, campaign finance, observation of elections, etc.)
- On-the-job capacity-building of NEC in ensuring compliance with electoral political and campaign finance legal and regulatory framework

Activity 2.2.2 Support to Effective Electoral Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, and Evaluation towards Greater Sustainability and Accountability

The reliance on donor funding presents significant challenges to electoral sustainability in Liberia. At the same time, NEC faces significant difficulties in development and submission of realistic operational budget proposals. The Project will support NEC and Ministry of Finance to strength their planning and budget formulation methods (short- and long-term) to ensure that NEC's planning is realistic in its assumption of security and stability, considering unforeseen circumstances, as well possible austerity measures caused by COVID-19. Basing budgeting on Strategic Plan improves the NEC's accountability for the use of public and other funds, and helps it focus on delivering cost-effective services. It will help the NEC to identify layers of details within both regular (operational) and election event budgets, with the aim to achieve cost-effectiveness and efficiency in the use of resources. Different approaches may be taken to create the budget levels, considering available funds. In times of austerity and budget cuts, the prioritization between the items in the strategic plan needs to take place.

Logistics continues to pose significant challenges to the NEC's operations. To ensure greater sustainability, the Project will support NEC in seeking more sustainable solutions to the challenges in reaching out to inaccessible areas of the country, through exploring and planning for utilization of existing national capacities and assets. Further strengthening and utilization of asset management system – Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP), implemented by the Support to 2015 – 2018 Liberian Electoral Support Project, will be among the critical project's intervention, as it would facilitate effective utilization of resources and enhanced accountability for public and other funds entrusted to the NEC. Moreover, the national institutions and agencies dispose of a variety of assets that could be used by the NEC during the electoral process. These assets need to be identified through the dialogue with different agencies and perception of ownership of the electoral process, to be practical. The Project will promote the national dialogue to strengthen election strategies towards greater sustainability.

Under this activity, the Project will support:
- Strategic review of electoral planning and budgeting at all levels towards and post-2020 Special Senatorial Elections
- Development of business continuity plans
- Strengthened monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and continuous implementation of lessons learnt through enhanced capacity of the M&E staff
- Procurement of M&E software and related on-the-job training
- Review of existing plans, regulations, and procedures to seek more sustainable solutions for logistics and electoral operations
- On-the-job training and troubleshooting for Enterprise Resource Management System to achieve full utilization
- Promotion and support of national dialogue for elections to explore existing national capacities and assets to ensure cost-effective electoral administration

Sub-output 2.3 Enhanced technical capacity of electoral stakeholders towards greater accountability and electoral integrity

Activity 2.3.1 Support to credible and efficient electoral dispute resolution

Electoral observation reports, Needs Assessment Mission (NAM), and lessons learnt identified shortcomings in the professional capacity of lawyers at all levels, among different stakeholders, and in various stages of the electoral disputes resolution process. NEC regulations were barely enough to ensure due process; cases could have been dealt more expeditiously. Trainings for hearing officers provided a good start, but there is space to further enhance overall capacity.[25] The Project will develop a multi-year training program aimed at enhancing the credibility of the electoral dispute resolution process. This will be achieved on one hand by training county magistrates and hearing officers through a comprehensive training program and development of a database of trained EDR lawyers. In synergy with the past project implemented by USAID,[26] and in collaboration with NEC CVE Cells, County Service Centers, Liberian Bar Association/County Bars and the Project will seek to strengthen long-term capacity of electoral stakeholders in Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR). The Project will seek to enhance NEC capacity, including in CVE and in conducting EDR trainings for electoral stakeholders, including political parties, judiciary, media, civil society, and other relevant government agencies, as well as involve qualified youth in electoral administration by attracting graduates in counties.

Under this Activity, the Project will support:

- Provision of technical and advisory support to the NEC on EDR matters
- Development of comprehensive and sustainable multi-actor, multi-layer, and multi-year EDR training program
- Identification of training needs and develop plan for NEC at all level to strengthen EDR capacity
- NEC in developing a multi-year schedule and conduct regular EDR trainings to enhance knowledge of electoral stakeholder
- Incorporating EDR component into CVE
- Identifying and hiring senior law students / recent graduates in counties to support NEC in EDR during the electoral period and to enhance national capacity in EDR
- Development of database of trained election lawyers

Activity 2.3.2 Strengthening CSO oversight of Liberia democratic institutions and processes

CSOs are well placed to play and oversight role, stemming notably from significant experience as observers during the past elections. The knowledge of operational area, nevertheless, needs to be further improved. The CSOs are also in excellent position to oversee the implementation of the NEC mandate in the long-term as well as assess the performance of the elected representatives in the long run. The Project will seek to invest in strengthening the long-term oversight role of the civil society to enhance accountability of Liberia's democratic institutions to the people.

Under this activity, the Project will support:

- Development of CSO oversight strategy towards enhancing accountability of democratic institutions
- Development of training manuals for CSO to strengthen their oversight capacities

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[25] EU EOM 2017.

[26] USAID Liberian Professional Development and Anti-Corruption (LPAC) Project).

- Cascade training for CSOs to enhance oversight capacity of democratic institutions nation-wide

Activity 2.3.3 Strengthening capacity of political parties in specific areas of electoral operations

The existing IPCC platform is well placed to enhance capacity-building of the political parties. In collaboration with other partners, notably the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Project will seek to strengthen capacity of political parties in specific areas of electoral operations, specifically in campaign finance, voter registration, campaign rules and regulations, electoral dispute resolution, and poll watching among others. The Project's approach of engagement will be through partnership with NEC's political party liaison, finance, and training departments, providing NEC with adequate mechanisms, resources, and knowledge to train political parties.

IPCC is well established to promote accountability and electoral integrity amongst the political parties and enhance respect for peaceful elections. Since 2016, the political parties came together and signed a joined declaration (Ganta Declaration, Farmington Declaration) committing to peaceful elections. A previous electoral project has supported the revision of the Code of Conduct, to ensure renewed commitment to the peaceful process. The Project will continue supporting the strengthening of the IPCC and enhance its efforts to target relevant actors at the county and grassroot levels.

Under this activity, the Project will support:

- Conducting cascade trainings for the NEC and its magisterial offices to hold briefings for political parties on specific areas of electoral operations
- NEC briefings for political parties on campaign finance rules and regulations in HQ and counties
- NEC briefings for political parties on voter registration in HQ and counties
- NEC briefings for political parties on EDR in HQ and counties
- Strengthening institutionalization of IPCC as a dispute resolution and violence prevention mechanism
- Youth summit

Sub-Output 2.4 Increased Integrity and Sustainability of Electoral Operations, including Voter Registration Process

Activity 2.4.1 Support to credible and Sustainable Voter Registration Process

The NEC has sole responsibility for the preparation of a high-quality voter register. Any failure to produce such a high-quality register would rightly be seen by the electorate as a failure on the part of the NEC and a serious breach of its responsibility as a key player in the democratic process. The last national voter registration exercise was conducted for 2017 general elections. More than 2.1 million registered voters participated. Distrust, nevertheless, remains over the accuracy of the voter's roll, notably due to the alleged duplication of voter's cards, difficulties with identification and allocation of voters per precinct, 'trucking of voters', among others. To improve public perception over the voter list, NEC needs to take immediate provisions ahead of 2020 Special Senatorial Elections, including to engage with IPCC and other electoral stakeholders to investigate areas of concern and reach consensus on additional safeguards.

In addition, the passive voter registration is considered costly and not sustainable by the NEC and electoral stakeholders. The NEC would like to consider introducing biometric voter registration or other form of digital registration mechanism that will allow for an accurate, sustainable, and less costly voter register. The consultant hired under the Support to 2015 – 2018 Liberian Electoral

Cycle Project identified six policy options on the way forward regarding the voter list, one of them being the introduction of automatic voter registration based on National Identification Registry (NIR) cards. The assessment outlining possible cooperation between NEC and NIR was also explored in 2018 but never materialized.

To strengthen the integrity of the voter list, the Project will support:

- Advisory, logistics, and training support to credible voter list
- Development and implementation of strategies and safeguards to improve public perception of the voter list
- NEC Consultations with electoral stakeholders on the voter registration process
- Investigation of the voter list by voters, civil society, and possibly independent experts
- Expert technical advice and assistance in reviewing options and their feasibility for introduction of biometric or other type of sustainable voter registration
- Further engagement with and support to NEC-National Identification Registry (NIR) collaboration on civil and voter registration processes

Activity 2.4.2 Electoral Logistics and Procurement Linked to Management Policies

While aiming at greater sustainability of the electoral process and decreasing Liberia's donor dependency, steps towards fully government-funded elections need to be taken gradually. At the same time, the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic has further stretched Liberia's resources. At the time of drafting, the government budget has yet to be made available for elections and referendum, now scheduled for 8 December 2020. Contingent upon the availability of Government funding to conduct the electoral process, the Project therefore, seeks to provide some support to electoral logistics and procurement. Any procurement supported will be carefully identified and linked to the management policies and processes. Preference will be given to re-usable materials that will be carefully catalogued, stored and re-used in subsequent electoral cycles. The support will be conditioned upon the full use of ERP system to record all the assets and development of asset management protocols to further enhance the capacity of the NEC in asset management, as well as to strengthen the culture of accountability within the institution. The UNDP Procurement Adviser will further support NEC to enhance transparency of its procurement processes, employing clear criteria, conditions, and attributions.

NEC Strategic Plan – Key Electoral Operations Goals

- ✓ Develop a voter registration system based on biometric identification
- ✓ Deliver free, fair, credible election
- ✓ Conduct constituency delineation

Under this activity, the Project will consider supporting:

- Procurement of electoral materials based on NEC needs and above-mentioned principles (followed by careful assessment of the electoral timeline and budget)

Activity 2.4.3 Support to training of the electoral staff prior to elections

Under this activity, the Project will provide expert and financial support to:

- Review of training materials to ensure they are fully in line with amended electoral procedures, regulations, and laws
- Cascade training roll-out – Training of Trainers component
- Production of some electoral training materials

Sub-Output 2.5 NEC Infrastructure Strengthening towards Greater Electoral Integrity

Sufficient infrastructure to safely store sensitive and non-sensitive materials, including soft content stored in NEC databases, is key to credible electoral processes.

Activity 2.5.1 Rehabilitation of remaining NEC warehouses and security enforcement of NEC offices

Under the Support to 2015 – 2018 Electoral Cycle Project, UNDP rehabilitated 12 out of 20 NEC warehouses (19 magisterial warehouses and central warehouse). Support to warehouses outlines the design and implementation plan for the packing, accountability and protection of materials stored. It has also aimed at reinforcing security of the NEC magisterial warehouses, install fences, locks and shelves for proper safeguarding. Security enforcement has been also supported at the NEC HQ with some additional activities pending.

Under this activity, the Project will support:

- Rehabilitation of remaining seven magisterial warehouses and the central warehouse
- Rehabilitation of the NEC security booth at the NEC HQ

Activity 2.5.2 Strengthening NEC ICT and knowledge management infrastructure

ICT systems evolve very quickly compared to the duration of electoral cycles. The limited financial resources but also an improper handling of materials not fully linked to the management policies, as well as inadequate planning for the ICT innovation cycles and their relations to the Electoral Cycle, cause critical vulnerabilities in the NEC ICT and Data Centre Systems. In 2020, the 2015-2018 Election Project conducted an assessment of the ICT infrastructure that identified some of these critical vulnerabilities in the ICT and Database system. The report suggested that the security and storage systems of the NEC databases were not condusive to the protection of critical data. To address critical recommendations, the previous project procured essential items (72 solar batteries, Network Access Storage (NAS), air conditioners and electronic access control-security system). Further investments to the ICT infrastructure, notably the magisterial offices, which faces even more crucial challenges, may be necessary to ensure the integrity of the electoral data to boost the confidence of the stakeholders and electorate in the process.

Electoral procurement must be conducted with a high degree of integrity, transparency, and competitiveness. ICT-based procurement processes are complex. Therefore, tender exercises must be identified well in advance as well as carefully planned and timed. Any ICT-based procurement will be coupled with adequate planning, asset management, maintenance and access policies, to further strengthen the data security, and training to ensure proper handling and full use of the system.

Furthermore, the NEC Resource & Research Section lacks equipment and training to ensure effective knowledge management. The Project will support the section in digitalizing, cataloguing, and storing of documents. The knowledge management infrastructure procurement will be complemented by relevant training of the staff.

The Project will further support update and development of relevant NEC databases, including candidate nomination, political-campaign financing, political parties, observers, monitors, party agents, voter registration, among others.

Under this activity, the Project will support:

- Analysis of ICT Procurement needs and long-term procurement planning
- Enhancing knowledge of NEC staff of ICT innovation cycles and sustainability of the ICT system through in-house training

- Some ICT procurement (where applicable; to the limited extent)
- Review and update of existing NEC databases and the security of the data
- Development of new databases, including database of vetted electoral staff, campaign finance, political party, observers, agents' databases
- Trainings related to the efficient use of the new infrastructure
- Development of ICT asset management policies and procedures
- Development of access policies as they relate to protection of sensitive data and relevant in-house training
- Digitalization of all NEC documents, their categorization, cataloguing and storage
- Equipment for the Resource and Research Center (software and hardware)
- Strengthening NEC's capacity in knowledge resource management, archiving and bookkeeping

OUTPUT 3 – CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MITIGATION MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT PEACEFUL CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS ARE STRENGTHENED

Under the Governance portfolio output area *3.1 Strengthened electoral framework for inclusive, transparent and peaceful elections*, the Project will support prevention and mitigation mechanisms, institutions, and actors, to conduct peaceful elections, and to reduce obstacles to women participation.

Sub-Output 3.1 Electoral security further improved

Liberia has gone a long way in consolidating democracy, peace, and stability since the end of the conflict in 2003. NEC's role, among others, is to support and promote structures that reduce tensions, in order to promote a secure setting to conduct peaceful electoral process. The 2017 elections were generally peaceful with only isolated cases of electoral violence, notably during the campaign period. Nevertheless, the 2019 Montserrado County by-elections have seen worrying incidents of post-electoral violence. The peaceful conduct of the upcoming elections are key to ensuring that existing progress is not jeopardized or reversed.

Activity 3.1.1 Election Security Forces Act in Line with International Standards

The Liberian National Police (LNP) plays a vital role in the electoral process to prevent and address instances of electoral violence. Building upon the good work done by the LNP in 2017 elections, the Project will, in collaboration with relevant partners, will continue strengthening the capacity of LNP to protect human rights during the electoral process and secure the upcoming elections. For this effort to be successful, it however, needs to be consolidated under the NEC leadership, through the provision and enforcement of harmonized regulatory requirements, coordination, and development and strengthening of early warning platforms. The establishment of the inter-agency coordination mechanism remains important for facilitating and sharing information and partnership but also to enhance credibility of the electoral process. The Project will continue its support to the NEC security section to revive and improve the national security coordination mechanism.

The campaign period was the most vulnerable point during the 2017 elections. The election observers noted that provisions to regulate campaign activities were scattered across several documents. That resulted in the lack of precise directives for the approval and coordination of campaign events, and therefore, sporadic clashes between supporters of different political camps occurred. The Project will support consolidation of the regulatory framework in one document issued by NEC, and its enforcement jointly with LNP would help decrease tensions stemming from conflicting campaign events. The revitalization of security coordination mechanism and refresher

training for the LNP and relevant electoral stakeholders remains key to promote peaceful conduct of the electoral process.

While there is a relatively free space for media to operate in Liberia, harassment and intimidation has been reported in tensed situations, such as during the 7 June 2019 protests. The media is key to ensuring transparent and credible electoral processes, and journalists need to be protected from harassment to provide a condusive environment to report on the electoral process. In collaboration with NEC and relevant partners, the Project seeks to support joint training for police and media to mitigate mistrust and promote adequate protection of journalists.

Under this activity, support will be provided to:

- Consolidation, printing and dissemination of regulatory framework for electoral campaign
- Revision, printing and dissemination of security booklets
- NEC-led refresher training for LNP and other electoral stakeholders
- Joint training for media and LNP on protection of journalists during the electoral process

Activity 3.1.2 *Early Warning Mechanism* – Strengthening existing national mechanisms to early identify and respond to electoral violence

The project will work to strengthen synergies between various violence prevention mechanisms and to enhance the ability of relevant stakeholders to analyze and respond to violent incidents in an informed and constructive manner. Liberia's Peace-Building Office (PBO) has currently 272 Early Warning reporters nation-wide and three regional offices on conflict early warning and response located in Gbarnga, Bong, Zwedru, Grand Gedeh and Harper, Maryland Counties. In addition, Liberia has a Center for the Coordination of Response Mechanism (NCCRM) that was established by Executive Order # 76 of the Government of Liberia operating under the auspices of the ECOWAS with initial funding from the US Government. NEC, nevertheless, does not have fully established relations with PBO, and the coordination between PBO and NCCRM remains limited. In addition, the Inter-Parties Consultative Committee (IPCC) is established to promote peaceful elections among the political parties and serves as an effective platform for peaceful dialogue and dispute resolution. The Project will work with partners to establish closer relationship amongst PBO, NCCRM, IPCC, NLP and NEC through a coordination mechanism on prevention and response to electoral violence. The Project intends to strengthen coordination and multi-stakeholder dialogue between the aforementioned partners (and possibly other relevant stakeholders) through the introduction of an IT platform, which will be specifically designed to enhance data collection, sharing and analysis and which forms the basis for well-informed prevention and response planning and real-time actions.

In close coordination and collaboration with other partners, key actions for this activity include:

- Capacity assessment and development of an architecture report based on existing structures and identified needs and gaps. This assessment and design report will include recommendations for the development of procedures and protocols in line with respective mandates, training material development and the configuration for the IT system. The implementation of these recommendations will constitute an important part of this activity.
- Continuation of IPCC electoral violence prevention dialogue, including relevant government institutions and non-government actors, with additional focus on funding support to 10 IPCC consultations at the national level
- Training for media on conflict sensitivity reporting on election
- Support coordination and response planning capacities between the NEC, and Government's Peace Building Office (PBO), LNP, and NCCRM (and other relevant

stakeholders) to strengthen national election-related early warning capacities and electoral violence prevention, including through training and dialogue

- PBO and partners including NCCRM develop election violence indicators and conduct training with CSOs that will use the tool to monitor, track and report to Situation Room established on the 2020 senatorial election
- In close collaboration with other partners/donors, complement support for SIDA-funded Situation Room on the Special Senatorial Election and national referendum
- Develop and conduct specific training for PBO early warning monitors on the detection of electoral violence (Training of Trainers (ToT), printing and distribution of material, etc.) and the Liberia Early-Warning and Response Network (LERN) platform intended to enhance data collection, sharing and analysis. The specific training will focus on the 272 conflict early warning monitors and 30 youth agents of peace in the 15 counties and link them to strategic groups observing election and national referendum processes.
- Development of active grassroot structure under the IPCC to enhance electoral violence prevention (cascade training)
- Procurement of required material to allow for effective coordination between stakeholders involved
- Support awareness raising, communication and sensitization of the general population on the Early Warning Mechanism for electoral violence prevention
- Produce and air peace messages on peaceful election
- Develop jingles and drama on peaceful election and air on state and community radio stations across the country, also on the ECOWAS radio station

Sub-output 3.2 Awareness raised, and mitigation measures implemented to reduce Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWE)

Activity 3.2.1 Raising awareness of Violence Against Women in Elections and its impact on women participation

Despite efforts to promote the participation of women in electoral processes, the meaningful participation remains a critical challenge. Violence against women in electoral and democratic processes impacts electoral integrity and is a serious obstacle to meaningful participation of women as voters, candidates, observers, and election workers. The recently conducted internal survey at the level of IPCC identified the challenge in understanding that electoral violence impacts women more than men. To tackle the topic awareness needs to be raised and electoral stakeholders need to be engaged on concrete cases of the violence against women in elections (VAWIE). In 2020, with support of UN Women, NEC's gender unit held a validation workshop for VAWIE protocol. However, dissemination and awareness raising are yet to be taken up by the NEC. In close collaboration with UN Women, the Project will support awareness-raising among the electoral actors of VAWIE, its impact on the electoral process, and strategies to tackle it. In the long run, and in close collaboration with UN Women, the Project will further support the Working Group to assess the landscape and available services to ensure concerted support to VAWIE victims. The Working Group will develop pathways of referral for VAWIE victims and engage in lobby to clearly define penalties for perpetrators. The Project will support a Focal Point set up at relevant institutions to support VAWIE victims.

Under this activity, the Project will support:

- The Gender Unit and NEC in raising awareness of the Protocol (launching VAWIE protocol, its publication and dissemination among stakeholders)
- The Gender Unit and NEC to adopt the Protocol on VAWIE and its implementation plan
- Platforms to ensure safe and inclusive discussions on VAWIE prevention (10 consultative meetings)

- Enhance capacity of CSOs and political parties to understand and combat VAWIE (funding support to printing and dissemination of relevant materials, two trainings on VAWIE)
- Development of reporting pathways for victims of VAWIE and lobby to define penalties for perpetrators
- Conduct training on gender responsive conflict early warning for the election and the national referendum

3.2 Partnerships

The Project will be implemented in collaboration with national government institutions including: the Legislature, Judiciary and Executive; Law Reform Commission and the Peace Building Office as well as Civil Society Organizations. It will build on the previous Support to Electoral Cycle Project, supported by the EU, Sweden, Ireland, and Canada, and earlier Japan and Germany. The partnerships with the key partners will leverage their strategic position in the country and in the region. The Project will foster collaboration at the level of knowledge and information-sharing, synergies with previous and future activities, reflecting established priorities for development support.

The Project will be implemented jointly with its main counterpart, the National Elections Commission. UNDP partnership with NEC is well established, based on support provided to the process through five-year periods. Following the 2010 – 2014 assistance, the Support to 2015 – 2018 (extended till August 2020) Liberian Electoral Cycle Project (hereinafter 'Election Project') has assisted NEC in five key strategic areas identified in the 2012 – 2018 Strategic Plan. The 2018 – 2024 NEC Strategic Plan guides the design of interventions in this electoral assistance project.

NEC is an independent body with seven-member Board of Commissioners (BoC), out of which four are currently women.[1] NEC is responsible for the organization of all elections and referenda, as well as registration and dissolution of political parties. The BoC is responsible for policy formulation, strategic direction, and oversight of the Secretariat, which is the executive arm of the NEC led by Executive Director and three Deputies who are in charge of its three departments (Administration, Operations, and Programmes). Apart from Legal, Internal Audit and Oversight, and Dispute Hearing Section, which report directly to the BoC, other NEC sections are subordinated to the three above-mentioned departments. The Project will provide direct technical, advisory, and financial support to the NEC, notably on more advanced strategic areas. NEC is part of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) / Project Board and will, jointly with the Project, guide the strategic direction of UNDP's electoral assistance.

To effectively execute its mandate, NEC remains in close interaction with the Government, Legislature, Security institution, Civil Society, including those representing marginalized groups, Political Parties, and Media.

In the ***Government,*** the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning – National Authorizing Office (NAO) is a key partner of the Project. MFDP is member of the Project Board, and responsible together with UNDP and NEC for Strategic Direction of the Project. The Project will continue close collaboration with MFDP. In addition, MFDP and Legislature will be included in Project's interventions in the area of capacity building for sustainable budgeting.

The Project will seek further collaboration with Ministry of Education and Ministry of Youth and Sports to advance CVE and promote participation of youth in the electoral process. Ministry of Justice, Supreme Court, Public Prosecutor, Law School, Liberia National Bar Association and County Bars will be key partners to strengthen capacity in electoral disputes resolution. NEC does

not have established strong relationships with the above institutions, therefore, the Project will aim to promote collaboration in the above-mentioned areas.

Security Institutions: The Liberian National Police (LNP) assumes the lead in the country's security responsibilities during electoral events. It works in conjunction with the security joint committee. There is good collaboration between NEC and LNP, nevertheless the establishment of national security collaboration mechanism has faced some challenges. The Project will further engage LNP and NEC in the areas of training/sensitization, support to improved coordination and planning, including budgetary planning for electoral security.

Enhanced citizen participation especially women, youth and persons with disabilities (PWDs) to drive knowledge and accountability in governance will be realized through partnership with ***Civil Society*** **Organizations** (CSOs). Civil society in Liberia is vibrant and active, albeit its limited capacity at the grassroot level and lack of financial resources. The CSOs coordination networks exist for various areas related to electoral and democratic processes, such as electoral observation, reform and women participation. While NEC enjoys good relations with CSOs, the formal coordination platform has never been formalized. The Project will work closely with NEC and CSOs to formalize some of these platforms (e.g. for civic and voter education, inclusive governance, etc.). The Project will seek to empower CSOs through long-term support to continuous civic education and build capacity in enhanced oversight of the country's democratic institutions and processes to increase accountability of Liberia's governance framework.

Partnership with the Press Union of Liberia (media) will lead to media oversight, accountability and citizen engagement role. Liberia has a wide range of ***Media outlets*** at national and local level, with radio remaining the primary source of political information. The media seems to operate relatively freely, although cases of intimidation against media practitioners or outlets sporadically occurs during the occasion of tensed political events. The quality of media reporting remains poor. The Project will seek, in synergy with partners, such as Internews, to build further capacity of media but also to strengthen their access to information, through the support to NEC communication departments.

Political parties are among the key stakeholders in the process. There are 26 registered political parties in Liberia. While they enjoy relatively well structured and cordial relationship with the NEC, their capacity in the area of electoral operations, remain limited, notably at the grassroot levels. The Project will further support the IPCC mechanism and attempt to build the capacity of political parties via NEC.

UN Delivering as One: UN agencies will leverage on the capacities and comparative advantages of existing projects and interventions to promote integrated electoral assistance and support under the Governance portfolio and this Project. For instance, UNDP will leverage on the existing capacities for civil society strengthening, peace building and conflict transformation to enhance the respective components of its work.

Legislative Committees are effective in enhancing governance by calling on accountability in execution of government functions and strengthening citizen participation in legislative business. Legislative Committees are effective in engagement of citizens on thematic matters relating to the Legislature's representation, oversight and legislative mandate, and in advocating for national level implementation of recommendations for treaty monitoring bodies. This Project will enhance knowledge and skills of relevant Legislative Committees and Caucuses on access to justice, rule of law, electoral reform and SDG implementation. Through Non-State Actors (NSA), the Project will engage Legislative Committees and Caucuses on women and youth mainstreaming in public policies and processes, participation of marginalized groups to inform gender responsive planning, budgeting and implementation.

The Project will build on ***existing partnerships*** and seek to build further synergies with past and existing activities on the ground. The ongoing collaboration that will be further explored has been established with efforts to promote electoral reform, support political parties, and support women participation. In addition, during the electoral period, collaboration is developed with other electoral assistance providers on the ground (e.g. International Foundation for Electoral Systems, ECOWAS, etc.).

The specific areas of collaboration include but are not limited to:

Lessons learnt and Electoral Reform: UNDP Electoral Project will coordinate lessons learnt from each of the electoral cycle and promote and support additional electoral reform initiatives. The project will continue collaboration with USAID[27] and the Carter Center to ensure successful completion of an ongoing electoral reform.

Political parties strengthening: The Project will continue working closely with National Democratic Institute (NDI) to ensure that parties are well trained on specific areas of the electoral process, notably campaign finance, EDR, and that NEC has sufficient capacity to ensure parties' compliance with the legal frameworks.

Poll watchers: The Project will collaborate with NDI to train the poll watchers deployed by political parties. The Project is also well placed to support coordination between national and international electoral missions deployed on the ground for the electoral period.

Civil Society: The Project will seek synergies with other partners supporting capacity-building of civil society (Carter Center, DAI, EU, USAID among others). While the Project's focus is more on CVE and accountability, synergies will be identified to enforce existing programs and strengthen CSO framework. Collaboration will be specifically sought with youth groups, disabled persons organizations, Community and Faith-based organizations, and where applicable, human rights defenders, to eliminate obstacles to inclusive participation in electoral and political processes.

Women participation: The Project will continue collaborating closely with UN Women, OXFAM, and other organizations supporting women participation, and their national partners, to ensure stronger impact of its interventions in the area.

Peacebuilding Office (PBO) and its partners: The Project will coordinate its support to early warning mechanism with the PBO and its partners, such as ZOA.

Similarly to synergies with UNDP Governance Portfolio aiming at developing links between electoral support and support to Rule of Law, Anti-corruption and Peacebuilding efforts, women participation, and other elements of democratic governance, the Project will liaise closely with USAID to build synergies and collaboration with its programs in the legal (LPAC), political parties, media, anti-corruption, and similar programs. In anticipation of USAID electoral assistance program, the Project will seek close collaboration with USAID and its contractor to ensure sufficient coordination, avoid duplication and conflicting technical advice.[28]

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[27] In particular collaborate and build upon past interventions by Liberia Accountability and Voice Initiative (LAVI) / Democracy Programme, implemented by DAI, to support electoral reform process.

[28] USAID approached its five-year country development Strategic Plan, which includes support to electoral processes through direct assistance to the NEC (as was a case in the past with IFES) as well as to domestic observers, including with civic and voter education activities aimed at women, marginalized groups and disabled. Sustained support will continue to political parties' training through the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

In addition to specific partnerships with identified institutions, the Project will promote national dialogue on elections to leverage existing assets and capacity to reduce electoral costs and make the process more efficient. Private sector partnership may be further explored for possible leveraging through favorable national policies to support electoral process.

1. Electoral Reform

UNDP / Election Project	Partners currently engaged in reform efforts
Coordination of and support to lessons learnt consultations to identify areas for reform Promote further electoral reforms Provide technical and advisory support to the NEC on its reform efforts	**DAI – LAVI:** Support to advocacy (Election Coordinating Committee - ECC) **Carter Center:** Support to advocacy (Liberia Election Observation Network - LEON)

2. Support to Political Parties and poll watching

Financial Compliance and reporting	
UNDP / Election Project	**Partners currently engaged on the issue**
Building capacity of NEC to (1) handle parties' financial reporting; (2) establishing proper accounting, monitoring, and oversight system; (3) conducting party audits; (4) train NEC trainers	**NDI:** (1) Training political parties on campaign and political finance; (2) Trainings on accounting and other specialized areas for political parties.
Enhance overall political and campaign finance monitoring framework	
Poll watching	
UNDP / Election Project & NDI	
Cooperation on poll watcher training, building on the core group of people that were trained in 2017 (around 180 Master Trainers from 25 political parties)	
IPCC	
UNDP / Election Project	**Partners currently engaged on the issue**
Consultations / roundtables on the modalities of the IPCC Secretariat. Define more efficient use of the mechanism on financial compliance reporting, training and capacity-building, etc. Further strengthen IPCC as conflict-prevention (detection and early warning mechanism)	**NDI**: Strengthening political parties **ZOA**: Support to Peace-Building Commission, dialogue on peace – electoral violence prevention **UNDP Cross Boarder Project:** Prevention of electoral violence

3. Support to women participation in electoral and political process

UNDP / Election Project	Partners currently engaged on the issue
Support to Gender-sensitive reforms Support to Gender Unit & Mainstreaming Gender within the NEC Gender disaggregated data and archiving VAWIE Implementation of gender quota within political parties	**UN Women** **OXFAM** and its partners (Paramount Young Women Initiative, Organization for Women and Children, Kvinna till Kvinna, UN Women, NDI, Oxfam and Liberia Elections Observation Network) **UN Women, NDI**

3.3 South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC)

The Project will build linkages with and seek lessons from other projects in other UN offices within the Regional Bureau for Africa within the framework of South-South Triangular Cooperation. These lessons will be used to strengthen its design and improve its implementation in a bid for it to deliver sustainable impact for the people of Liberia.

3.4 Risks and Assumptions

The identified overarching risks and assumptions are as follows:

- Non transformative approach to electoral cycle and deepening democracy issues, leading to non-completion of next electoral cycle legal framework;
- Low citizens confidence in the electoral process or its aspects owing to the disenchantment of past elections;
- Diminishing donor resources for deepening democracy projects in the face of ongoing similar projects in peacebuilding and countering violent extremism and conflicting electoral priorities in the region/worldwide;
- Limited capacity of implementing partners and responsible partners;
- Delay in donor commitment to funding the project as many donors are in the process of identifying their priorities for support and the adverse impact of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- A highly dynamic political environment leading to shifting priorities and demands.

A full analysis is captured in Annex 3. The risk analysis will be continuously updated, monitored and mitigation measures proposed. Implementation of identified mitigation measures will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

3.5 Knowledge

A well-designed and executed knowledge management is a critical driver for program implementation and delivery. The project will place proactive knowledge management and strategic communication at the center of its implementation. This approach will ensure that the project remains nimble to the dynamic political narrative of democracy and elections in Liberia. The project will therefore leverage inherent knowledge management strengths of partnering institutions (UNDP, UN Women, among others) and comparative advantage of the agencies and partners to effectively gather, archive and manage tacit and explicit knowledge for cross-organizational learning, peer to peer sharing and evidence-based innovation.

From the implementation of the Project, there is need to document and archive the learnings electoral assistance and governance projects to inform future programming on democratic governance and elections. The project will use these lessons learnt to establish robust implementation approaches and sustainable results delivery. While the project covers other areas of democratic governance and gender equality in addition to elections, it will endeavour to strictly follow the Electoral Cycle Approach (ECA). It will ensure that key activities in the 2020 and 2023 electoral cycles are adequately implemented, including addressing framework conditions and deep-seated governance issues which cause violence and discontent in past electoral cycles. ECA addresses electoral assistance as part of the longer-term process of democratic development rather than as support for a one-off polling event. It also addresses the different elements of the cycle that affect the quality of the electoral process and the credibility of its events.

The results of the project, successes, challenges lessons learnt will be documented and shared with other similar projects and projects within the UN system. All documents will be carefully archived, and repository of knowledge documents created under the EC – UNDP Joint Taskforce for Electoral Assistance (JTF).

3.6 Sustainability and Scaling Up

The sustainability strategy will be an integral part of programme implementation and consist of the following components:

- ***Alignment:*** The project document is fully aligned to national development priorities as outlined in the Liberia Multi-Partner Trust Fund (LMPTF) and the UNSDCF 2020-24, which has received high level government endorsement. The project interventions are aligned to the Political Pillar of LMPTF 2018-2021. These interventions will centre around review of the legal framework for access to justice, rule of law and elections; institutional strengthening; civic engagement and social inclusion; and support to 2020-2024 electoral cycle.
- ***Enabling environment***: The project will support policy, legislation and regulations development that will provide long-term frameworks for continuing the objectives of the project's support.
- ***Ownership through participation***: UN agencies will ensure that all interventions are designed, planned, implemented and monitored in a participatory way to encourage full ownership by stakeholders and beneficiaries.
- ***Financial sustainability through counterpart financing***: The UN will engage with all levels of State institutions so that the government of Liberia can provide any contribution required in the development and implementation of relevant projects. The UN will also ensure that the funds are factored in the government budgets, the resources have been factored in the project document as part of the government contribution and included in the Results and Resources Framework. Annual Work Plans will be approved through the Project Steering Committee, with clear government allocations to programme activities.
- ***Capacity building through local institutions:*** All capacity building initiatives will be designed with a strong focus on imparting new knowledge that leads to a positive shift in attitudes and practices of public service. The project will partner with or contract expertise that are utilizing transformative capacity building approaches and include Training of trainers and phasing out strategies.
- ***Involvement of youth:*** Recognizing special role and importance of youth in democratic governance as well as in elections, this project will remain particularly active in seeking out synergies with youth targeting programmes and approaches, including through establishing fellowships for universities, support university graduates introduction to election administration, etc. The project will aim to support establishment of a database of trained and experience young electoral officers. The project will strive to establish entire inter-related training programs rather than individual training activities to maximize impact.
- ***Institutionalized knowledge management:*** Learning and knowledge management will be supported through scaling up best practices, accountability for and communication results to key stakeholders and support to learning activities.
- ***Exit strategies for Technical Assistance:*** Institutional support will include placing demand-driven technical expertise in key relevant government institutions. As appropriate, technical assistance will be taken up by partners through inclusion in budget process. Developing exit strategies with partners taking on functions upon termination of intervention.

- ***Social capital***: The project recognizes the importance of developing social capital to sustain a Liberian constituency and public that supports and advocates for basic service delivery. The project will strive to strengthen civil society networks (including networks of including those furthest behind such as women, youth and communities vulnerable to disasters) to advocate for and enjoy their rights.

IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

4.1. Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

The Project will strive for strategic allocation of resources (financial, human, institutional and technical) and ensure its implementation according to the multi-year and annual work plans. In addition to increasing national ownership, the project will aim to leverage its sustainability. Among others, it will aim to strike a balance between long-term national capacity building while ensuring adequate and cost-effective technical assistance in required areas. As such, recognising Liberia's continued progress in the technical conduct of electoral processes, this project will aim to promote national staff and International United Nations Volunteers' (IUNVs) support for the broader project activities (e.g. Campaign Finance or Communication Specialist; Operations Specialist to provide continuity in the work with the NEC, identifying relevant long-term capacity building needs), combined with fewer and more targeted engagement of consultants for support in identified areas. The Project, at the stage of its formulation, has carefully evaluated areas requiring specialized support of more senior staff / consultants, such as Electoral Dispute Resolution, and areas where technical support can be scaled down. Among the areas already identified as in need of further professional development are those related to sustainable electoral administration and budgeting.

Cost effectiveness will be further achieved by ensuring effective coordination among the participating institutions, notably UNDP and NEC, and building on the existing coordination mechanisms and synergies. The project will foster partnerships with bilateral partners and intergovernmental organizations in undertaking investigations and capacity development in specialized areas, especially in cases where mutual assistance is provided.

The implementation will maximize synergies with other ongoing initiatives in related areas. Foremost, the project will closely coordinate with the Ministries of Finance and Development Planning, World bank and other partners regarding the development of national capacities for sustainable planning and budgeting. The project will build on existing coordination mechanisms, notably the Technical Working Group (TWG) to eliminate duplication.

Under this action, procurement shall be carried out in line with the applicable rules and regulations of UNDP. To minimize delays in activities, the Project will be supported by the Procurement Unit in the UNDP Country Office and a dedicated Election Procurement Officer.

4.2 Project Management

4.2.1 Project Steering Committee / Project Board

The Project will be implemented by UNDP, in close partnership with UN Women, United Nations Volunteers and other relevant UN agencies with select Government of Liberia's ministries, departments, agencies and targeted core strategic partners. These include the National Elections Commission (NEC); the Legislature, independent commissions, such as The Independent National Commission on Human Rights, and the Independent Information Commission) and the Judiciary. The UNDP, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and NEC, together with the project donors, will form the Project Steering Committee (PSC)/Project Board, the project's decision-making authority and oversight mechanism. Other Project partners, national and

international, may serve as observers to the PSC, based on the agreement of the PSC members. The PSC will meet twice a year.

The Project Board/ Steering Committee will:

- Allocate resources, and review/approve any budget revisions/reallocations;
- Review and approve the Project Document and subsequent revisions, as well as annual work plans;
- Provide strategic direction, including on resource mobilization;
- Monitor implementation progress and address/mitigate challenges;
- Review and approve progress reports;
- Review evaluation and audit reports.

The Delivering as One principle, with UNDP leading other UN agencies in the implementation of this Project, has been adopted. Overall accountability for implementation and administrative leadership of the project will be held by UNDP, owing to its experience in broader support to democratic governance and electoral assistance to Liberia over the years. The day-to-day management and coordination of the Project is therefore entrusted to UNDP. UNDP will be accountable for coordinating programmatic activities including reporting to the donors.

4.2.2 Project Donor Group (PDG):

This group will bring together the project development partners, UNDP and participating UN organizations. The PDG will meet quarterly or as needed to approve policy level decisions for project funding, such as the annual work plan and review project progress. It will provide technical advice to the Project Steering Committee /Project Board on project issues, identify risks and propose mitigation measures.

4.2.3 Technical Working Group

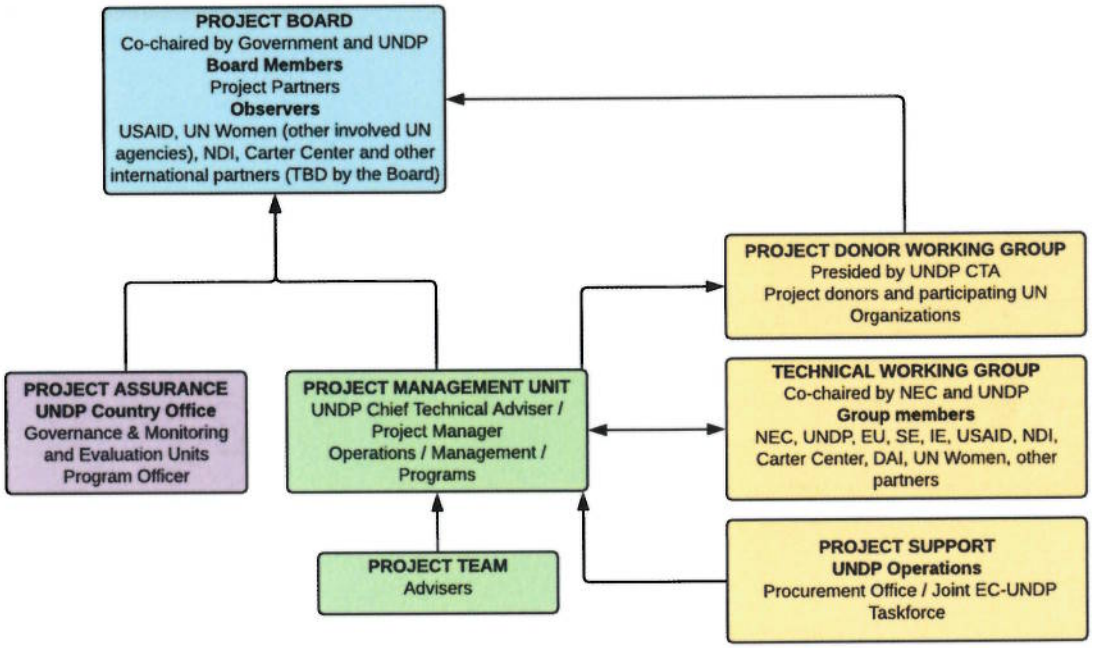
Technical Working Group (TWG) is co-chaired by the UNDP Chief Technical Adviser and NEC Executive Director and held at the technical level to update on ongoing activities with variety of international development partners involved in the electoral support. It facilitates information-sharing and development of synergies between the activities.

4.2.4 Project Management Unit (PMU), project staff and technical expertise

The Project Management Unit (PMU) is led by the Chief Technical Adviser. It is embedded within the NEC and has following functions:

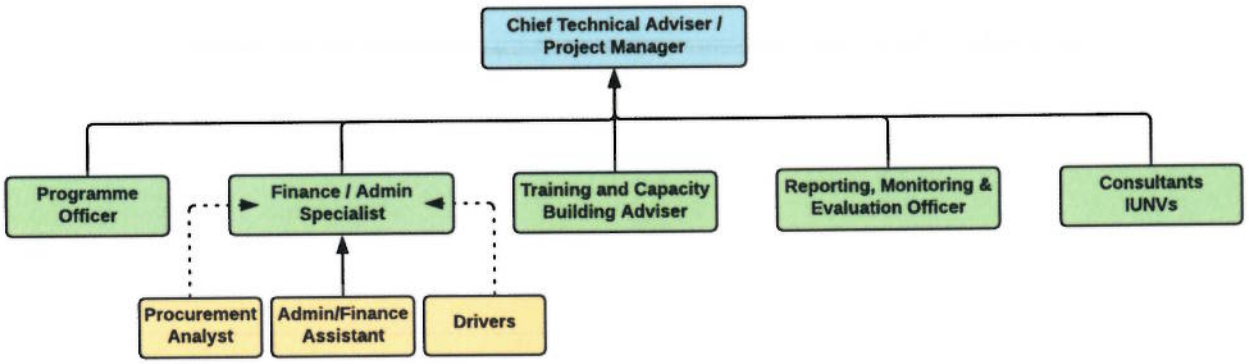
- Implement Project activities;
- Serve as the 'Secretariat' of the Steering Committee / Project Board;
- Call and organize Project Steering Committees / Project Board meetings;
- Monitor progress against the project's results framework in according with the monitoring and evaluation plan, and prepare regular progress reports;
- Coordinate the development of annual work plans for discussion and prepare project documents and budget revisions;
- Provide general oversight, monitor progress and provide support to the other Agencies;
- Consolidate the annual and final narrative progress reports based on submissions provided by different technical experts (where applicable, the Project will consolidate contribution of other agencies);
- Coordinate resource mobilization efforts and actively engage in resource mobilization;
- Ensure availability of technical expertise to achieve required results of the Project;
- Coordinate permanent and temporary technical specialists, consultants, and IUNVs;
- Facilitate evaluations and audits.

Project Management Chart



Staffing table		
Project PMU and permanent international staff	**Project PMU and permanent national staff**	**International Volunteers**
Chief Technical Adviser (P4, full time)	Programme Officer / Stakeholder Liaison (full time)	Elections operations and logistics Specialists (12 months, 2023)
Finance and Administration Specialist (P3, full time)	Procurement Analyst (full time)	Communication Specialist (full time)
Training and Capacity-Building Specialist (P3, full time)	Admin and Finance Assistant (full time)	Political and campaign finance specialist (1 year; possible extension based on capacity assessment)
	Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (full time)	
	Gender and Inclusion Specialist (full time)	
	2 Drivers (full time)	

Staffing Chart



4.3 Project Implementation Modality

This Project will be implemented through the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM),[29] with key focus of building internal capacity of NEC and other Liberian institutions in the electoral and democratic process. The DIM will promote local ownership of results, institutional strengthening through capacity development, advancing South-to-South collaboration, and promote innovation and learning with UNDP and sister UN agencies. The DIM approach will also build local institutional capacity for greater programmatic and administrative control in the long run. Consequently, UNDP will apply its technical and administrative capacity to assume the responsibility for mobilizing and applying effectively the required inputs in order to reach the expected outputs. UNDP will assume the overall management responsibility and accountability for project implementation. Accordingly, UNDP will follow all policies and procedures established for its own operations. DIM will enable UNDP to engage with Responsible Parties as appropriate based on a written agreement or contract to purchase goods or provide services using the project budget. The Responsible Party may manage the use of these goods and services to carry out project activities and produce outputs. All Responsible Parties are directly accountable to UNDP in accordance with the terms of their agreement or contract with UNDP.

The PMU will coordinate and facilitate project planning, delivery and ownership of results, and while overall leadership and ownership of outcomes will lie with the NEC and local partners. The PMU will work with the NEC and other partners to build local capacity on efficiency and coordination of donor efforts in in a manner that promotes greater ownership by local institutions. Accordingly, UNDP will follow all policies and procedures established for its own operations to ensure high standards of financial probity and fiduciary accountability to donors, implementing and responsible partners.

Participating UN Organizations (PUNO): To leverage the knowledge and expertise of One-UN family, the Project may enter (or exploit existing) MoU with other UN organizations to jointly implement the activities. Each of the participating UN agencies (UNDP, UN Women, others) will have individual roles and responsibilities as well.

These include but not limited to:

- Implement activities according to the agreed project document, and oversee related activity M&E, data collection and analysis;
- Lead the coordination of all Agencies' activities at the output level for areas assigned in the Result Reference Framework;

- Make technical expertise available for all aspects of the project, including by deploying experts to support activities, monitoring and implementation, providing inputs to and conducting, developing and delivering training;
- Leverage agency comparative advantages in resources mobilization, programming, partnerships and networks building to support project implementation and attainment of results; and
- Actively engage in resource mobilization.

The outcome and output areas described in the Results Framework will be addressed collaboratively by all UN Agencies, with each Agency contributing to each outcome subject to their comparative advantages on the outcome area.

- UNDP is the management agent and is accountable programmatically and financially for narrative and financial reporting. In addition, UNDP applies its convening role and deploys its capacity in governance, human rights programming, public participation, and SDGs reporting. It will deploy the experiences and lessons of previous and current programmes.
- UN Women will provide its comparative advantage in gender equality and women's empowerment, deploy inclusion and equity strategies, deploy its networks in women movement and women leadership, gender responsive budgeting, and gender statistics.
- OHCHR will provide training and advice on human rights monitoring in the context of elections, support and organize campaigns for violence-free elections, engage in advocacy for human rights-compliant electoral laws and institutions, monitors and reports on human rights violations during electoral processes.

Resources will be allocated to each PUNO in accordance with the Annual Workplan to finance agreed activities backed by MoU. Each PUNO will assume full programmatic and financial responsibility and accountability to UNDP for the resources disbursed to them. Agencies will use their respective rules and regulations in the implementing process with partners and counterparts. UNDP will maintain the overall fiduciary responsibility, including periodic programmatic and financial reporting, to Development Partners.

4.4 Project Start Up

This project will start in September 2020 and will be implemented as a four-year action until July 2024. Successful implementation of this project will be contingent upon the following factors:

- Establishment of PSC/Project Board with clear TORs and meeting timelines
- Formulation, implementation, and monitoring of annual work plans with clearly spelt out timelines based on realistic and achievable activities and budgets.
- Building synergies among key partners to create strategic networks, partnership and linkages with relevant government agencies and other stakeholders.
- Strengthened institutional capabilities with clearly defined roles and accountabilities for each partner.
- Regular participation in project management meetings and an effective information sharing and feedback mechanism between partners.
- Effective internal coordination and joint working by the implementing UN agencies.

V. DETAILED RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF/Country [or Global/Regional] Programme Results and Resource Framework: UNSDCF Pillar 3 – Sustaining the Peace, Pillar 4 – Governance & Transparency

Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Global/Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: UNDP Country Programme Document Outcome 1 – Sustainable and inclusive governance & Outcome 2 – Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Outcome 2 – Structural Transformations & Outcome 3 - Resilience

Project title and Atlas Project Number: Liberia Electoral Support Project / 00123923

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	DATA SOURCE	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE [30]		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Output 1	Strategic communication plan and framework is developed and implemented, including at county level	*Election observation reports; NEC reports; Surveys; Public statements*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
INCLUSION AND TRANSPARENCY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IS STRENGTHENED	Increase public confidence in NEC	*stakeholders/observers reports, NEC survey*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*quantitative with a caveat for other political developments*
	10 of CSOs/CBOs/FBOs active in CVE activities between 2020 and 2023; with broad geographic representations involved (15 counties)	*activity reports*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	85 % of districts reached through CVE; including women representation	*stakeholders/observers reports; surveys; activity reports*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	All NEC policies mainstream gender	*policies, procedures, legislative proposals and other relevant documents*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	At least 20 CBOs & FBOs in each county involved in CVE at grassroot level (Governance indicator)	*reports, monitoring report / field visit*	0	2020	*50%*	*0%*	*0%*	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	Percentage of civic and voter materials available in local languages	*Translated materials*	0	2020	*50%*	*70%*	*80%*	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	Misinformation platform developed and used by stakeholders	*stakeholders/observers reports; number of visits on the site*	0	2020	*0%*	50%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*

[30] Baselines will be set based in a baseline study (as indicated in monitoring and evaluation plan).

Output 2	Capacity assessment of NEC and electoral stakeholders at all levels conducted	*assessment documents*	0	2020	*50%*	*0%*	*0%*	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF NEC AND ELECTORAL STAKEHOLDERS ENHANCED	Electoral operational plan developed and implemented, including at county level	*Observers' reports; NEC reports, planning documents, procedures, instructions, etc.*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	All NEC transactions are implemented via Enterprise Resource Management System	*Audits; NEC reports, improved processes*	0	2020	*70%*	80%	95%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	At least 30 trained election resolution lawyers in the NEC database	*Observers' reports; NEC reports, improved processes, activity reports*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	Percentage of electoral complaints resolved in timely, transparent and credible manner (Governance indicator)	*Observer reports, NEC reports*	0	2020	*75%*	0%	0%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	A CSO network set up, trained and active in parliamentary oversight	*activity reports*	0	2020	*25%*	50%	75%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	Parliamentary platform developed and at least 35 new parliamentarians trained in citizen oversight	*number of visits on the website*	0	2020	*0%*	50%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	NEC capacity building plan for political parties is developed and implemented in each county	*Observees' reports; NEC reports, improved processes*	0	2020	*25%*	25%	50%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	Voter list audited for vulnerabilities (Governance indicator)	*Audit report*	0	2020	*70%*	0%	0%	100%	
	Feasibility study for biometric voter registration conducted	*feasibility study*	0	2020	*100%*	0%	0%	0%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	100% or procured assets are included in ERP including maintenance and renewal cycle	*reports from ERP system*	0	2020	*25%*	45%	70%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	100% of electoral staff trained prior to elections	*activity reports, observers' reports*	0	2020	*50%*	0%	0%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	Eight remaining warehouses rehabilitated	*completion of works certification, activity reports*	0	2020	*0%*	90%	100%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	All NEC documents are digitalized, archived and catalogued	*completion of works certification, activity reports*	0	2020	*25%*	45%	70%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*

	Long term ICT procurement and renewal cycle is designed and implemented	*completion of works certification, activity reports*	0	2020	*25%*	45%	70%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
Output 1	Election Security Forces Act in Line with International Standards; 100% of LNP is trained and has the security booklet	*Observers' reports; NEC reports, improved processes*	0	2020	*50%*	0%	0%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MITIGATION MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT PEACEFUL CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS ARE STRENGTHENED	Early Warning Mechanism platform designed and implemented	*platform operational; reports generated by the platform*	0	2020	*0%*	0%	100%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*
	Increased awareness of violence against women in elections (among project beneficiaries)	*Observers' reports; NEC reports, improved processes; surveys;*	0	2020	*25%*	30%	70%	100%	*qualitative and quantitative*

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation plans:

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners (if joint)	Cost (if any)
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Quarterly, or in the frequency required for each indicator.	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.		
Monitor and Manage Risk	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Quarterly	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.		
Learn	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.	At least annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.		
Annual Project Quality Assurance	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.		
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	At least annually	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.		
Project Report	A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating	Annually, and at the end of the project (final report)			

	summary, an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.				
Project Review (Project Board)	The project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	Specify frequency (i.e., at least annually)	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.		

Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Title	Partners (if joint)	Related Strategic Plan Output	UNSDCF/CPD Outcome	Planned Completion Date	Key Evaluation Stakeholders	Cost and Source of Funding
Mid-Term Evaluation	NEC, Project partners/donors	Outcome 2 – Structural Transformations & Outcome 3 - Resilience	Outcome 1 – Sustainable and inclusive governance & Outcome 2 – Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion	31/12/2022	NEC, Government Institution, Civil Society, Political Parties – IPCC, House Committee on Elections and Inauguration, PBO	25,000 USD
Terminal Evaluation	NEC, Project partners/donors	Outcome 2 – Structural Transformations & Outcome 3 - Resilience	Outcome 1 – Sustainable and inclusive governance & Outcome 2 – Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion	31/07/2024	NEC, Government Institution, Civil Society, Political Parties – IPCC, House Committee on Elections and Inauguration, PBO	25,000 USD

VII. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN [31] [32]

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES / SUB-OUTPUTS	Planned Budget by Year					RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount (Projected)
Output 1: Inclusion and transparency of the electoral process is strengthened	1.1 NEC strategic approach to communication, external relations, and disinformation management	104,600	101,250	98,000	128,500	27,250	NEC UNDP		Capacity-building, advisory and funding support to the NEC leadership and Communication Section	**459,600 USD**
		70,000	59,000	91,000	102,500	30,000	NEC UNDP		Trainings to improve election-related communication and combat misinformation	**352,500 USD**
	1.2 Strengthening capacity of NEC, civil society, and other actors in conducting civic and voter education	296,500	14,000	16,000	719,500	-	NEC UNDP CSOs		Expert and financial support to CVE related to electoral events	**1,046,000 USD**
		-	268,000	268,000	-	-	NEC UNDP CSOs		Support to sustainable and long-term CVE and public outreach	**536,000 USD**
	1.3 Improved access and opportunity of the right to vote to vulnerable groups	12,500	99,027	82,908	112,908	15,335	NEC UNDP UN Women		Support to Gender Section in developing formative influence over the NEC to mainstream gender-related policies	**322,678 USD**
		88,000	42,300	42,300	114,300	2,000	NEC UNDP UN Women CSOs		Promoting inclusion and eliminating obstacles to inclusive political participation	**288,900 USD**

[31] Cost definitions and classifications for programme and development effectiveness costs to be charged to the project are defined in the Executive Board decision DP/2010/32.
[32] Changes to a project budget affecting the scope (outputs), completion date, or total estimated project costs require a formal budget revision that must be signed by the project board. In other cases, the UNDP programme manager alone may sign the revision provided the other signatories have no objection. This procedure may be applied for example when the purpose of the revision is only to re-phase activities among years.

		0	56,000	20,000	20,000	6,000	UNDP Legislature		Promoting inclusion at the Liberia House of Representatives	102,000 USD
	MONITORING	10,000	5,000	5,000	10,000		NEC UNDP		Joint UNDP-NEC Monitoring Teams	30,000 USD
	Sub-Total for Output 1	**581,600**	**644,577**	**623,208**	**1,207,708**	**80,585**				**3,137,678 USD**
Output 2: *Institutional capacity and accountability of NEC and electoral stakeholders enhanced*	2.1 Project's capacity-building support is based in detailed and realistic assessment at all levels	0	48,000	10,000	3,000	55,000	NEC UNDP		Conduct capacity assessment of NEC and electoral stakeholders at all levels	116,000 USD
	2.2 Technical Capacity and Skills of NEC at All Levels are strengthened	0	404,330	314,830	292,580	121,290	NEC UNDP		Developing capacity of the NEC in advanced areas of electoral operations	1,133,030 USD
		28,000	108,954	69,694	28,954	4,737	NEC UNDP		Support to Effective Electoral Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation towards Greater Sustainability and Accountability	240,339 USD
	2.3 Enhanced technical capacity of electoral stakeholders towards greater accountability and electoral integrity	119,400	52,200	56,800	230,500	12,500	NEC UNDP Judiciary CSOs		Support to credible and efficient electoral dispute resolution	471,400 USD
		0	100,000	35,000	35,000	0	UNDP CSOs		Strengthening CSO oversight of Liberia democratic institutions	170,000 USD
		70,000	120,000	150,000	170,000	60,000	NEC UNDP IPCC NDI		Strengthening capacity of political parties in specific areas of electoral operations	570,000 USD
	2.4 Increased Integrity and Sustainability of Electoral Operations,	45,000	191,000	360,000	280,000	0	NEC UNDI NIR (?).		Support to credible and Sustainable Voter Registration Process	876,000 USD
		1,000,000	0	0	1,089,000	0	NEC UNDP		Electoral Logistics and Procurement Linked to Management Policies	2,089,000 USD

	including Voter Registration Process	180,000	0	0	380,000	0			Support to electoral staff training	**560,000 USD**
	2.5 NEC Infrastructure Strengthening towards Greater Electoral Integrity	15,000	1,239,022	0	0	0	NEC UNDP		Rehabilitation of remaining NEC warehouses and security enforcement of NEC offices	**1,254,022 USD**
		137,300	88,200	97,000	150,000	0	NEC UNDP		Strengthening NEC ICT infrastructure	**472,500 USD**
	MONITORING	-					NEC UNDP		Annual monitoring of project implementation	Budget included under Project Management Unit
	Sub-Total for Output 2	**1,594,700**	**2,351,706**	**1,093,324**	**2,659,034**	**253,527**				**7,952,291 USD**
Output 3: ***Conflict prevention and mitigation mechanisms to support peaceful conduct of elections are strengthened***	3.1 Electoral security further improved	118,000			120,000		NEC UNDP LNP		Election Security Forces Act in Line with International Standards	**238,000 USD**
		100,000	80,000	160,000	150,000	42,000	NEC UNDP IPCC PBO NCCRM		Early Warning Mechanism – Strengthening existing national mechanisms to early identify and respond to electoral violence	**532,000 USD**
	3.2 Awareness raised and mitigation measures implemented to mitigate Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWIE)	30,000	52,000	37,000	47,000	10,000	NEC UNDP UN Women IPCC		Raising awareness of Violence Against Women in Elections and its impact on women participation	**176,000 USD**
	MONITORING	-					NEC UNDP		Annual monitoring of project implementation	Budget included under Project Management Unit
	Sub-Total for Output 3	**248,000**	**132000**	**197000**	**317000**	**52000**				**946,000 USD**
Project Management Permanent	Permanent Staff (Project Management Unit)	204,357	669,925	669,925	669,925	367,097	UNDP			**2,581,229 USD**
Technical	Vehicles	5,920	17,700	17,700	17,700	11,800	UNDP			**70,800 USD**

Advisory Team & Running Costs	Office running costs	13,370	45,000	45,000	45,000	26,800	UNDP			175,170 USD
MONITORING	Field Monitoring Missions	3,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	3,000	NEC UNDP			24,000 USD
VISIBILITY	Visibility costs*	2,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	3,000	NEC UNDP			20,000 USD
Evaluation *(as relevant)*	EVALUATION AND AUDIT	-		25,000		50,000	NEC UNDP			75,000 USD
	Sub-Total (PM+TA)	**228,647**	**743,625**	**768,625**	**743,625**	**461,697**				**2,946,219 USD**
General Management Support		**212,236**	**309,753**	**214,573**	**394,189**	**67,825**				**1,198,576 USD**
TOTAL		**2,865,183**	**4,180,661**	**2,896,730**	**5,321,556**	**915,634**				**16,180,764 USD**

**Visibility costs are also integrated in every activity under the Project Plan. Monitoring costs are covered under PMU (with the exception of CVE that has separate monitoring budget).*

VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

TERMS OF REFERENCE – KEY PROJECT STAFF

CHIEF TECHNICAL ADVISER (P4, INTERNATIONAL)

The Chief Technical Advisor's (CTA) primary responsibility will be to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the Project Document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The CTA will be responsible for the day-to-day management and decision-making for the project, within the framework and constraints set out by the PSC/Project Board.

The CTA will possess professional expertise across the areas of electoral assistance, project management, inclusive participation and stakeholder engagement. He/she will advise the NEC Board of Commissioners and Secretariat on strategic issues, comparative analysis, international experience and best practice on electoral processes, as well as institutional management systems and reform.

The CTA will manage a team of technical advisers and the support staff of the PMU and provide technical guidance to facilitate the timely resourcing of activities that meet with agreed priorities. The CTA will report to the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative for Programmes and will liaise and work closely with the UNDP Governance Unit.

In addition, the CTA will:

- Ensure effective administration and technical management of the project, producing project results as specified in the project document, within the specified constraints of time and cost, including development of annual work plans, timelines for activities and budgets, planning and oversight of project activities and results, and monitoring progress.
- Offer expert guidance to the National Elections Commission (NEC) in the overall management of electoral processes through: advice on policy development and implementation; guidance on the implementation of administrative and management reforms, including technical advice on fostering transparent, inclusive and peaceful elections; also, specifically, institutional capacity development, stakeholder engagement, civic and voter education and inclusive participation; guidance in strategizing and organizing the various election operational activities the NEC will be carrying out in preparation for and implementation of the elections.
- Provide technical and policy support to the NEC to implement its gender mainstreaming strategy, as well as with regard to gender-related stakeholder activities, to increase the role of women, youth and PWDs in the electoral process, in close coordination with UN Women and with the support of the project Gender Adviser.
- Liaise with the judiciary to strengthen the role of dispute resolution in the electoral context.
- Analyze broader democratic governance and electoral issues and trends in the country and advise the project, the country Office, UN system and the partners accordingly.
- Provide regular briefings and written reports to UNDP senior management, donors and other stakeholders.
- Oversight and manage the submission of operational and financial reports, including the project quarterly progress report and the Annual Report.

- Monitor and report on progress and risks including monitoring and updating the risks and issues log according to Technical Committee discussions and Steering Committee decisions.
- Continuously review the project status and provide strategic and policy advice to the Steering Committee and Technical Committee on required follow up and/or corrective action.
- Monitor financial resources and accounting to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial reports, as well as the mobilization of funds with partners.
- Ensure the harmonization of support through the regular Technical Working Group, Donor Working Group and annual Steering Committee/Project Board meetings and the preparation and dissemination of regular reports for their information on progress.
- Liaise and foster strategic cooperation with other development partners to reinforce dialogue between stakeholders.
- Contribute to knowledge creation and sharing including on aspect of electoral best practices and positive global experiences;
- Ensure effective cooperation and coordination between all the components of the project.
- Effectively manage and oversee the work and performance of the project technical advisors, consultants and any other assigned staff; and
- The CTA will ensure synergies between the project and all relevant UNDP thematic areas, in particular within the Governance portfolio.

PROGRAMME OFFICER (NATIONAL)

Under the guidance and the direct supervision of the Chief Technical Advisor (Elections) the Project Officer supports the technical management and ensures smooth operation of the project.

Planning and Monitoring:

- Preparing the annual work plans, quarterly and annual reports, procurement, recruitment and monitoring plans as well as necessary updates;
- Support the monitoring of the implementation of the work plans;
- Ensures project plans, reports and status are accurately reflected and uploaded in ATLAS;
- Coordinates the Project's monitoring and evaluation;
- Work along with NEC units to monitor activities of the project being implemented by Partners, including CSO both in the field and at HQ.

Project Liaison, Reporting and Analysis:

- In coordination with the CTA liaise with the project donors;
- Support organization of the Project Board and Technical Working Group meetings including working along with the relevant government agency to organize regular board meetings; Ensure preparation and approval of PB minutes;
- Contribute the production of accurate and timely reports for donors, with the support of other project staff, on project activities;
- Provide analysis on politico-electoral landscape to inform Project activities;
- Provide regular updates and reports on progress in program development.

Operations Management:

- Liaise with relevant UNDP Country Office departments and units, notably those responsible for operations, project management, project support and quality assurance, to ensure adequate provision of services, flow of information and the project's compliance with its obligations;

- Contribute to knowledge creation and sharing including on aspect of electoral best practices and positive global experiences.
- Ensure meticulous archiving and filing of the project documents;
- Ensure proper control of the project assets and regular inventory and physical verification;
- Ensure visibility plan of the project is implemented.

Support to Partner:

- Work along with various units of the NEC in planning and implementation of activities outlined in the project work and operational plans;
- Support Training and Capacity Building Adviser in identifying training needs of various units of the commission both at HQ and Magisterial offices, advice on curriculum development and organization of courses in collaboration with the NEC's relevant Units;
- Assist the Project and NEC in liaising with relevant legislative committees on elections at the Legislature on electoral issues;
- Liaise regularly with electoral stakeholders, notably current or potential Project beneficiaries, including CSOs, political parties, government agencies, to inform about Project activities.

TRAINING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING SPECIALIST (P3, INTERNATIONAL)

The Training and Capacity Building Specialist is the international expert advising the National Elections Commission (NEC) on all issues related to training and capacity building. The Training and Capacity-Building Specialist reports directly to Chief Technical Adviser.

The duties of the Training and Capacity Building Specialist include:

- Conducting a comprehensive Capacity Assessment of the NEC and electoral stakeholders in HQ and in the counties;
- Developing a comprehensive training and capacity-building plan for NEC and electoral stakeholders in Liberia;
- Supervising implementation of the long-term multi-stakeholder capacity-building plan nation-wide;
- Advising on strategies to ensure sustainability of the training provided and retention of qualified staff;
- Support transfer of knowledge from directly trained staff to other employees of the NEC and stakeholders, including at county-levels (e.g. through training of trainers);
- Ensuring implementation and follow up of capacity-building strategy and plan;
- Advising on challenges in implementation and alert on issues that may impact sustainability of the capacity-built, suggest strategies for improvement;

Advice, assistance and capacity building to the NEC during the electoral period on:

- Development of a cascade training plan for training of polling staff;
- Optimization of procedures for polling and counting;
- Development of training materials for polling and counting, including a training manual and any other training aids deemed appropriate;
- Recruitment and training of trainers;
- Development of plans and materials for training related to other electoral activities such as registration update, voter list display period, complaints, appeals, absentee registration and voting, and out-of-country voting as required;

- Periodic written status reports, including weekly, quarterly and end of mission reports;
- Any other duties as assigned by the Chief Technical Advisor.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION SPECIALIST (P3, INTERNATIONAL)

Under the overall guidance of the Chief Technical Advisor, the Finance and Administration Specialist is responsible for ensuring the highest efficiency in financial resources management and the provision of accurate, thoroughly researched and documented financial information, effective delivery of financial, administrative and procurement services, transparent and effective utilization of financial resources, and management of the Finance Unit within the PMU. He/she analyzes and interprets the financial rules and regulations and provides solutions to a wide spectrum of complex financial and procurement issues. The Finance and Administration Specialist promotes a collaborative, client-oriented approach consistent with UNDP rules and regulations.

The Admin and Finance Specialist supervises and leads professional and support staff of the project, including Admin and Finance Assistant and National Procurement Analyst. The Admin and Finance Specialist works in close collaboration with Programme, Operations, and project teams in the CO, UNDP HQ staff and Government officials ensuring successful project performance in Administration, and Finance Issues. He/she is also the lead advisor to the NEC on best practices in financial management.

The duties of the Finance and Administration Specialist include:

Ensure effective and accurate financial resources management and oversight, focusing on achievement of the following results:

- Financial analysis and oversight for all resources managed by the project and provision of high-quality professional advice to the project management;
- Proper planning, expenditure tracking of the project in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations;
- Organization and oversight of project cash management processes, including liquidity management, recommendation of impress level, risk assessment, bank relationship management, timely accounting and reconciliation of all transactions, security for cash assets on site.

Ensure implementation of operational strategies and procedures, focusing on achievement of the following results:

- Full compliance of administrative and financial activities, administrative and financial recording/reporting system and audit follow up with UN/UNDP rules, regulations, policies and strategies; implementation of the effective internal control, proper design and functioning of the administrative and financial resources management system;
- Project finance business processes mapping and elaboration/establishment of internal standard operating procedures in the Finance Unit; control of the workflows in the Finance Unit;
- Continuous analysis and monitoring of the financial situation, presentation of forecasts for development and management projects;
- Elaboration of the framework and conditions of contribution within the project resource mobilization efforts;
- Routinely monitors financial exception reports for unusual activities, transactions, and investigates anomalies or unusual transactions. Informs supervisors and other UNDP staff at Headquarters of the results of the investigation when satisfactory answers are not obtained;
- Advise NEC finance section on financial planning and processes and guide them for proper implementation of their task;

- Administer human resources activities for project staff in accordance with the rules & regulations of UNDP;
- Prepare staff budget forecast through an analysis of staffing pattern and needs during the respective year;
- Advise the respective staff for proper coordination with UNDP HR Unit during the different stages of recruitment of project staff;
- Coordinate for issuance, renewal and termination of contracts of project staff;
- Ensure proper maintenance of filing system for HR records, personnel files, attendance and leave records and prepared correspondence, reports and tables on human resources;
- Ensure smooth, efficient and effective running of the office;
- In close coordination with the CTA, ensure proper supervision and management of performance of the support staff;
- Actively participate in discussions related to efficient and effective project implementation and general office management.

Manage the project budget focusing on achievement of the following results:

- Management of all financial resources through planning, guiding, monitoring and controlling of the resources in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations;
- Preparation and monitoring of projects' budgets in Atlas;
- Regular analysis and reporting on the budget approvals and the delivery situation of management projects;
- Elaboration of proper mechanisms to eliminate deficiencies in budget management;
- Collection of information on internal and external clients' satisfaction and needs in order to develop improvements to services;
- Ensuring that advance payments and direct payments are properly reviewed and made on a timely basis, as well as ensuring that payment information is properly recorded into the Atlas system on a timely basis;
- Ensuring that cost-sharing contributions are properly transferred to the project on a timely basis;
- Submission of financial reports to donors on a timely and quality basis.

Ensure proper control of Elections Assistance project accounts, focusing on achievement of the following results:

- Elaboration of the internal expenditures' control system which ensures that vouchers processed are matched and completed, transactions are correctly recorded and posted in Atlas; payrolls are duly prepared; monthly payment orders (MPOs), travel claims, and other entitlements are duly processed;
- Control of accounts closure;
- Timely corrective actions on unposted vouchers, including the vouchers with budget check errors, match exceptions, unapproved vouchers;
- Timely response to HQ requests to resolve financial data issues;
- Control of the Accounts Receivables for UNDP projects and follow up with partners on contributions, maintenance of the General Ledger;
- Responsible to control and monitor the financial closure of the project.

Ensure proper Elections Assistance project cash management, focusing on achievement of the following results:

- Timely review of cash position for local accounts to ensure sufficient funds on hand for disbursements;
- Timely identification and recording of receipts for income application;
- Daily review of zero-balance account bank statements in Atlas to monitor imprest level;

identification and recording of contributions;
- Primary contact with local bank management on routine operational matters including negotiation of exchange rate on replenishments;
- Transaction and stop payment approval on internet banking system;
- Timely and accurate approval of bank reconciliation, including documented review of exceptions;
- Initiation of bank transfers and deals, selecting bank transfers and deals for approval and settlement;
- Timely preparation of monthly cash flow forecast for use by the Operations Manager. Liaison with other UN agencies to obtain estimate of their cash requirements.

Financial management of the basket fund and status reporting:
- Monitor pledges and contributions of donors to perform budget revisions;
- Report to donor on the status of expenses in the basket fund;
- Take into account remarks from the donors and make necessary adjustments.
- Ensures proper control of the project Assets focusing on achievement of the following results:
- Maintenance and repair of office equipment;
- Implementation of Inventory and physical verification check-up in the projects.

Preparation of financial reporting of the project to donors and other stakeholders:
- Periodic written status reports, including weekly, quarterly and end of mission reports;
- Prepare on a regular basis a regular report on the financial status of the project;
- Present and explain to donors the financial situation of the project;
- Take into account remarks from the project board and make necessary adjustment in the project budget and financial reporting.

Financial management of the basket fund and status reporting:
- Monitor pledges and contributions of donors to perform budget revisions;
- Report to donor on the status of expenses in the basket fund;
- Take into account remarks from the donors and make necessary adjustments.

ADDITIONAL PROJECT SUPPORT

Additional project support will be provided by the UNDP Bureau for Programme and Policy Support (BPPS) through relevant experts posted at the UNDP Regional Service Center for Africa in Addis Ababa and the Brussels-based EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance (JTF), as well as the UNDP Global Policy Network (GPN). BPPS will provide substantive electoral technical advisory assistance, democratic governance assistance, and conflict prevention and recovery expertise to the implementation of the project based on regional and global best practice.

The project will particularly continue to benefit from an ongoing support by the electoral experts at the JTF Team which will, among other activities, establish and maintain a dedicated project website, provide support with all outputs of the project, and in particular regarding the Early Warning System, and deploy periodic support missions in the country. The website will provide visibility to all donors under the multi-donor fund. In addition, the project will also deliver monthly contributions to the JTF global monthly reports on a regular basis. For more information on the JTF please see: https://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/.

UNDP's Strategic Plan (2018-2021) recognizes the importance of contextual analysis, crisis prevention and recovery, and the management of multidimensional risks as fundamental for

development. The Crisis Bureau is responsible for UNDP's corporate crisis-related strategies, vision and priorities for crisis prevention, response, and recovery. One of the areas of responsibility of UNDP's Crisis Bureau is to ensure that UNDP is well positioned to anticipate and to respond in the timeliest and most effective manner to crisis. The JTF Early Warning System on prevention of electoral violence with work in close collaboration with UNDP Country Office's Crisis Risk Dashboard (CRD).

In line with the EC-UNDP Guidelines on Electoral Assistance (signed by UNDP Administrator and EC Commissioner and available at https://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Electoral-Assistance-Guidelines-EC-UNDP-2016-2nd-Review.pdf), the JTF is mandated to assist all UN Electoral Support Programmes with EU funding in terms of implementation, reporting, visibility and any other issues. The JTF may, among other activities, organize a kick-off training for the UNDP Country Office and EU Delegation staff to familiarize them with the rules and regulations of the two organizations.

In accordance with the current DPA-UNDP Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance, UNDP will provide EAD with status reports on project implementation at least quarterly. UNDP will also notify EAD of any additional UN electoral assistance that is requested that falls outside the scope of the NAM recommendations so that EAD can determine whether a new assessment might be necessary.

PROJECT ASSURANCE

Project quality assurance will be provided by the UNDP. Project quality assurance will follow UNDP programming systems, tools and procedures and feed directly to the Project Steering Committee and the Project Donor Group. Assurance will also be an important part of internal coordination mechanisms within the UN system especially in sharing information and advancing programming priorities.

As per UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP), the Project Assurance role supports the Steering Committee by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. This delegated role will be undertaken within the UNDP Country Office – Governance Unit. The project assurance role involves oversight over the operations processes, budget planning and financial management, donor coordination, and tracking donor contributions and transfers.

The programme will organize regular meetings and consultations at both technical and policy/decision making levels. The PMU will ensure routine liaison between the project and partners at all levels. This will ensure programme management milestones are managed and completed and that corrective actions anticipated, discussed and decisions are taken as required.

IX. LEGAL CONTEXT

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

X. RISK MANAGEMENT

UNDP (DIM)

1. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS.)

2. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the [project funds][33] [UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document][34] are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml. This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under this Project Document.

3. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (http://www.undp.org/ses) and related Accountability Mechanism (http://www.undp.org/secu-srm).

4. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.

5. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP as the Implementing Partner will handle any sexual exploitation and abuse ("SEA") and sexual harassment ("SH") allegations in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies and procedures.

6. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.

7. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will ensure that the following obligations are binding on each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient:

    a. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA, the responsibility for the safety and security of each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in such responsible parties, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's custody, rests with such responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient. To this end, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall:

        i. put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
        ii. assume all risks and liabilities related to such responsible parties, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.

[33] To be used where UNDP is the Implementing Partner.
[34] To be used where the UN, a UN fund/programme or a specialized agency is the Implementing Partner.

b. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.

c. In the performance of the activities under this Project, UNDP as the Implementing Partner shall ensure, with respect to the activities of any of its responsible parties, sub-recipients and other entities engaged under the Project, either as contractors or subcontractors, their personnel and any individuals performing services for them, that those entities have in place adequate and proper procedures, processes and policies to prevent and/or address SEA and SH.

d. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or programme or using the UNDP funds. It will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.

e. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at www.undp.org.

f. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP will conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP programmes and projects. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to its (and its consultants', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with it to find a solution.

g. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will promptly inform UNDP as the Implementing Partner in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality.

   Where it becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). It will provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

h. UNDP will be entitled to a refund from the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient under this or any other agreement. Recovery of such amount by UNDP shall not diminish or curtail any

responsible party's, subcontractor's or sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.

i. Each contract issued by the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from it shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.

j. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project or programme, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.

k. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled "Risk Management" are passed on to its subcontractors and sub-recipients and that all the clauses under this section entitled "Risk Management Standard Clauses" are adequately reflected, *mutatis mutandis*, in all its sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

XI. ANNEXES

1. Project Quality Assurance Report

Project Quality Assurance (PQA) is conducted at design and appraisal, implementation and closure levels. The Project Quality Assurance Report will be prepared following the approval of the Project Document at Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC)

2. *Social and Environmental Screening Template*

Project Information

Project Information	
1. Project Title	Liberia Electoral Support Project
2. Project Number	
3. Location (Global/Region/Country)	Africa / West Africa / Liberia

Part A. Integrating Overarching Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

QUESTION 1: How Does the Project Integrate the Overarching Principles in order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?
Briefly describe in the space below how the Project mainstreams the human-rights based approach
The Project focuses on support to Liberia on its road towards 2020 Special Senatorial Elections, Constitutional Referendum, and 2023 General Elections. It provides advice to Liberia Electoral Management Body (EMB) according to international electoral standards in line with Article 21 of UN Declaration of Human rights and Article 25 of the of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The Project adopts a human rights-based approach, leaving no-one behind by focusing programs on the most vulnerable and marginalized, being adaptable and flexible in order to cater to changing and unforeseen circumstances, addressing structural issues for lasting results, and ensuring sustainability. The Project seeks to mainstream diversity throughout its activities by working with women organizations, local communities, and Disabled People Organizations (DPOs). Through close collaboration with UNHCHR, as subject-matter expert in the area of human rights, the Project seeks to ensure human-rights-based proofing and where needed trainings in the area of human rights for relevant interlocutors, counterparts and project staff.
Briefly describe in the space below how the Project is likely to improve gender equality and women's empowerment
The gender approach to elections borrows from the UNSDCF pillar 4 and UN Women Flagship Programme Initiatives (FPI) theory of change which shows that the gender sensitive capacity strengthening of Liberian institutions will lead to delivery of women's participation and leadership in elections and politics in line with the law, policies, standards, norms, frameworks ensuring that the rights holders have the knowledge, service seeking behaviors and capacity to utilize them. Gender will be mainstreamed throughout all Project's interventions. In addition, a sub-output is dedicated to improved access and opportunity of the right to vote by women along with vulnerable and marginalized groups, with a specific focus on: (i) developing formative influence of the Gender Section over the NEC to ensure all policies are gender-proofed and action is taken to increase participation of women in electoral process; (ii) promoting inclusion

and eliminating obstacles to inclusive political participation; (iii) Promoting inclusion at the Liberia House of Representatives (HoR) through the implementation of a citizen consultation platform. The Project will also work to raise awareness and mitigate violence against women in elections under Output 3 – Conflict Prevention and Mitigation Mechanims to Support Peaceful Conduct of Elections Are Strengthened. The Project will work closely with UN Women, especially in implementation of specific gender-related goals but also to ensure gender-lense is applied to the Project activities in general.
Briefly describe in the space below how the Project mainstreams environmental sustainability
In 2016, the Project has supported NEC in installation of solar panels to its magisterial offices. The Project will continue supporting the maintenance policies of those panels to ensure sustainable energy is continuously used. Where possible, the Project will advise and/or prioritize the use of sustainable energy. Under Output 2, the Project seeks to strengthen sustainable planning and budgeting that goes hand-in-hand with sustainable procurement. The Project will consider environmental sustainability in its advice, where applicable. Where applicable, the Project will also consider the environment in Procurement actions, with an attempt of employing re-usable materials and support sustainable energy.

Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks? *Note: Describe briefly potential social and environmental risks identified in Attachment 1 – Risk Screening Checklist (based on any "Yes" responses). If no risks have been identified in Attachment 1 then note "No Risks Identified" and skip to Question 4 and Select "Low Risk". Questions 5 and 6 not required for Low Risk Projects.*	QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks? *Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 6*			QUESTION 6: What social and environmental assessment and management measures have been conducted and/or are required to address potential risks (for Risks with Moderate and High Significance)?
Risk Description	***Impact and***	***Significance***	***Comments***	***Description of assessment and management measures as reflected in the Project design.***

	Probability (1-5)	***(Low, Moderate, High)***		***If ESIA or SESA is required note that the assessment should consider all potential impacts and risks.***
Risk 1: Voter register is not perceived as credible by political parties and electoral stakeholders, which may exacerbate electoral violence potential.	I = 4 P =3	**High**	In 2017 elections and subsequent bi-elections, electoral stakeholders demonstrated lack of confidence in the voter list. If the voter list and related public perception is not improved, the issue may exacerbate electoral violence.	The Project has incorporated support to voter roll (VRU) process with specific aspects to enhance its credibility. These include international data center consultant, voter list audit (computer and field based), additional security messures to the data center, as well as future feasibility study and measures taken to mores sustainable and credible voter list. The VRU support is accompanied by the advice to communication strategies critical to enhance perceptions by electoral stakehodlers.
Risk 2: Exclusion of some members of vulnerable population from the electoral process	I = 3 P = 4	**Moderate**	The vulnerable groups, notably persons with disabilities, face significant obstacles in participating in elections, due to cultural attitudates and physical obstacles.	The Project intends to involve disabled people's organizations (DPOs) in electoral acitivites to ensure their views are incorporated into the work of the NEC and physical obstacles are minimized. The Project will also work with the NEC to mainstream disability in electoral operations.
Risk 3: Eruption of electoral violence during the electoral period, including violence against women candidates	I = 5 P = 2	**High**	Previous electoral process suggests Liberia's vulnerability to sporadic electoral violence.	The entire Output 3 of the Project focuses on prevention and elimination of electoral violence, including violence against women in elections.
Risk 4: Spread of Covid-19 amidst electoral activities	I=5 P=3	**High**	Electoral acivities involve gathering of people, which may lead to spread of Covid-19.	The Project works closely with the NEC to ensure health protocols are incorporated and observed during the electoral activities; there is a strick observations of the Protocol during the activities supported by the Project.

Risk 5: Duty-bearers do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in the Project and the right-holders do not have capcity to claim their rights	I=3 P=3	**High**	Capacity gaps persists within the NEC and electoral stakeholders, in relation to their obligations and rights under the ICCPR Article 21.	Significant component of the Project is capacity-buildng of the NEC and electoral stakeholders. The Project therefore aims at mitigating this risk as its core activitiy.
[add additional rows as needed]				

	QUESTION 4: What is the overall Project risk categorization?		
	Select one (see SESP for guidance)		**Comments**
	Low Risk	X	It is likely that some members of vulnerable groups will be excluded and there will be sporadic cases of electoral violence; however, mechanisms exist to prevent both. The Project is well placed to support the NEC and other stakehodlers in strengthening these mechanisms towards more inclusive process and peaceful elections. There is no environmental risk – direct or indirect, involved in this Project.
	Moderate Risk	☐	
	High Risk	☐	
	QUESTION 5: Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, what requirements of the SES are relevant?		
	Check all that apply		**Comments**
	Principle 1: Human Rights	X	
	Principle 2: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	X	
	1. Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management	☐	

	2. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	☐	
	3. Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions	☐	No as per the below template. Nevertheless, there is a risk of Covid-19 transmision amidst electoral activities.
	4. Cultural Heritage	☐	
	5. Displacement and Resettlement	☐	
	6. Indigenous Peoples	☐	
	7. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	☐	

Final Sign Off

Signature	*Date*	*Description*
QA Assessor Homolková Lenka Homolkova, CTA, Elections	22-09-2020	UNDP staff member responsible for the Project, typically a UNDP Programme Officer. Final signature confirms they have "checked" to ensure that the SESP is adequately conducted.
QA Approver	20-Oct-2020	UNDP senior manager, typically the UNDP Deputy Country Director (DCD), Country Director (CD), Deputy Resident Representative (DRR), or Resident Representative (RR). The QA Approver cannot also be the QA Assessor. Final signature confirms they have "cleared" the SESP prior to submittal to the PAC.
PAC Chair	19-Oct-2020	UNDP chair of the PAC. In some cases PAC Chair may also be the QA Approver. Final signature confirms that the SESP was considered as part of the project appraisal and considered in recommendations of the PAC.

SESP Attachment 1. Social and Environmental Risk Screening Checklist

Checklist Potential Social and Environmental Risks	
Principles 1: Human Rights	**Answer (Yes/No)**
1. Could the Project lead to adverse impacts on enjoyment of the human rights (civil, political, economic, social or cultural) of the affected population and particularly of marginalized groups?	NO
2. Is there a likelihood that the Project would have inequitable or discriminatory adverse impacts on affected populations, particularly people living in poverty or marginalized or excluded individuals or groups? [35]	NO
3. Could the Project potentially restrict availability, quality of and access to resources or basic services, in particular to marginalized individuals or groups?	NO
4. Is there a likelihood that the Project would exclude any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups, from fully participating in decisions that may affect them?	NO
5. Is there a risk that duty-bearers do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in the Project?	YES
6. Is there a risk that rights-holders do not have the capacity to claim their rights?	YES
7. Have local communities or individuals, given the opportunity, raised human rights concerns regarding the Project during the stakeholder engagement process?	NO
8. Is there a risk that the Project would exacerbate conflicts among and/or the risk of violence to project-affected communities and individuals?	NO
Principle 2: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	
1. Is there a likelihood that the proposed Project would have adverse impacts on gender equality and/or the situation of women and girls?	NO
2. Would the Project potentially reproduce discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits?	NO

[35] Prohibited grounds of discrimination include race, ethnicity, gender, age, language, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political or other opinion, national or social or geographical origin, property, birth or other status including as an indigenous person or as a member of a minority. References to "women and men" or similar is understood to include women and men boys and girls, and other groups discriminated against based on their gender identities, such as transgender people and transsexuals.

3.	Have women's groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the Project during the stakeholder engagement process and has this been included in the overall Project proposal and in the risk assessment?	NO
4.	Would the Project potentially limit women's ability to use, develop and protect natural resources, taking into account different roles and positions of women and men in accessing environmental goods and services? *For example, activities that could lead to natural resources degradation or depletion in communities who depend on these resources for their livelihoods and well being*	NO
Principle 3: Environmental Sustainability: Screening questions regarding environmental risks are encompassed by the specific Standard-related questions below		
Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management		
1.1	Would the Project potentially cause adverse impacts to habitats (e.g. modified, natural, and critical habitats) and/or ecosystems and ecosystem services? *For example, through habitat loss, conversion or degradation, fragmentation, hydrological changes*	NO
1.2	Are any Project activities proposed within or adjacent to critical habitats and/or environmentally sensitive areas, including legally protected areas (e.g. nature reserve, national park), areas proposed for protection, or recognized as such by authoritative sources and/or indigenous peoples or local communities?	NO
1.3	Does the Project involve changes to the use of lands and resources that may have adverse impacts on habitats, ecosystems, and/or livelihoods? (Note: if restrictions and/or limitations of access to lands would apply, refer to Standard 5)	NO
1.4	Would Project activities pose risks to endangered species?	NO
1.5	Would the Project pose a risk of introducing invasive alien species?	NO
1.6	Does the Project involve harvesting of natural forests, plantation development, or reforestation?	NO
1.7	Does the Project involve the production and/or harvesting of fish populations or other aquatic species?	NO
1.8	Does the Project involve significant extraction, diversion or containment of surface or ground water? *For example, construction of dams, reservoirs, river basin developments, groundwater extraction*	NO
1.9	Does the Project involve utilization of genetic resources? (e.g. collection and/or harvesting, commercial development)	NO

1.10	Would the Project generate potential adverse transboundary or global environmental concerns?	NO
1.11	Would the Project result in secondary or consequential development activities which could lead to adverse social and environmental effects, or would it generate cumulative impacts with other known existing or planned activities in the area? *For example, a new road through forested lands will generate direct environmental and social impacts (e.g. felling of trees, earthworks, potential relocation of inhabitants). The new road may also facilitate encroachment on lands by illegal settlers or generate unplanned commercial development along the route, potentially in sensitive areas. These are indirect, secondary, or induced impacts that need to be considered. Also, if similar developments in the same forested area are planned, then cumulative impacts of multiple activities (even if not part of the same Project) need to be considered.*	NO
Standard 2: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation		
2.1	Will the proposed Project result in significant[36] greenhouse gas emissions or may exacerbate climate change?	NO
2.2	Would the potential outcomes of the Project be sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change?	NO
2.3	Is the proposed Project likely to directly or indirectly increase social and environmental vulnerability to climate change now or in the future (also known as maladaptive practices)? *For example, changes to land use planning may encourage further development of floodplains, potentially increasing the population's vulnerability to climate change, specifically flooding*	NO
Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Working Conditions		
3.1	Would elements of Project construction, operation, or decommissioning pose potential safety risks to local communities?	NO
3.2	Would the Project pose potential risks to community health and safety due to the transport, storage, and use and/or disposal of hazardous or dangerous materials (e.g. explosives, fuel and other chemicals during construction and operation)?	NO
3.3	Does the Project involve large-scale infrastructure development (e.g. dams, roads, buildings)?	NO
3.4	Would failure of structural elements of the Project pose risks to communities? (e.g. collapse of buildings or infrastructure)	NO
3.5	Would the proposed Project be susceptible to or lead to increased vulnerability to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme climatic conditions?	NO

[36] In regards to CO_2, 'significant emissions' corresponds generally to more than 25,000 tons per year (from both direct and indirect sources). [The Guidance Note on Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation provides additional information on GHG emissions.]

3.6	Would the Project result in potential increased health risks (e.g. from water-borne or other vector-borne diseases or communicable infections such as HIV/AIDS)?	NO
3.7	Does the Project pose potential risks and vulnerabilities related to occupational health and safety due to physical, chemical, biological, and radiological hazards during Project construction, operation, or decommissioning?	NO
3.8	Does the Project involve support for employment or livelihoods that may fail to comply with national and international labor standards (i.e. principles and standards of ILO fundamental conventions)?	NO
3.9	Does the Project engage security personnel that may pose a potential risk to health and safety of communities and/or individuals (e.g. due to a lack of adequate training or accountability)?	NO
Standard 4: Cultural Heritage		
4.1	Will the proposed Project result in interventions that would potentially adversely impact sites, structures, or objects with historical, cultural, artistic, traditional or religious values or intangible forms of culture (e.g. knowledge, innovations, practices)? (Note: Projects intended to protect and conserve Cultural Heritage may also have inadvertent adverse impacts)	NO
4.2	Does the Project propose utilizing tangible and/or intangible forms of cultural heritage for commercial or other purposes?	NO
Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement		
5.1	Would the Project potentially involve temporary or permanent and full or partial physical displacement?	NO
5.2	Would the Project possibly result in economic displacement (e.g. loss of assets or access to resources due to land acquisition or access restrictions – even in the absence of physical relocation)?	NO
5.3	Is there a risk that the Project would lead to forced evictions?[37]	NO
5.4	Would the proposed Project possibly affect land tenure arrangements and/or community based property rights/customary rights to land, territories and/or resources?	NO
Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples		
6.1	Are indigenous peoples present in the Project area (including Project area of influence)?	NO

[37] Forced evictions include acts and/or omissions involving the coerced or involuntary displacement of individuals, groups, or communities from homes and/or lands and common property resources that were occupied or depended upon, thus eliminating the ability of an individual, group, or community to reside or work in a particular dwelling, residence, or location without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protections.

6.2	Is it likely that the Project or portions of the Project will be located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	NO
6.3	Would the proposed Project potentially affect the human rights, lands, natural resources, territories, and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples (regardless of whether indigenous peoples possess the legal titles to such areas, whether the Project is located within or outside of the lands and territories inhabited by the affected peoples, or whether the indigenous peoples are recognized as indigenous peoples by the country in question)? *If the answer to the screening question 6.3 is "yes" the potential risk impacts are considered potentially severe and/or critical and the Project would be categorized as either Moderate or High Risk.*	NO
6.4	Has there been an absence of culturally appropriate consultations carried out with the objective of achieving FPIC on matters that may affect the rights and interests, lands, resources, territories and traditional livelihoods of the indigenous peoples concerned?	NO
6.5	Does the proposed Project involve the utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	NO
6.6	Is there a potential for forced eviction or the whole or partial physical or economic displacement of indigenous peoples, including through access restrictions to lands, territories, and resources?	NO
6.7	Would the Project adversely affect the development priorities of indigenous peoples as defined by them?	NO
6.8	Would the Project potentially affect the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples?	NO
6.9	Would the Project potentially affect the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices?	NO
Standard 7: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency		
7.1	Would the Project potentially result in the release of pollutants to the environment due to routine or non-routine circumstances with the potential for adverse local, regional, and/or transboundary impacts?	NO
7.2	Would the proposed Project potentially result in the generation of waste (both hazardous and non-hazardous)?	NO
7.3	Will the proposed Project potentially involve the manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous chemicals and/or materials? Does the Project propose use of chemicals or materials subject to international bans or phase-outs? *For example, DDT, PCBs and other chemicals listed in international conventions such as the Stockholm Conventions on Persistent Organic Pollutants or the Montreal Protocol*	NO

7.4	Will the proposed Project involve the application of pesticides that may have a negative effect on the environment or human health?	NO
7.5	Does the Project include activities that require significant consumption of raw materials, energy, and/or water?	NO

3. Risk Analysis

Project Title: Enhancing Liberia Electoral Credibility, Transparency, and Inclusiveness	**Award ID:**	**Date:**

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Management Response	Owner	Submitted, updated by	Last Update	Status
1	Non-transformative approach to electoral cycle and deepening democracy issues, leading to non-completion of next electoral cycle legal framework on time	August 2020	Political	I: High P: Low	UNDP will support NEC and CSO efforts to advocate for reforms on the legal framework or improvement of processes through adequate regulations; Appropriate corrective measures when and where necessary; Constant monitoring.				
2	Low citizens' confidence in the electoral process or its aspects owing to the disenchantment of past elections	August 2020	Political	I: Medium P: High	Increased outreach to the voters through focusing on increased transparency and better communication by the NEC; creating paths for more direct communication between the voter and elected institutions as well as strengthening the media in era of disinformation.				
3	Diminishing donor resources for deepening democracy projects in the face of ongoing similar projects in peacebuilding and countering violent extremism and conflicting electoral priorities in the region/worldwide	August 2020	Financial	I: High P: High	Continuous outreach to donors; streamlining of processes within the UN; close coordination, highlighting financial and thematic synergies with relevant UN entities, in particular PBSO, UNDP Governance, violent extremisms.				

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Management Response	Owner	Submitted, updated by	Last Update	Status
4	Limited capacity of implementing partners and responsible partners	August 2020	Organizational	I: Medium/Low P:Medium/Low	Strong capacity building element				
5	Delay in donor commitment to funding the project as many donors are in the process of identifying their priorities for support and the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic	August 2020	Organisational & Financial	I: High P:High	Close engagement of the UNDP Country Office and UN Resident Coordinator for ongoing communication with donor and programmatic and political level.				
6	A highly dynamic political environment leading to shifting priorities and demands	August 2020	Political	I: Medium P: Medium	Encourage consultations and dialogue among national stakeholders to resolve any impasse and agree on common priorities				

4. Capacity Assessment

Results of capacity assessments of Implementing Partner (including HACT Micro Assessment).The Capacity Assessment will be conducted in the first six months of the Project (January 2021).

5. Reporting

The following provides a summary of reporting.

1. Monthly Reports to the EU-UNDP JTF Team via the UNDP Country Office
    - Activities carried out during reporting period
    - Difficulties encountered and measures taken to overcome
    - Any risk mitigation measures taken and identification of emerging risks
    - Changes introduced in implementation
    - Progress towards achievement of expected results

2. Quarterly Progress Report to the Project Steering Committee / Project Board and Technical Committees
    - 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 section submitted quarterly
    - Contributions received
    - Estimated and actual expenditures by category (with explanations for significant variances)

3. Final Report to be submitted within three (3) months of the financial closing of the project.
    - Activity Report
    - Summary and context of the project
    - Major 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
    - Recommendations and lessons for follow-up assistance projects

- Financial Section submitted in final report
    - Total contributions received
    - Summary of expenditures by category compared (with original budget with explanations for significant variances)

4. Project Lessons Learned Exercise
    - UNDP will commission and participate in a terminal evaluation exercise, to be facilitated by an independent consultant(s) and conducted at project close-out funded by the project

The following is the timetable for reports to be submitted to Multi-Donor Fund contributions.

No.	Report	Content	Period Covered	Due Date
1	Inception Report	To be prepared by the Chief Technical Adviser / Project Manager in collaboration with the UNDP Country Office Governance Advisor, and to include a detailed scope of work (action plan) for at least the first six months of the project, showing start and end dates for each activity	1st month of activity	1 month + 1 week from project implementation start date
2	2020 Work plan	Work plan stating the activities to be undertaken in 2020	August – December 2020	31/08/2020
3	2020Progress Report	Narrative Description of activities and progress in 2020, including a provisional financial status report; and liquidity planning for subsequent 6 months	Project Start - December 31st, 2020	31/03/2021
4	2021 Workplan	Workplan stating the activities to be undertaken in 2021	January – December 2021	15/12/2020
6	2021 Progress Report	Narrative Description of activities and progress including a provisional financial status report covering the whole year, and liquidity planning for subsequent 6 months	All 2021	31/03/2022
8	2022 Workplan	Workplan stating the activities to be undertaken in 2022	January-December 2022	15/12/2021
9	2022 Progress Report	Narrative Description of activities and progress including a formal financial status report covering the whole year, including a formal financial status report covering the whole year.	All 2022	31/03/2023
10	2023 Workplan	Workplan stating the activities to be undertaken in 2023	January – December 2023	15/12/2022
11	2023 Progress Report	Narrative Description of activities and progress including a formal financial status report covering the whole year, including a formal financial status report covering the whole year.	All 2023	31/03/2024
12	2024 Workplan	Workplan stating the activities to be undertaken in 2024	January – July 2024	15/12/2023

No.	Report	Content	Period Covered	Due Date
13	2024 Final Report	Narrative Description of activities and progress including a financial status report covering the whole project period	All 2020-2024	30/12/2024

Other reports include monthly and quarterly reports through the life of the project. If requested, the project may provide additional reports on specific topics or activities, or supplementary supporting documents. The project will endeavour to synchronize combined financial and regular streams of reporting in line with multi-donor fund guidelines

6. Summary of the Needs Assessment Mission Report: Liberia (9-19 July 2019)

Executive Summary

Following a request for electoral assistance from the National Elections Commission (NEC) of Liberia, dated 21 May 2019, an Electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) was deployed to Monrovia (9-19 July 2019) and met with a wide range of interlocutors. The aims of the NAM, led by the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, were, inter alia, to assess the request for assistance by the NEC ahead of the October 2020 special senatorial and 2023 presidential and legislative elections and provide recommendations with regard to possible electoral assistance the UN can provide to the NEC and various stakeholders.

The UN has a long history of providing electoral assistance to Liberia, with a current UNDP-led project due to end in early 2020. UN electoral assistance for the period of 2014 - May 2020 is in the form of technical assistance and support through a UNDP managed project funded by European Union (EU), Sweden, Ireland and Canada which focuses on improving the electoral institutions, processes and laws, mainstreaming of gender through specific support to women's participation in political and electoral processes, and enhancing conflict prevention.

Recommendations

1. ***Type and length of electoral assistance***: The NAM recommends continued electoral assistance to Liberia in support to the 2020 special senatorial, 2023 presidential and legislative elections (as requested) and potential referendum on constitutional amendments, under the overall guidance of the Resident Coordinator (RC). UNDP remains best placed as an agency to develop an integrated electoral assistance program. The programming should cover the period from June 2020-July 2024, subject to further review as needed. The support should leverage the activities and expertise of other UN entities, including UN Women, and potentially OHCHR and UNFPA, in addition to drawing experience and lessons learnt from the current electoral cycle. The scale and extent of future support and assistance however will be contingent, inter alia, upon interest from current and new donors.

Support to 2020 special senatorial, 2023 presidential and legislative elections, a referendum on constitutional amendments, and acceptance of results

2. To the UN and International Partners*: promoting confidence building among electoral stakeholders*

a. *The NAM recommends continuing efforts of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) of UNOWAS, supported by the international development partners, ECOWAS and AU to contribute to confidence building and dialogue among political actors.*
b. *The international partners – to consider the possibility of providing advisory and financial support to the NEC through the UN to complement their efforts in the run up to the 2020*

special senatorial, 2023 presidential and legislative elections, a referendum on constitutional amendments, and to consider support to domestic observation and deployment of international observers.

*3. **United Nations technical assistance to the NEC:***

a. Any UN electoral assistance should fully respect national leadership. As with all UN support to Member States, technical assistance and advocacy should be based on the UN principle of national ownership, respect for national sovereignty, promotion and protection of human rights, and strict impartiality;

b. UN experts should endeavour to continue to be co-located with the NEC to make available day-to-day advisory assistance to the institution;

c. As a prelude to the provision of continued assistance, it is recommended that a technical capacity assessment of the institution is undertaken to identify concrete activities for institutional capacity building for the NEC Board of Commissioners (BoC), Secretariat and its field offices;

d. It is recommended that an Electoral Advisor/Project Manager be offered as an advisor to the NEC BoC and the Executive Director of the Administration who will also act as an advisor to the UN RC and the UNDP Resident Representative (RR). This can be complemented by targeted assistance from technical advisors and/or consultants through UNDP and other UN entities;

***Contingent upon interest from current and new donors, it is recommended that technical advice and assistance is provided to the NEC in the following areas**:*

*a. **legal advice and assistance** - to ongoing discussions on electoral and constitutional reform processes;*

*b. **voter registration advice and assistance** – including guidance for a comprehensive feasibility study on the introduction of a biometric voter registration systemm. Any UN assistance to its adoption and roll out should be based on the findings of the feasibility study;*

*c. **operations advice and assistance** including infrastructural improvements on the data centre; - given the uncertainties of the constitutional reform process and a consequent timeline for possible referendum on amendments, the UN should stand ready to provide additional assistance to the NEC, as needed, in the implementation of their mandate;*

*d. **electoral dispute resolution** - advice and assistance with training and coordination of information with relevant institutions;*

*e. **external relations** – advice and assistance with development and implementation of strategic communication and information sharing with all electoral stakeholders (media, civil society/domestic observers, political parties, government) including advice and assistance with further development of the IPCC, strategic cooperation, and information sharing, as well as communication strategy with the field offices. The UN should not provide capacity development support to political parties which can be undertaken by non-UN electoral assistance providers;*

*f. **civic and voter education** – advice and assistance with development and implementation of programs that will aim to target the electoral process as a whole, including women, youth, disabled, and all others in order to enhance their meaningful participation in the process and promote peaceful and accepted results;*

*g. **advice and assistance to the Gender Unit;***

*h. **advice and assistance to ICT infrastructure** and coordination with the field offices;*

*i. advice and assistance with establishment of national election **security coordination mechanism**, including with sensitization workshops for security, and field coordination;*

*j. **advice and assistance with budget planning;** consideration should be also given to advise and assist NEC in adopting cost-saving measures by putting in place effective coordination mechanisms with other national stakeholders.*

2. Support for the enhanced participation of women and other disadvantaged groups including youth – advocacy, support and technical advice for enhanced participation of women and all disadvantaged groups throughout all phases of the electoral process, including civic and voter

education, mainstreaming gender in the electoral process, analysis of election related gender-disaggregated data.

5. *Coordination: The UN jointly with the NEC is well positioned to play a leadership role in coordinating all electoral assistance providers and other interested parties on electoral matters. Facilitating information sharing, prevention of duplication of efforts and ensuring coherence of any international electoral advice to the NEC of Liberia will be critical as well as development of common or coordinated messaging.*
6. *Careful mapping of partnership landscape with clear division of labour based on comparative advantages and mandates and close coordination would be essential before finalization of the initial UNDP project document. The UN's electoral assistance project should ensure that it does not needlessly duplicate efforts of other electoral assistance providers. UN support for a comprehensive lesson learnt exercise following elections should also be included.*
7. *Post-elections support:*

a. *Provide advice and assistance to the NEC in consolidating its institutional capacity;*
b. *Provide advice and assistance to the NEC Commissioners in expanding sub-regional information sharing and exchange of experiences with their peers.*

8. *To National Authorities:*

a. *Continue dialogue with a view to creating a political, social, and security environment that is conducive for holding inclusive, peaceful, credible and accepted elections and referendums (Government, House of Representatives, Senate, political parties, security forces, civil society organizations, media, the NEC);*
b. *Timely adoption of electoral and constitutional reforms following an inclusive and broadly consulted process, to ensure harmonization with operational planning for future elections and referendums by the NEC (NEC, Legislature, Governance Commission, political parties/IPCC, civil society organizations/domestic observers);*
c. *Allocation and timely release of required funding for elections and referendums as per the operational timelines established by the NEC (Government, Ministry of Finance)*
d. *Consider measures for improvements of the voters' roll in transparent and stakeholder-sensitive manner (NEC);*
e. *Consider proactive civic and voter education to sensitize all key stakeholders in all aspects of the electoral processes to maximize informed and effective participation (Government, NEC, Governance Commission, civil society organizations, political parties, media).*