

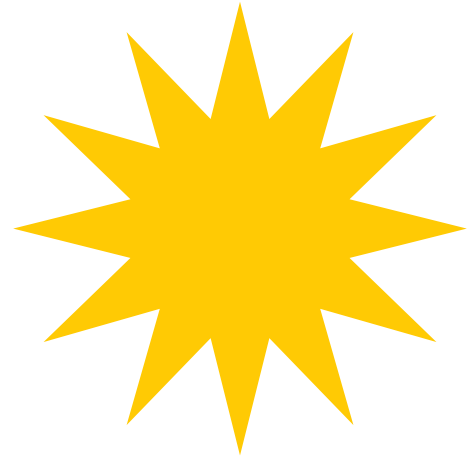
UNDP Nauru Accountable and Inclusive Governance (NAIG) Project

2022 Annual Report



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere





Annual Report 2022

PROJECT TITLE:

Nauru Accountable and Inclusive Governance (NAIG) Project

Start Date: 5 May 2021 End Date: 31 December 2024

PROJECT NUMBER:

00121714

Applicable Output(s) from the SRPD (2018-2022)

United Nations Pacific Strategy Outcome 5:

By 2022, people and communities in the Pacific will contribute to and benefit from inclusive, informed, and transparent decision-making processes, accountable and responsive institutions, and improved access to justice

Strategic Plan Outcome 2:

Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democracy and governance.

Implementing Partners:

The Parliament of Nauru Nauru Electoral Commission



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Summary

The Nauru Accountable and Inclusive Governance (NAIG) Project was officially launched in July 2021, providing support to the National Election Commission's (NEC) and the Nauru Parliament. The focus of in 2022 was on the election of the 24th National Parliament in Nauru. The Project's involvement in the election included a wide range of activities, including outreach, candidate management, operational planning and execution, training, legal support, and results management. The election took place smoothly and without any major incidents. One petition focusing on other candidates was lodged but subsequently dismissed.

NAIG's parliament component was able to leverage the goodwill and trust generated through ongoing UNDP regional parliamentary development projects, including the Pacific Parliamentary Effectiveness Initiative (PPEI) funded by the New Zealand Government, the Strengthening Legislatures in the Pacific (SLIP) Project funded by the Government of Japan and the Fiji Parliament Support Project (II) which was jointly funded by New Zealand, Australia, and Japan.

NAIG is anchored in the work around institutional building and capacity building of Members and the Office of Parliamentary Services (or the Secretariat). After achieving autonomy in 2021, NAIG continued to provide vital assistance to the Parliament as it implemented the Parliamentary Service Act 2020,¹ with the intention to improve their three core functions (legislation, oversight and representation) by becoming more effective, efficient, inclusive and transparent.

Although the project team and parliament were able to roll out key activities anchored in the project document that is aimed at addressing the development challenges of the institution, preparations for elections in the second half of the year and its related activities meant the rate of implementation of activities actually slowed in the second half of the year. Similarly, the MPs Induction planned for end of November had to be postponed.

Nevertheless, the project team has discussed with the Clerk ways to accelerate implementation and focus on key activities in 2023. Especially building the capacities of Members of Parliament, the Committee system, developing the professional skills of parliamentary staff, supporting parliaments to improve their procedures and practices, and strengthening the budget approval and oversight process.

Despite the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, NAIG was able to adapt and incorporate mitigation measures into the election planning process by promoting close cooperation with the Covid Taskforce and the Ministry of Health. The pandemic reached Nauru three months before polling, which allowed for the Project's supported measures to be deployed in a timely manner after the initial lockdown.

¹ *An Act to establish the Office of Parliamentary Services, to provide support services to the Parliament of Nauru, to provide for the autonomous administration and funding requirements for Parliamentary purposes and for related purposes.*

Part 1: Developments & Activities During the Reporting Period

COVID-19

There was an outbreak of COVID-19 in Nauru approximately 3 months before the elections took place. The community recovered quickly and by election time, no active cases were reported.

Effect on Parliament Component:

Even with the outbreak of COVID-19, the project team managed to bring in a staff member from Fiji who was present in Nauru for six months to ensure that the project activities could be implemented effectively. Despite facing challenges of delayed implementation and limited travel, the Project provided an opportunity to connect regional parliaments through Zoom to exchange experiences and learn from each other. The parliament staff appreciated the opportunity and were keen to continue capacity building virtually.

Effect on Election Component:

The Project team worked to ensure that the Ministry of Health and the Covid Task Force were brought in to assist with risk management and to facilitate safe polling. Difficulties with flights cancellations and long quarantine affected the frequency of visits, however, restrictions eased just prior to the election and the Project team was able to bring four advisors into the country to support election operations.

National Election Called for 24 September

The Writ was issued immediately after the dissolution of Parliament on 26 August 2022, which called for an election to be held on 24 September- 4 weeks after the end of the Parliamentary term.

Effect on Parliament Component:

The Parliament component was not significantly impacted, however the team strategized on how to continue with implementation given the limited capacity on the ground. The Project continues to focus on building the institutional capacity of its Parliament staff to deliver on the mandate of the Legislature.

Effect on Election Component:

While this was expected, the Project had hoped for six weeks from the issuing of the writ to the election, but only four weeks were provided. This reduced time period compressed the outreach campaign, however, the Project team worked to maximise its effectiveness.

Changes to the Electoral Act 2016 and Regulations

In the last week of August 2022, Cabinet introduced structural changes to the voting system. These included:

- Allowing early voters and home-bound (mobile) voters to act as proxy for a person who would not be in Nauru on Polling Day. Previously, proxy voters had to vote on Polling Day.
- Consideration was also given to voters who were under compulsory quarantine due to COVID-19 on polling day. These voters were deemed to be "overseas" if they were unable

to attend the polling place on polling day but could apply for an Emergency Proxy Vote before 1 pm on polling day.

These changes added complexities and timing challenges to the electoral process, particularly concerning processing proxy applications, which have a long lead time (usually three days), the early voting process (usually actioned on the spot), and the mobile voting process, which concerns voters that cannot come to the NEC to sign the required consent form for proxy voters.

Apart from operational difficulties, concerns were raised on the increasing use of proxy voting, which was contrary to the recommendations of election observers who consistently suggested the reduction in the use of proxy voting since it is not secret, private, or guaranteed to deliver the franchise to the absentee voter.

The allowance of an Early Voter to cast proxy votes for up to four other overseas voters meant that what was once a very direct process cumulating to action on polling day, now needed to be managed in continual loops of application, voting, and marking back. This needed to occur so that there was no confusion on polling day as to whether a proxy vote had been cast before the election or still needed to be cast on polling day.

The Project had a relatively short timeframe to design several program changes to the voter roll application to manage these changes.

Output 1: National Electoral Commission Processes and Capacities Strengthened

The following are key areas of support that were provided to the NEC during the reporting period:

2022 Parliamentary Election Support

The writ to hold elections was issued for 24 September 2022. The NAIG Project supported the NEC in all technical aspects of the election process, from operational planning to implementation. During the polling and counting period, four advisors were brought in-person to Nauru for the election to continue the work they had been doing remotely.



The NAIG Project team with the NEC

Back Row: (I to R) NEC: Sylvanna, Christine, Myanitti, Corinne, Twylite, Cronisa, Everest, Kaz

Front Row: (L to R) NAIG: George (legal and dispute resolution advisor), Asenaca (election trainer), Daniel (election advisor), Yvonne (outreach and curriculum advisor).

The project continued to be supported remotely by Edib Agagjyshi who provided graphic design expertise and Judy Birkenhead, who is a voter registration advisor and led programming changes to the database.

These team members are intended to be retained for the duration of the Project to maximise the ability to leverage close relationships with the NEC and other stakeholders.



NAIG Project team brainstorming session



Election Operation Support

Operational Planning

The project team worked with the NEC to develop an operational timeline and conduct periodic reviews to ensure that tasks were completed within time. Task deadlines were adjusted as needed. These simple tools allow for good tracking of the operation. Future work will include revising the operational plan to allow for more activities to occur as far ahead as possible including outreach planning to maximise ability to cope with changes and build redundancy and contingency planning into the electoral operations. An operational planning matrix example is as shown:

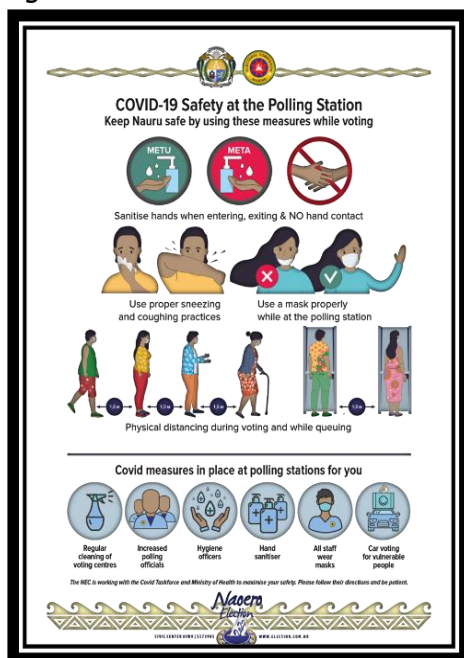
2022 Election Operational Timeline			27 Aug 22	: Writ Issued		-10	
		Sat	24 Sep 22	: Election Date		Days to electio	
Operation	Sub Op	Event	Day	From	Days	To	Days Before Election
Counting	Counting	Resultsheet templates finalised	Mon	28 Mar 22	1		180
Operations	Operations	Operational plan finalised	Mon	28 Mar 22	1		180
Outreach	Outreach	Finalise public outreach strategy & messages	Mon	28 Mar 22	1		180
Procurement	Ballots	Photocopier secured (& backup ready)	Mon	28 Mar 22	1		180
Procurement	Polling materials	Voting Screens, Ink and Tents checked and ordered	Mon	28 Mar 22	1		180
Procurement	Polling materials	Polling material specified	Mon	28 Mar 22	1		180
Operations	Covid	Covid plan in place with MoH & Covid TF	Wed	27 Apr 22	1		150
Procurement	Polling materials	Polling material ordered	Wed	27 Apr 22	1		150
Outreach	Outreach	Finalise public information/voter education plans and calendar	Tues	17 May 22	1		130
Outreach	Facebook Updates	weekly facebook posts	Fri	27 May 22	120	23 Sep 22	1
Budget	Budget	Supplementary Election budget submitted (4 months prior)	Fri	27 May 22	1		120
Counting	Counting	Data Entry System development completed (4 months prior)	Fri	27 May 22	1		120
Legal	Legal	Legal revisions and regulations in place (by 2020)	Fri	27 May 22	1		120
Operations	Covid	Covid Materials Procurement	Fri	27 May 22	1		120
Outreach	Outreach	Finalise outreach materials	Fri	27 May 22	1		120
Polling	Forms, Manuals	Polling & counting manual, candidate handbook, forms etc. finalised	Thur	16 Jun 22	1		100
Polling	Ballots	Ballot Templates Ready	Sun	26 Jun 22	1		90
Polling	Early Voting	Early Voting location, Security & layout plan finalised (CCTV)	Sun	26 Jun 22	1		90
Operations	Covid	Covid planning update with MoH & Covid TF	Thur	21 Jul 22	1		65
Counting	Counting	Confirm location for count and access (PoCs) (2 months prior)	Tues	26 Jul 22	1		60
Observers	Observers	Observer Accreditation	Tues	26 Jul 22	54	17 Sep 22	60
Polling	Polling Centers	Polling centers location, permission, PoCs, and access confirmed	Tues	26 Jul 22	1		60
Polling	Early Voting	Compile location of each voter from 2019 (mapping)	Tues	26 Jul 22	1		60
Training	Staff	Finalise polling and counting training plans/program	Tues	26 Jul 22	1		60
Voter Roll	Proxy	Appoint/update witness list overseas	Tues	26 Jul 22	1	Tues	60
Voter Roll	Mobile	Establish focal point for institutions (mobile voting) - provide info	Tues	26 Jul 22	1		60
Candidates	Ballot Draw	Confirm ballot lottery location (6 weeks before) (Civic Center)	Sat	13 Aug 22	1		42
Counting	Counting	Count center location & layout plan finalised (1 month prior)	Thur	25 Aug 22	1		30
Procurement	Logistics	Contract vehicle rentals - Driver Hire	Thur	25 Aug 22	1		30
Legal	Legal	Writ issued (not less than 4 weeks before election)	Sat	27 Aug 22	1		28
Polling	Police	Meeting/training with Police for briefing of duties & ops plan	Sat	27 Aug 22	1		28
Polling	Staff	Advertisement for polling/counting staff (SMS Website)	Sat	27 Aug 22	7	Fri 2 Sep 22	22
Polling	Polling materials	Packing/secure storage of contingency materials	Tues	30 Aug 22	1		25
Polling	Staff	Polling staff identified and hired	Thur	1 Sep 22	1		23
Legal	Legal	Publish voter roll in Gazette (5 days after writ issued)	Thur	1 Sep 22	1		23
Procurement	Logistics	Count staff food tender launched	Fri	2 Sep 22	1		22
Procurement	Logistics	Polling staff food tender launched	Fri	2 Sep 22	1		22
Outreach	Outreach	Candidate Information Workshop	Sat	3 Sep 22	1		21
Voter Roll	Legal	Close of voter roll (5:00pm 21 days before election) [Gazette]	Sat	3 Sep 22	1		21
Legal	Legal	Proxy applications open	Sat	3 Sep 22	1		21
Voter Roll	Mobile	Update voter roll to list mobile voters	Sat	3 Sep 22	21	23 Sep 22	21
Voter Roll	Remote Witnessing	Remote Witnessing	Sat	3 Sep 22	21	23 Sep 22	21
Outreach	Door Knock	Door to Door Campaign (Writ +1 week - Roll Check)	Sun	4 Sep 22	7	Sat 10 Sep 22	14
Candidates	Ballot Draw	Prepare materials and poster templates for Ballot lottery (1 week)	Sun	4 Sep 22	1		20
Voter Roll	Voter Roll	sale of the roll	Sun	4 Sep 22	1		20
Candidates	Legal	Candidate nominations (1 week) (close 5:00pm E-day - 14)	Sun	4 Sep 22	7	Sat 10 Sep 22	14
Procurement	Polling materials	Polling material delivered on island	Fri	9 Sep 22	1		15
Legal	Legal	All mobile polling stations published (on nomination day) [Gazette]	Sat	10 Sep 22	1		14
Polling	Logistics	Finalise movement plans/roster with police (ballot draw, EV, P)	Sat	10 Sep 22	1		14
Training	Staff	Polling Staff Training/Contracting - Group 1 (30 pax)	Tues	13 Sep 22	1		11
Candidates	Legal	Candidate list, P. locations & date published (after withdrawal period)	Tues	13 Sep 22	1		11
Candidates	Legal	Last withdrawal date for candidates (72 hrs after application)	Tues	13 Sep 22	1		11



COVID-19 Management

Initially, the project team worked with the NEC to create a series of implications for the election if COVID-19 were to remain off-island or if it were to outbreak 3 months or 2 weeks before the election. Fortunately, the outbreak occurred 3 months before the election, allowing enough time to prepare.

The project team promoted relationships with the Ministry of Health and the Covid Task Force (CTF) and ensured that they were able to share the risks and risk management with the proper ministries. The project team then worked with the NEC to produce a list of discrete activities and propose appropriate mitigation measures for each. This cumulated in an Election Covid Management Plan for endorsement by the Ministry of Health. The Project team also supported outreach material and incorporated Covid safety measures into all voting information.



Candidate Management and Ballots

The project team supported the NEC with operational and process planning for the candidate nomination events including the ballot draw. This planning included support to the NEC to hold candidate meetings – a general one for all candidates on 22 September 2022, and one specifically for women on 20 September 2022.



General candidate information session



The Project team also worked to create ballot and candidate poster templates that can be used to create high-quality ballots quickly and without graphic design support.

The revised templates include accurate Nauruan language instructions on the ballot:


Deidet Ikiyyi Ea
Amen Kiyiy
 Wo nim wemaiy am kiyiy
 ian murane ballot-paper
 eow ean am erre me
 number eiy
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 me 18
 ian mungana square
 egadauw irurun mungana
 egen amebuna *candidates*
 bwe enim omeata tekeiy
 am teng ote ura.

Directions to Voters
 Mark your vote
 on this ballot-paper
 by placing the numbers
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18
 in the squares respectively
 opposite to the names
 of the *Candidates* so as to
 indicate the order of your
 preference for them.

Ballots and posters from 2022

Training

The Project lead trainer developed the training plan and materials with the NEC and led training for more than 280 applicants who were selected to undergo election official training for the 2022 parliamentary election. 159 participants were trained as polling officials while 124 were trained as counting officials.

The breakdown was as follows:

Day/Dates	Session	Participants
Polling Officials Training		
Mon, 12 Sept	Briefing - 10.00am	All election officials
Tues, 13 Sept	Session 1 - Poll	32
Wed, 14 Sept	Session 2- Poll	36
Thurs, 15 Sept	Session 3 - Poll	31
Fri, 16 Sept	Early/Mobile Team	30
Sat, 17 Sept	Session 4 - Poll	30
Count Officials Training		
Mon, 19 Sept	Prep for count training	0
Tues 20 Sept	Session 1 - Count	36
Wed, 21 Sept	Session 2 - Count	28
Thurs, 22 Sept	Session 3 - Count	36
Fri, 23 Sept	Session 4- Count	24

The training was conducted in a series of face-to-face, one-day programs where participants were taken through polling procedures, counting procedures, and mock exercises to enable them to understand their key roles and responsibilities during elections.



UNDP Trainer Asenaca leading a session

The training was well received by participants. Many highlighted in their evaluations that they understood their distinct roles, the importance of having a code of conduct, and understood the Nauru election process. The training broadened their knowledge and understanding of different election concepts. Their participation during the mock polling and counting also provided a platform to share ideas, experiences, and thoughts, and learn from one another.

Materials

The Project built on a previous supply of quality ballot boxes and seals in 2019 to procure quality ink and voting screens to maximise perceptions of integrity and unify the election brand with high-quality, fit-for-purpose voting equipment.

The ink specifications were set at 20% silver nitrate and 40% alcohol. These specifications were important to reassure voters during the Covid outbreak given they would be inserting their fingers into a pot shared with up to six hundred other voters. The hand sanitisers contained upwards of 60% alcohol, and this is a much stronger product with extreme cytotoxicity.

The voting screens were very robust and are able to be reused for several election cycles. Their storage is being designed to ensure maximum protection with reusability and sustainability in mind.



High quality ink and voting screens used in 2022

Results Management & Count

The project team revised and updated the 2019 results management template and developed a data entry system to provide a check on the count for the Ubenide constituency (as it was the largest and therefore the most difficult to count). The



project team also provided technical support for the entire duration of the 36-hour count.

UNDP Trainer Asenaca assisting count staff

Manuals Procedures and Forms

The Project supported the NEC with the revision of all key manuals used in the election as well as the creation of a new manual for voters – the “voting guide.” The manuals were redesigned with an easy reading style for maximum usability and to cater for low literacy.

Candidate Guide This guide is to help candidates understand the Electoral Act and its amendments. It was delivered during the series of candidate meetings (attended by fifty-six candidates) and during the candidate nomination process to candidates who had not received one earlier.

Voting Guide This guide is for voters to help them understand the election and prepare as voters. It was distributed to every household in Nauru during the door-knocking program.

Polling Manual This manual contains all information required to conduct Polling. A version was also produced for early voting.

Election Guide This guide is for observers and other stakeholders who need background on the election process and Nauru’s system of democracy.

Counting Manual This manual was provided to counters during training. It has an overview of how the count is to be conducted and lists each step.

These manuals are the backbone of NEC institutional memory and knowledge. They allow incoming staff members to learn each process and capture key points that may not be obvious. The counting manual proved to be critical and several elements were reviewed for process improvements during the actual count– showing the living nature of these documents.

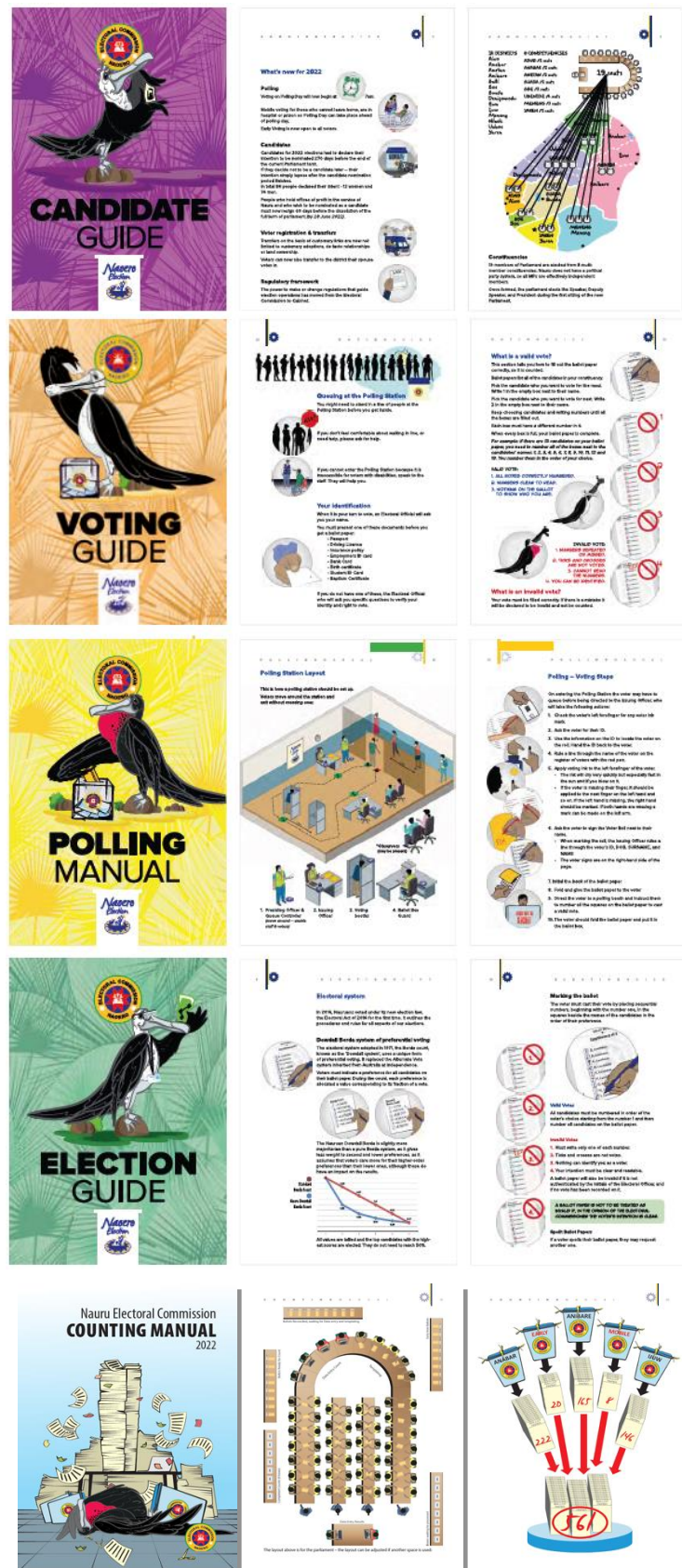


Figure 1: Samples of manual layouts

Voter Registry Support

Judy Birkenhead, a voter registration advisor, was retained as a consultant to provide the following support to the NEC:

1. Providing Help Desk Support for the VR Database, including security management and adjusting the database as required to support legal changes.
2. Performing bi-monthly quality checks on the voter roll for the duration of the contract.
3. Performing quality checks on the voter roll before it is printed for voting.
4. Resetting the roll database after the election in readiness for the next election.
5. Preparing a Final Report with recommendations for progressing the management of the VR Database.

This work was done remotely and involved the following:

1. Changes To the Database

To help manage revisions to the process in the cabinet changes, two new options were added to the Proxy Application Screen to indicate if the proxy vote had been cast by an Early or Mobile voter, or if the proxy had been cast on the day as an Emergency Proxy.

These two flags were not updated until the proxy vote had been cast so as not to exclude the proxy from being cast on polling day.

Once these flags were activated, a red line reflected that the vote had been cast on the printed rolls whether they were cast early, through mobile, or on Polling Day.

In this example of the Polling Day roll, it is easily seen that 2353 asked 2348 to vote for them and that both votes have been issued.

2348	8/04/1974	CLODUMAR	KEVIN STASZEK	2353	Early Vote
2353	11/04/1946	CLODUMAR	MIROSLAWA	Proxy given to 2348	Early Proxy

The Mobile Voting Roll was altered to show voters who should cast a proxy vote as well.

4670	9/10/1977	FRITZ	BENNA EIYONI	Aiwo	11535
<i>Proxy 11535</i>	<i>DANIEL</i>	<i>DJ BOBISH ROY</i>	<i>Aiwo</i>		<i>4670</i>

The Proxy Voter list was altered to show proxy votes that had been issued progressively. This list was printed each day and given to the Early Voting team and would accumulate the red-coloured proxy marks each day.

2353 Clodumar	Miroslawa	2348 Clodumar	Kevin Staszek
2265 Deiva	Kelaki	4781 Gadabu	Issuing Charles

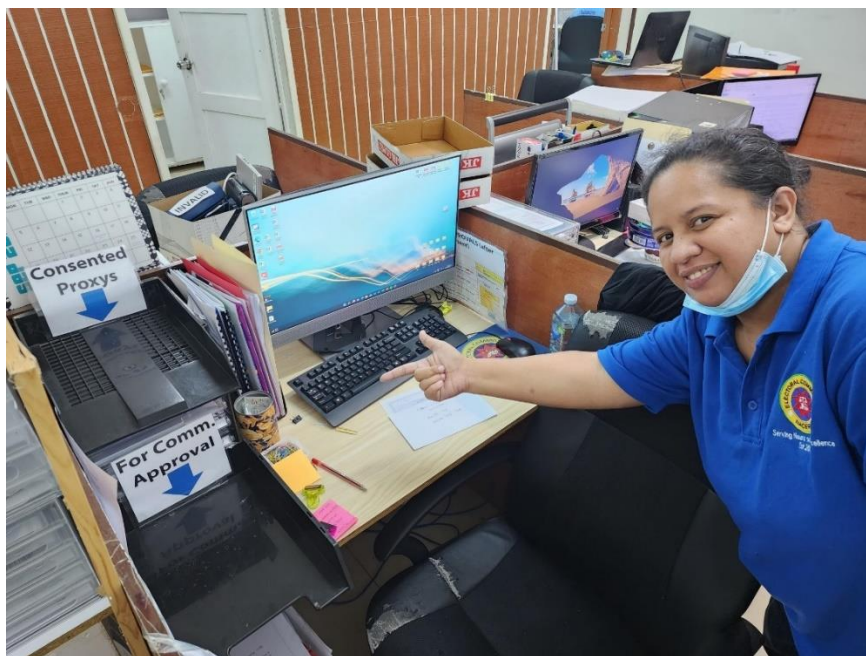
2. Daily Updates

Each night, the Early and Mobile Voters who had cast a vote for a proxy were marked in the system by going to the Proxy Screen and checking the “Early or Mobile Proxy” check box. Once this was done, the red lines would appear on the reports the following day and on Polling Day.

Early voters also needed to be marked in the system so that they would appear as “Early Voters” on the list on Polling Day and not have another ballot issued. Mobile Voters were processed at the time of application approval and they too would appear on the polling day roll as “Mobile Voters.” To complete this task, an NEC team of four staff worked solidly on entering this data daily with good control steps with support from the project team.

3. Help Desk Support

One recommendation from the 2021 National Survey was to use remote access software to allow the consultant to view and operate the NEC desktop when they required support. This initiative increased confidence in remote support. The consultant was able to deliver training on how to use the database at various times during the election. Support was ongoing and regularly provisioned to build trust, so that questions were asked freely.



Twylite showing empty trays demonstrating successful processing of all 900+ proxy applications

4. Quality Checks

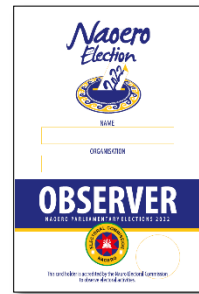
Quality Checks were conducted with increasing frequency, with daily checks during election week. These checks were important to catch errors and rectify problems. In election week, checks revealed only minor data entry issues – such as a voter being marked as having voted early and as a mobile voter. These issues were identified and returned to the office for investigation. The NEC staff were very capable, caring, and delivered a fully accurate roll for the election.

Observation Support

The project team supported the accreditation of the observers and assisted with logistical support as required. This support included accommodation, vehicle hire, and visa assistance. The team also coordinated a briefing for the observers with the NEC.

Legal Support

The Project provisioned legal support to NEC as it prepared for the 2022 parliamentary elections.



This support included submission of a legal reform document to cabinet by the NEC. While small changes were incorporated into the Electoral Act, most structural elements were not included. The Project team will continue to advise on reforms post elections.

Throughout the election preparations, the electoral commissioners sought and received prompt legal advice on issues relating to voter enrolment, transfer, use of proxy and interpretation of the recent amendments to the Electoral Act. For instance, the implications of the change in the definition of Nauruan custom or customary links and affiliation as the basis for registration or transfer were discussed with and explained to the electoral commissioners, which enabled them to act on applications for transfer of registration in a timely and decisive manner.

Additionally, the timely provision of legal support during early voting, polling day, counting and post-election proved crucial in ensuring the integrity of the electoral process and timely resolution of potential election-related disputes. Following the advice of the project team, the Electoral Commission made it clear that campaigning within two hundred meters of the early voting polling station is not allowed.

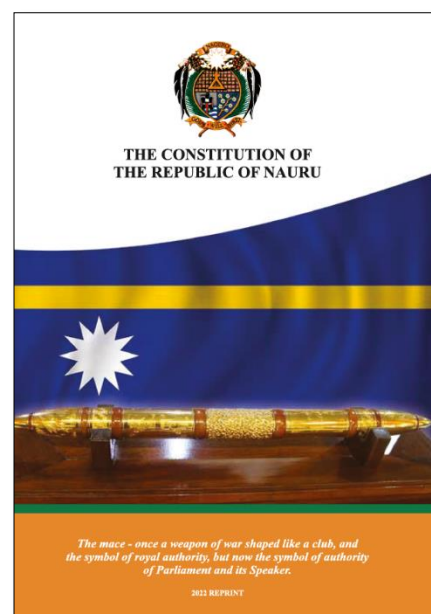
Other questions that arose during early voting and polling included issues in connection with the withdrawal of the appointment of a proxy voter during early voting and the validity of a proxy form witnessed by a Police Commissioner in Australia. Answers to these questions were relayed immediately to the affected voters to ensure the integrity of the proxy process.

Finally, the Electoral Commission was able to authoritatively explain the rule on requests for a recount following the conclusion of counting and declaration of results. This rule resulted in the denial of a losing candidate's request for a recount since it was filed more than 24 hours after the public declaration of the winning candidate.

The NAIG team was also on hand to provide support for any petitions that may be filed in the court of disputed returns. To date, none have been filed.

To ensure sustainability, each decision has been recorded and will be published internally to ensure consistency of approach in the future.

The project team also worked with the Ministry of Justice to update the online version of the Electoral Act 2016 with all amendments and regulations.



In partnership with the Ministry of Justice, the Project supported the printing of 2500 copies of the Nauruan constitution after a thorough review process which brought the constitution up to date and removed typographical errors that had previously been printed. This version is now seen as completely accurate. Every household in Nauru now has a copy in their house.

2023 Election Lessons Learned Process

The Election Review and Planning Workshop was a 4-day event that took place from November 14th to 17th, 2022. The workshop's aim was to review the 2022 election operations and develop recommendations for improving the process. The recommendations were submitted to Parliament in the NEC's Report. The agenda was divided into three days, each with a different focus:

Day 1: Review of the 2022 election operation, focused on polling, counting, data entry systems, proxies, transfers, and manuals. The day ended with a recap of the 2022 election outreach program, looking at ways of better reaching/supporting marginalised groups including women, youth, disabled, and the NEC Reputation - external relations.

Day 2: Review of the electoral legal framework focused on transfers, proxies, polling time, early voting, and misc. The day ended with the development of NEC activities plan for 2023/4 (Operations)

Day 3: Developing NEC activities plan for 2023/4 (Outreach) focused on what messages are needed, how to deliver them, events by calendar for special days, and continued curriculum development. The day ended with agreement on NAIG workplan, wrap up and presentation of findings.

The three commissioners, four senior NEC office staff and UNDP advisors attended.



NEC Lessons Learned Workshop

Output 2: National Parliament Capacities' to Ensure Inclusive, Accountable Governance Strengthened

NAIG provided technical support to the Nauru Parliament in the first three quarters of 2022 as part of the implementation of the Parliamentary Service Act (PSA) 2020. This component of the Project was designed to strengthen the much-needed capacity of the Office of Parliamentary Services (OPS) and Members of Parliament to effectively fulfill their constitutional mandate of law making, oversight and representation.

Activity 2.1: Support Legal and/or Operational Efforts to Entrench Parliamentary Autonomy

The Project provided technical advisory support to the recruitment of the Parliamentary Legal Counsel for Nauru, including independent advice to the Clerk and the Assistant Deputy Clerk on the Counsel's final contract. Once the Counsel commenced her role in mid-April, NAIG assisted with virtual HR training and review sessions with the Human Resources Specialist who was hired as part of the Transition Team supporting the Parliament in the roll-out of the PSA 2020. The Counsel also benefited from high-level technical advice on the constitutional aspects of timelines for the resignation of the Deputy Clerk who was leaving the OPS to contest in the 2022 elections.

Activity 2.2: Support Parliamentary Institutional Strengthening

Boosting the Nauru Parliament ICT Capacity

While it is interesting to note that most Parliaments and MPs, especially in the developing world, including the Pacific, have yet to fully capitalize on the use of ICTs to empower their role at both the national and global levels, we cannot discount the fact that especially after the COVID 19 pandemic, there is an emergence of a network society where access to information and knowledge-sharing are taking centre stage. More than ever, Pacific parliaments now understand the importance of ICT in a global village.

² http://ronlaw.gov.nr/nauru_lpms/index.php/act/view/1523

At the request of the Nauru Parliament, UNDP completed the information and communication technologies (ICT) needs assessment in 2021 that informed the ICT infrastructure upgrade in 2022. An investment of \$210,000USD was allocated for the parliament and the project should be completed in the first quarter of 2023.

NAIG investments in ICT would be timely and effective in enabling parliament's strategy and efforts to strengthen parliamentary openness, accessibility, and effectiveness in the future. The ICT development would enable the OPS and Members to undertake their constitutional roles of oversight, law-making, and representation - better quality of video live streaming of its sessions, updated Hansard equipment that would allow staff to prepare reports in a timely and accurate manner, and an upgraded parliament conference room that would allow the Speaker to better host meetings and virtual engagements with partners and external stakeholders.

NAIG convened several discussions with the Government ICT Unit on the development of the Parliament website, which should be operational in the second quarter of 2023. The website would serve to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of parliament's activities, especially Members' abilities to better connect with their electorate.

The handover of the ICT equipment took place on November 11th, was attended by the Australian and New Zealand High Commissioners and the UNDP Resident Representative. The UNDP Resident Representative emphasized that this was not just about handing over equipment, but about giving the members of parliament and staff proper access to the latest technology for virtual participation in conferences and meetings and delivering essential services to the people of Nauru.

The Nauru Parliament expressed their gratitude for the technical and logistical support provided by the project and noted that they now have the capability to participate in virtual meetings and trainings for both staff and Members of Parliament. A tweet from the UNDP Pacific Office on the day of the ceremony provided an overview of the handover agenda:



Testing of the new video conferencing equipment



Technicians and Nauru Parliament ICT staff discussing the installation of the video conferencing equipment



Enhancing Staff Capacity and Development

As a contribution to staff capacity building, the NAIG team organized several learning and exchange opportunities for the Nauru Parliament staff in the first two quarters of 2022 as part of the implementation of the Parliamentary Service Act 2020.

In April and May, OPS staff participated in two regional peer-to-peer trainings organized for the Human Resources (HR) and Hansard staff. The OPS HR Manager benefited from an information learning session with colleagues from parliaments in Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands and New South Wales. Topics covered in the session included handling trade disputes and staff grievances, dealing with difficult staff and Members of Parliament, terms and conditions of work for staff including salary structures, benefits and training and development of staff.

Similarly, six (6) Hansard staff participated in a regional peer-to-peer exchange for the parliaments of Nauru, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Fiji, New South Wales and Queensland. The topics they focussed on included the mandate and scope of Hansard Reporting teams, managing reporting on language(s) used in the Chamber or in Committee meetings, and challenges faced by Hansard teams and approaches used to resolve them. Feedback from both learning sessions was overwhelmingly positive, especially regarding the sharing of good working practices between the groups. The staff of both the HR and Hansard teams continue to use these networks for learning and exchange of information for work purposes.

In response to a request from the Nauru Parliament, the project team also supported the first-ever training attachments for the newly appointed Assets Officer and the Procurement Officer at the Fiji Parliament. The objectives of the attachments were to develop the skills and knowledge of the staff in a way that helps them perform their jobs better. The Nauru staff were paired with their counterparts in the Fijian Parliament in the course of the

practical training attachment. This opportunity for the visitors let them learn about the workings of the host parliament. They were able to review processes, systems, templates and learn how the assets and procurement work was being undertaken in a parliament that shared both similarities and glaring differences mostly in terms of staff capacity, structure and systems.

Utilizing the experiences and networks of the UNDP Pacific Office regional parliament Project, including "South-South learning", the NAIG team sought the assistance of a senior Finance staff member of the Fiji Parliament, who guided parliament on the preparation of their first ever budget submission as an autonomous institution. This support was critical to meeting a requirement of the PSA 2020 and was provided both remotely and on-site. The presence of the Fiji officer in Nauru proved useful and practical not only for staff to learn how a budget is prepared in advance of the submission deadline but also for the host to understand the principles and methods of working in support of the Clerk of Parliament.

Staff who participated in the different trainings provided constructive and optimistic feedback. From boosting their job satisfaction to filling in the skills and knowledge needed to perform higher-level tasks, the staff have said that the training opportunities allowed them to be more reflective and driven towards their professional goals.

Development of the Parliament Strategic Plan

With support from NAIG, Nauru Parliament will be finalizing its draft strategic plan by the end of quarter one 2023, laying out concrete plans for institutional development of the Assembly.

In response to a request from the Parliament, NAIG has supported the Nauru in the development of its Strategic Plan for period 2023 – 2026. The development of this Plan is a demonstration of the commitment of Parliament to pursuing best management practices.

UNDP's technical support is through the provision of an expert who, together with the leadership of the parliament, will hold a series of bilateral and plenary consultations on the Strategic Plan with MPs and staff in early 2023 to finalize the draft.

Review of Parliament Standing Orders

NAIG is providing extensive technical support to the review of the Nauru Parliament Standing Orders (SO), which would help simplify and clarify many parliamentary procedures. This will be the first time the Nauru Parliament will conduct a review of its Standing Orders. The Standing Order technical adviser has conducted consultations with the parliament leadership and staff, and feedback from staff has been positive, especially the opportunity to be consulted and provide reflections on the workings of the Parliament institution that would feed into an important document like the SO. The review process was launched in August and is ongoing, with the second round of consultations with key stakeholders including the Speaker and MPs now scheduled for November.

An initial review of key documentation such as the "Standing Orders", "Practice and Procedure Compendium" (also known as the "Green Book"), and the "Handbook for Members" was conducted, along with several in-depth discussions with key figures such as the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Legal Counsel, parliamentary staff, and selected members. Through this process, several major issues were identified that require an amendment to the Standing Orders:

- Diverging from the structure commonly found in Standing Orders modelled after the Australian system, which aligns with best practices for democratic parliaments.
- Outdated or antiquated language in the Standing Orders, using words and phrases that are no longer in use.
- Gendered language in the Standing Orders and Compendium, using words and phrases that assign gender-based attributes or show a preference for one sex.
- Outdated conventions for the conduct and dress code of Members during sittings and meetings, as outlined in the Practice and Procedure Compendium.
- Standing Orders and committee functions that are no longer deemed necessary, such as a Library Committee and Printing Committee.
- No mention of digital technologies as tools for facilitating remote work, remote sittings of parliament through audio or audio-visual links, and voting in the plenary chamber.
- Limited mention of the public's right to access parliamentary premises, visitors' right to observe sittings of parliament and committee meetings, and the public's right to access information.

The goal of these discussions was to facilitate the meetings of the Standing Order Committee and drive the review, as well as recommend any necessary changes to the Standing Orders. However, since the appointment of the members of the Parliamentary Committees, none of the committees were able to be inaugurated or hold their initial meetings. Due to many Members of Parliament leaving directly after the first Parliament meeting post-election, it has been difficult to establish a calendar for the Committee meetings and the Standing Order review.

Preparatory Work on the MP Induction Program

The objectives of the Induction and Staff training are to provide the Members of Parliament with knowledge and skills on legislative, oversight, and representative functions, as well as constitutional responsibilities. The staff training will enable parliament staff to improve their efficiency and collaboration across departments. NAIG is preparing for a Member of Parliament Induction and Staff Training was to take place in early quarter two of 2023. The inductions and training were to be held in December 2022 but the lack of in-country presence from most Members of Parliament resulted in the postponement.

To ensure that the events are successful, preparations and arrangements have been made and necessary equipment has been procured. The participants will be the Nauru Members of Parliament and staff. Experts from the Victoria Parliament, New Zealand Parliament, and Solomon Islands Parliament will also participate as resource persons, bringing a wealth of parliamentary experience and knowledge to the program.

Activity 2.3: Strengthen the Oversight Role of Parliament

Following the national elections conducted in September, NAIG has convened technical discussions with parliament on committee reforms and capacity building opportunities for committee members and selected staff. A priority of the project staff in 2023 is to develop and agree on key activities for committee members to launch the reform process.

Additionally, the following Parliamentary Committees and their members were announced by the OPS:

Parliamentary Committees

Standing Orders

Committee

Hon. Marcus Stephen M.P.
Speaker (Ex-officio)

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.
(Deputy Speaker)

H.E. Russ Kun (Leader of
Govt. Business)

Hon. Asterio Appi M.P.

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Privileges Committee

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Hon. Martin Hunt M.P.

Hon. Delvin Thoma M.P.

Hon. Jason Bingham Agir M.P.

Library Committee

Hon. Marcus Stephen M.P.,
Speaker (Ex-officio)

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.

Hon. Asterio Appi M.P.

Hon. Timothy Ika M.P.

Hon. Pyon Deiye M.P.

House Committee

Hon. Marcus Stephen M.P.,
Speaker (Ex-officio)

Hon. Martin Hunt M.P.

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Hon. Pyon Deiye M.P.

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.

Subsidiary Legislation

Committee

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Hon. Jesse Jeremiah M.P.

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.

Hon. Isabella Dageago M.P.

Hon. Jason Bingham Agir M.P.

Private Business

Committee

Hon. Marcus Stephen M.P.

Speaker (Ex-officio)

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.

Hon. Isabella Dageago M.P.

Public Accounts

Committee

Hon. Delvin Thoma M.P.

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.

Hon. Jesse Jeremiah M.P.

Hon. Asterio Appi M.P.

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Constitutional Review

Committee

Hon. Reagan Aliklik M.P.

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Hon. Pyon Deiye M.P.

Hon. Rennier Gadabu M.P.

Hon. Isabella Dageago M.P.

Hon. Delvin Thoma M.P.

Hon. Asterio Appi M.P.

Hon. Lionel Aingimea M.P.

Hon. Jesse Jeremiah M.P.

Deputy Chairmen of

Committees

Hon. Maverick Eoe M.P.

Hon. Reagan Aliklik M.P.

Activity 2.4: Support Parliamentary Education And Public Outreach

Preparations for the Youth Parliament

NAIG has provided extensive technical assistance in the organization of the National Youth Parliament (NYP). The event was scheduled to be held in July but was postponed due to COVID-19. To build staff confidence and skills for such events, an internal youth committee was set up by parliament to oversee both the technical and logistics components of the programme. The draft NYP programme should be finalized in this reporting period and be ready for the event, to be implemented in early 2023.

A training programme was developed for an intended period of 2.5 days. The training was planned to cover the roles and responsibilities of the Parliament, the Electoral process and the youth policies or strategies that the Government of Nauru has in place. This training will be solely for information purposes to prepare the young people for the actual debate in 2023. The Youth Parliament was based on the theme: "Let's make a mark for the young voices of Nauru" and "Ang nim wemai nongin aen ngain Naoero"



Former UNDP Resident Representative, Levan Boudze, with the Nauru Youth Parliament participants. To the far left is Revai Aalbaek, Effective Governance Leader

To facilitate the awareness process, different aspects were taken into consideration:

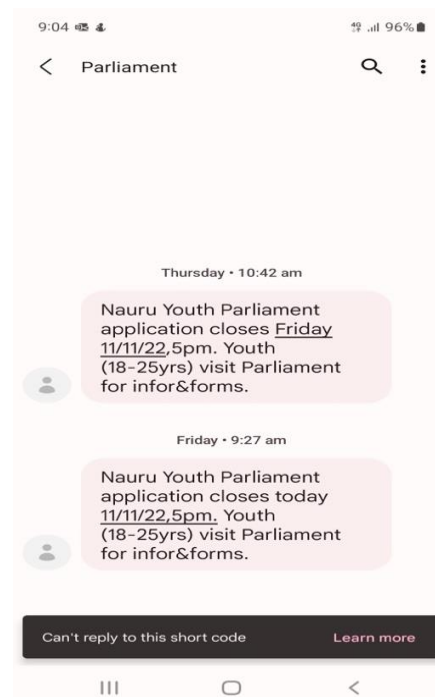
- Awareness through radio
- Awareness through Text Blast
- Awareness through showcases

The radio awareness was facilitated twice by the National Consultant with the local radio station, providing an overview of the purpose of the Youth parliament, as well as urge young people to apply to be part of the 19 youths who will be part of the training.

In partnership with Digicel, two sets of Text Blasts were also sent out to the public. This was aimed at urging young people between the ages of 18 – 25 to apply to be part of the training. Below were the texts sent out on Thursday 10th November and Friday 11th November:



Youth Parliament participants ready for the training



Participation at USP Open Day

For the first time ever, the Nauru Parliament took the opportunity to set up an information booth at the USP Open Day. Using newly printed parliament outreach materials, parliament staff shared key information about what the institution of parliament was all about. Citizens, including school children, were afforded the opportunity to learn more about the Parliament, its roles, the decision-making processes including how laws and policies are endorsed through the parliamentary procedures.

Students actively engaged with parliament staff and were full of questions about the role of Members, the role of staff and how they could engage with the parliament. Staff offered very positive and interesting feedback, sharing that it was the first time ever that they conducted a parliament outreach activity. Not only did they share important information with citizens, they also learnt the majority of Nauruans had no idea what parliament and parliamentary democracy was all about.



Assistant Deputy Clerk speaking to students during the Open Day



Manager HR explaining the work of parliament to students passing through the display booth

Output 3: The Engagement of Women and Girls in Politics & Public Life Strengthened

Support for Women's Candidacy

With the arrival of COVID-19 three months before the election and the resulting lockdown, – the Project's ability to promote candidate workshops before the process was limited. However, the Project team was able to work with the NEC and Women's Empowerment Nauru Association (WENA) to hold an in-person event for women who wished to become political candidates. After the 'declaration of intention' process, the Project targeted all potential female candidates for support.

The private round table discussion was held in Nauruan to create an intimate setting and to answer any election questions the candidates had. The Project team coordinated the attendance of the Australian High Commissioner. She led a discussion on elements of support that the women felt would be useful to maximise their ability to be candidates in a male-dominated election.

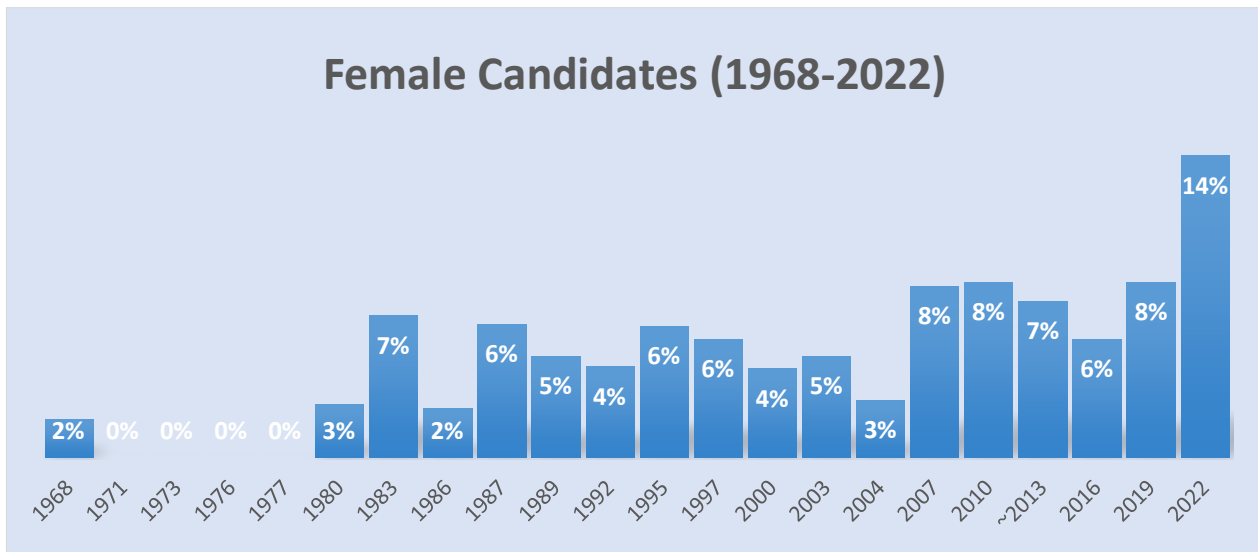


Participants in the meeting for female candidates

The feedback from the event was positive. A decision was taken to hold a post-election workshop as well with candidates to brainstorm areas of support that would empower them in future campaigns.

Declaration Of Interest			
Constituency	Female	Male	Total
Aiwo	2	8	10
Anabar	1	9	10
Anetan	0	8	8
Boe	0	6	6
Buada	2	11	13
Meneng	2	10	12
Ubenide	1	18	19
Yaren	4	4	8
Total	12	74	86
	14%	86%	

Candidate Nomination			
Constituency	Female	Male	Total
Aiwo	2	8	10
Anabar	1	8	9
Anetan	0	6	6
Boe	0	6	6
Buada	2	7	9
Meneng	1	10	11
Ubenide	1	17	18
Yaren	4	4	8
Total	11	66	77
	14%	86%	

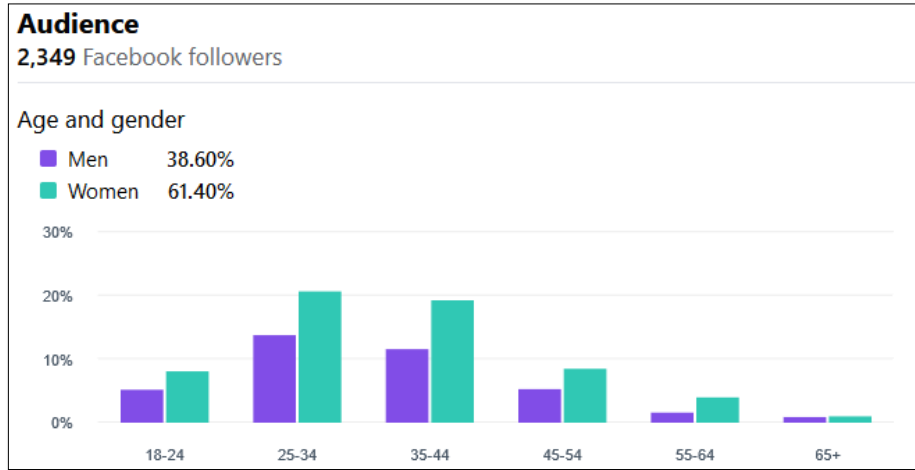


Even though the 'declaration of intention' was implemented before an outreach to women candidates could be launched, the number of female candidates still reached a new high of 14% (11 of 77 total candidates). While low on a global scale, this number did represent the highest proportion of female candidates in Nauru's democratic history. The Declaration of Interest (DOI) did not seem to adversely women's participation since they also comprised 14% of total declarants.

Facebook

Women were the main users of the NEC’s information on Facebook. The Project worked with the NEC to develop a comprehensive, continual, and varied series of updates that resonated with all Nauruans but also contained messaging for women, marginalised groups, and youth.

NEC Facebook user demographics



Gender-based outreach messaging

Messaging around women's empowerment in elections as leaders, and the powerful example set by two incumbent women MPs (both of whom retained their seats in 2022) has been instrumental in inspiring more women to put themselves forward as candidates. The Project team collaborated with the NEC to maintain and build upon messaging from 2019 about the importance of women as candidates. Additionally, the Project team worked closely with the NEC to create targeted messaging for women as voters, utilizing a variety of mediums to maximize reach and impact. This messaging was incorporated onto everyday items such as tea towels and tote bags, which were distributed to every household on the island. The messaging was crafted to resonate with traditional concerns of women while being paired with crucial voter information, as seen below:



Output 4: National Civic Education Initiatives Piloted and Rolled Out

Civic Education Curriculum

In 2022, the Project team supported the NEC as they made progress in developing and implementing civic education curriculum materials including:

- ***Piloting the Civic Education Curriculum for Year 10 students***
The Year 10 civic education curriculum is comprised of a Teachers Manual, Student Workbook, and complementary resources such as the UNDHR poster, and videos. This curriculum continues to be piloted by the NEC with the Ministry of Youth Affairs (see below)
- ***Continuation of Development of Complementary Curriculum Materials***
Resources that complement the Year 10 curriculum were developed in 2022, such as a video (Youth Vox Pop), a plain English and easy-read version of the Nauru constitution, and a comic book about democratic decision-making (in the process).
- ***Continuation of School Prefect elections***
The school prefect elections were held on (6 May 2022), delivered by NEC staff with Project support (photos below):



In 2022, the curriculum pilot was rolled out on a weekly basis, with the exception of periods of COVID-19 lockdowns. From 2021 to August 2022, the first 12 lessons were taught alternately by two commissioners from the Department of Youth Affairs.

In September 2022, the civic education consultant delivered two additional lessons in-country, titled "Including Everyone in a Democracy" and "Women in a Democracy". With only three lessons remaining in the curriculum, the NEC and Youth Affairs are committed to completing these lessons by the end of the year.

The first class, held after an extended break due to COVID-19 restrictions, was small as not all youth had yet returned to the program. The young women were initially shy, but quickly adjusted to the English-speaking facilitator. The civic education consultant noticed that a student-centred, interactive, and participatory learning style was unfamiliar to this group of learners and adjusted the class in real-time to suit their learning preferences and personalities. One student thanked the consultant after class, saying the lesson had "opened her eyes like never before" and that she now understood human rights and her own human rights.

The second class focused on gender equality. The civic education consultant once again adapted the curriculum and methodology to suit the number of learners and the lack of equipment, resources, and textbooks. At the beginning of class, all students said they felt women were equal to men in Nauru, but by the end of class, the young women said their views had been broadened and they now felt it was important to empower young women to be politically aware and active. The class ended with the female students agreeing to create a video for TikTok to raise awareness of first-time voters in Nauru, which was used in the NEC Facebook campaign and received high engagement and number of views.

Voter Information/Education Programs

The NAIG supported the NEC's Voter Awareness Strategy (VAS) to be designed as a dynamic and flexible document, that could be adapted as needed to changing circumstances. It combined civic education, voter education and information.

The main products and materials developed in 2022 to support outreach were comprised of:

- Voters' Guide (in Plain Language)
- 'How To Vote' Brochure (in Plain Language)
- Practice ballot papers
- "How to Cast a Valid Vote" video
- Posters and products with election messaging (tea towels, hats, bags, water bottles)
- 'I Voted!' stickers



Voters' Guide

How to Vote

Practice Ballot

Valid Vote Video

Promo Material

I voted Sticker

Many of the products were distributed through the voter awareness events such as the door-knock program, the Cross-Fit games, as well as at the Early Voting Centre and through mobile voting. The products were immensely popular with voters asking where they could get these products, as the news of them spread through social networks.

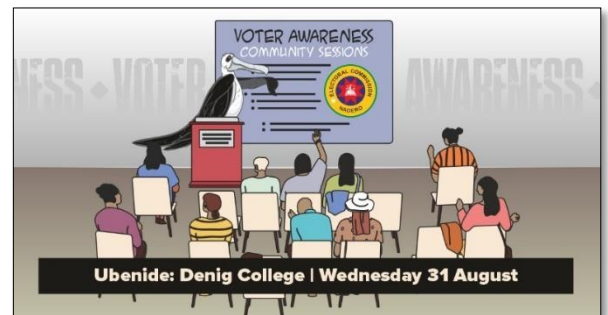
The brief period from the issuing of the writ to Polling Day (4 weeks) meant the NEC had to condense their voter awareness program with the following key events:

Voter Awareness Key Events

1. Voter awareness sessions in every constituency

- Aiwo:** Centennial Hall - Monday 29 August
- Buada:** Church Hall - Tuesday 30 August
- Denig (Ubenide):** Denig College - Wednesday 31 Aug.
- Anetan/Ewa:** Capelle Oval - Thursday 1 September
- Anabar:** AIA Outside Fishermen Church - Friday 2 Sept.
- Meneng:** Meneng Hall - Monday 5 September
- Yaren:** Basketball court - Tuesday 6 September
- Boe:** Kenas Aroi Hall - Wednesday 7 September

- 2. Cross-fit games (see below)*
- 3. Door-knock program (see below)*



Through these events, the NEC ensured it contacted every voter (including first-time voters and soon-to-be voters). Key electoral information was disseminated in an informative and engaging way, tailored to the audience. The compressed timeframe meant the door-knock program was compacted, with not as much time spent at every household as was planned. However, every household was visited and received a kit of key awareness documents and materials.





Social Media

The NEC posted key electoral information on their website but voter awareness messaging was primarily disseminated through the NEC's Facebook page. Messages were posted every second day and more frequently in the week and days before the election. Messaging included:

- Combatting Mis/disinformation
- COVID-safe polling
- Fun facts and quizzes
- International Day of Democracy
- Key dates and deadlines

- Motivational messaging
- Messaging targeting specific groups, including one video of a Polling Official using AusLAN sign language.

Posts were kept short with graphics and photos being used more than text. In the 3 weeks leading up to the Polling Day, the Project team worked with the NEC to produce over forty posts. Here is a sample of posts with the highest views:







	You must fill out the ballot paper correctly, so it is counted. Ballot papers list all of the candidates in your constituency. Pick the candidate who you want to vote for the most. Write 1 in the empty box next to their name. Pick the candidate who you want to vote for next. Write 2 in the empty box next to their name. Keep choosing candidates an...	Post reach 4165	Engagement 839
	You can practice filling out a ballot paper at home with this pretend ballot. In this ballot paper, there are 18 teams. You have to write the numbers, 1, 2, 3, all the way up to 18 in the boxes next to the team of your choice.	Post reach 4902	Engagement 2101
	A message to the hearing impaired voters for polling day.	Post reach 4417	Engagement 1710
	2022 Parliamentary Election Results Full preference results available here: https://election.com.nr/election-results/	Post reach 6569	Engagement 3407

The Project team also supported the NEC with Facebook banners to match the posters and other outreach materials which were rotated throughout the election period:



Facebook Statistics/Metrics

The NEC reached a total of 9,728 people through Facebook, which is well used in Nauru and a valuable component in the NEC's Outreach strategy.

Page overview		Last 28 days
Followers: 2,349		
 Post reach 		9,728
 Post engagement 		18,591
 New followers 		347

SMS

The NEC also sent over 30 SMS messages through Digicel (the sole telecommunications provider in Nauru), on key dates relating to the election.

Door Knock Program

A program to deliver voter education and voter information materials to every house in Nauru was conducted before the election. Each house received a voter guide, a 'How to Vote' brochure, a constitution, a practice ballot, and a tote bag with civic education messaging.



CrossFit Youth Outreach

The NAIG supported the NEC to run a cross-fit program for youth on 3 September 2022. This was run to remarkable success. The Project played a support role and provided advice and outreach support.



Clockwise from top: CrossFit games mascot, dumbbell exercise, election question round, voting exercise, rope run, tyre flip, disabled Olympics team

Poster Competition

The Project supported the NEC to run an online poster competition. The winner had a poster designed with their slogan, which was used in outreach efforts.



Photo 1: Poster slogan winner with his poster and NEC commissioner

Poster Program

Posters were distributed around the Island two weeks before polling. There were fourteen variations. Messages were revised from 2019 but several messages including the secrecy of a vote and women as leaders were continued.




Website

The Project team worked with the NEC to ensure that the website was updated with the latest news. The website will be revised in 2023 to give a fresh look and serve as an online archive for all election material.

Support For People Living With Disabilities

The NAIG initially produced a stand-alone guide for People living with disabilities but decided to incorporate the information into a voter guide – distributed to all Nauruan households. This decision was to help all people learn about the rights of disabled people in their community and to ensure that everyone who needed the information was able to receive it. Plain language and an easy-read format were used to convey information effectively.



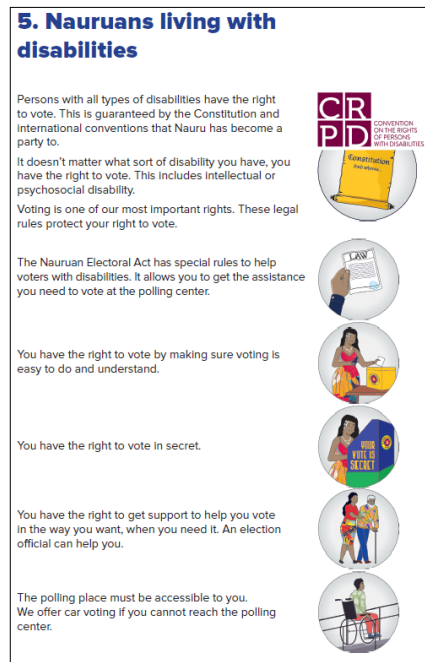
I NEEDS HELP
The voting system must work for you, too. If your disability is invisible election officials may not recognise that you need help.
PLEASE ASK ELECTION OFFICIALS FOR ANY HELP OR EQUIPMENT YOU NEED.

ASK
You may find a long line when you arrive at your polling place.
Ask (do not be shy) to go to the front of the line. If your disability makes waiting in a long line difficult. It is your right.

VOTE
If you cannot enter the polling station because it is inaccessible for voters with disabilities, speak with the presiding officer who oversees the polling station for help.

If you are in line when polling closes, you get to vote.

MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT
Make your vote count!



5. Nauruans living with disabilities

Persons with all types of disabilities have the right to vote. This is guaranteed by the Constitution and international conventions that Nauru has become a party to.

It doesn't matter what sort of disability you have, you have the right to vote. This includes intellectual or psychosocial disability.

Voting is one of our most important rights. These legal rules protect your right to vote.

The Nauruan Electoral Act has special rules to help voters with disabilities. It allows you to get the assistance you need to vote at the polling center.

You have the right to vote by making sure voting is easy to do and understand.

You have the right to vote in secret.

You have the right to get support to help you vote in the way you want, when you need it. An election official can help you.

The polling place must be accessible to you. We offer car voting if you cannot reach the polling center.

The Project team held several meetings with Department for People Living with Disabilities (PLWD). Out of these meetings, a joint NEC, Project, and PLWD session on election outreach for blind people and sight impairments was held.



The Project team led the production of the first-ever AUSLAN (sign language) Facebook post. This was one of the most successful posts with the following reach:

Nauru Electoral Commission
Published by Cronisa Amwano · 24 September at 10:24 · 🌐

A message to the hearing impaired voters for polling day.

Post impressions **4,590**

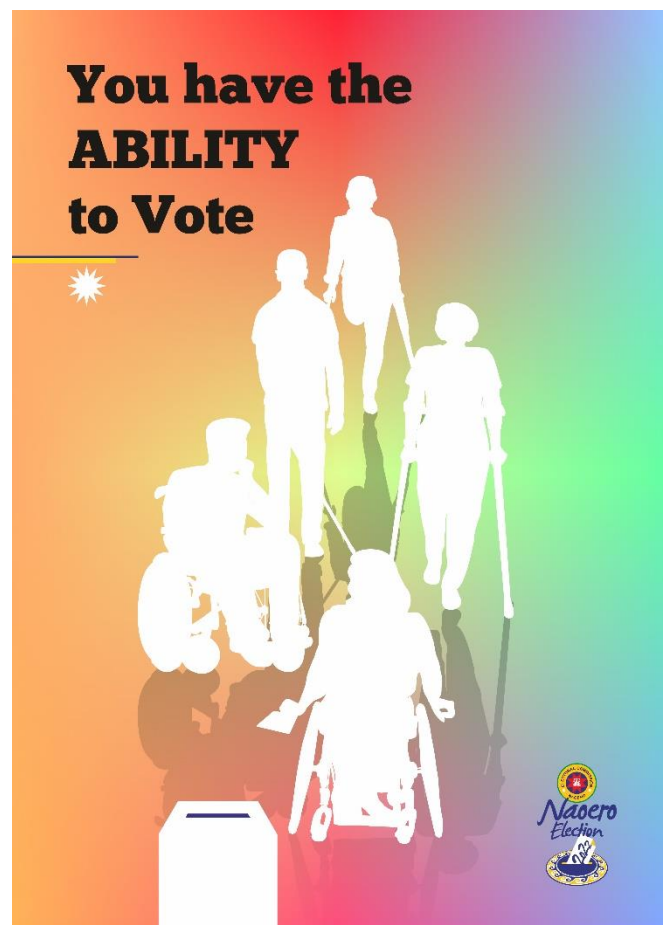
Post reach **4,417**

Post engagement **1,708**

0:05 / 0:52

Intellectual and Psychosocial Disabilities

The NAIG was also able to promote a discussion on the rights of people living with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities to vote. Nauru is one of the only pacific island nations that does not prohibit by law people with these disabilities from voting. After a series of discussions, people who had been previously omitted from the voter roll were added. This included Ronwyn Neemia. His story is below.



Ronwyn Jeremiah – A First-Time Voter in Nauru’s 2022 General Election

Ronwyn Jeremiah is a young man (31) living with intellectual and physical disabilities.

On 21 September this year, Ronwyn cast his first vote for the 2022 General Election. This vote was possible with the help of a mobile voting team that visited his home in Nauru.

The Nauru Constitution and the Electoral Act of 2016 does not exclude people from voting due to their disabilities, including intellectual disabilities. Although people living with disabilities are eligible to vote, many Nauruans with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities have not been registered or have voted in the past.

However, for the 2022 General Election, the Nauru Electoral Commission (NEC) made a special effort to include people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities by meeting with advocates and reaching out to individuals living with these disabilities. In their consultations, the NEC emphasized the rights of people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities to register and vote and explained mobile voting as a convenient option for voting.

Ronwyn is one of those living with these disabilities. His capacity to communicate is limited, but he can express himself sufficiently to his caregiver and mother, Jane Neemia. She applied for Ronwyn to be registered to vote and to cast his vote by mobile voting.

The mobile voting team visited Ronwyn on 21 September, three days before Election Day. The team arrived in personal protective equipment due to the COVID-19 protocols in place for mobile voting for vulnerable groups.

Jane helped Ronwyn sign an X next to his name on the Voter Roll. Ronwyn had previously spoken to his mother to express his preferences for candidates. Jane completed Ronwyn’s ballot paper and helped him place his folded paper in the box. Ronwyn’s vote was secret; only his mother was aware of his preferences.

Ronwyn expressed his joy after casting his vote and being congratulated by the mobile voting team on having cast his first vote. His mother provided positive feedback to the NEC for having made it possible for her son to vote by having a mobile team come to him.

Jane and Ronwyn permitted the photographs of Ronwyn voting to be published.

Feedback Email from Jane

Subject: Re: Ronwyn Jeremiah Sent: 22 September 2022 08:20

Good morning, Corinne & Daniel,

The feedback from Jane, Ronwyn’s carer & mother is to state the least, were overwhelmed with joy. Ronwyn dropped his ballot paper into the ballot box by himself.

The photo opportunity was the grand finale for him.

Excellent outcome.

Regards

*Riddell Akua
[Director of Department for Nauruan People living with Disabilities]*

Jane helps Ronwyn sign the Voter Roll



Jane helps Ronwyn vote



Part 2: Activity Plan for 2023

Parliamentary Support

The focus for Parliamentary support will cover all components within Output 2 of the Project. The specific focus will be on:

- Parliamentary Website Development: A Terms of Reference has been developed and will be launched shortly for a Request for Proposal
- Installation of ICT equipment for Video Conferencing and digitalization of Hansard records: Equipment will arrive in the country in October at which time installation will take place to ensure it is set up before the Member of Parliament induction programme
- Conduct consultations for the review of the Standing Orders will continue throughout October with the plan to finalize the review in November
- Conduct consultations for the development of the Parliament Strategic Plan: a draft Strategic Plan is already in place and will need further consultation to finalize it. This will be a process for October and November
- Conduct the first Youth Parliamentary training towards a Youth Parliament. This training is planned for October to prepare for a Youth parliament in 2023
- A Member of Parliament induction programme is planned for November where experts from the Region will travel to Nauru to support the induction of newly elected Members of Parliament

Electoral Support

In 2023, a key focus will be on initiating the legal reform process. This period is of critical importance to the NEC as key structural elements of the electoral process can only be effectively addressed during this time frame, as changes need to be complete well before electoral events. Adequate time must be given to ensure that changes are fully accepted and understood, and that changes are made with complete transparency and community acceptance.

With NAIG support, the NEC will undertake a comprehensive review of all operational documents and procedures.

Additionally, efforts will be made to further the civic education program and integrate the curriculum into schools.

The Project team will also work towards establishing WENA as a structured and sustainable Civil Society Organization.

Part 3: Partnerships

Implementing Partner (IP) and Focal Point Contact	Type of Partnerships/ Role	Duration of Partnership	Progress of Deliverables from Partnership
<p>Nauru Electoral Commission Focal Point: Sylvanna Deireragea, Commissioner, Address: NEC Office, Civic Center, Aiwo, Nauru Phone: 5573897 Email: commissioner@electoralcommission.org.nr</p>	<p>Oversees and is responsible for elections and referendums, Implementing Parliament</p>	<p>4 years</p>	<p>Provision of office space and the internet</p>
<p>Parliament Focal Point: Ms Ann-Marie Cain Clerk of Nauru Parliament Phone: 557 3133 ext. 307 Email: amarie.cain@gmail.com</p>	<p>Implementing Parliament</p>	<p>4 years</p>	<p>Provision of office space and a vehicle for use by UNDP staff</p>

Part 4: Risk and Assumptions

Risk	Mitigation Action	Timeframe	Mitigation Action Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Instability leads to a suspension, postponement, or snap election, resulting in the inability of the Project to meet revised electoral timelines with its planned activities and the inability to complete Parliament capacity development activities. Impacts are a reputational loss for UNDP and donors, and their ability to support counterparts effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build trust through continuous dialogue with Nauruan Government, the NEC, and Parliament to retain flexibility, strong stakeholder risk ownership, and accountability through oversight by the Project board. Build formal and informal networks with a broad spectrum of champions across and within Project stakeholders and NGOs. 	Length of Project	Advisers integrated into EMB and Parliament, PBM to be held, Project focused on primary stakeholders but interactions with others are ongoing. First PBM held. Outreach to disabled and women’s NGOs was established.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The structure of the NEC or Parliament changes due to legal reforms during the Project lifetime, resulting in the misalignment of priorities of the Project and the new institutional structures leading to the constrained implementation of the Project activities. Impacts are implementation delays and the inability to complete some activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Advisors to monitor and report on progress to the Project Board, UNDP and donors, and flag possible changes in prioritisation for discussion. Obtain senior government officials' understanding and buy-in for the Project and its deliverables and impact. 	Length of Project	<p>Donors and UNDP kept informed of developments through PBM, reporting, & other methods.</p> <p>President informed of the UNDP MCO strategic plan and its alignment with the Nauruan NDS.</p> <p>Signed acceptance has been sought.</p>

Risk	Mitigation Action	Timeframe	Mitigation Action Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity constraints in counterparts and supporting bodies to implement and achieve the outputs of the Project, limit the absorption capacity and create Project fatigue among the target institutions and their personnel. Impacts and the limited sustainability of the Project outcomes and ability of institutions to deliver on their mandates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careful and pragmatic prioritisation, planning and sequencing of Project activities will be undertaken with the assistance of the UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji and the UNDP Project advisers' updates to the Project Board on potential challenges and mitigation strategies are identified early so that change leaders are identified early, and over-ambitious scheduling is avoided. Ensure that the pace of implementation is appropriate to avoid 'Project fatigue' and matches the absorption capacity. Ensure the scope of activities and terms of reference are endorsed by stakeholders. 	Length of Project	<p>Operation and legal timelines were compiled, and allowances were made for changes in the election Dates.</p> <p>Project Board fully informed Implementation timeline matches the election cycle and EMB planning.</p> <p>Approval for AWP to be given by PBM.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in ownership and engagement by stakeholders and Projects results in delays or halts to Project implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate Project management arrangements are established and maintained to ensure stakeholder understanding of Project management tools, including annual work planning processes, corporate procurement practices and timelines. 	Length of Project	<p>AWP is to be shared and agreed upon with implementing partners. Procurement activities agreed between Project and implementing partners.</p>

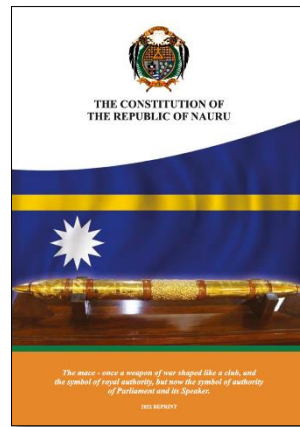
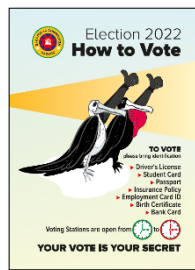
Risk	Mitigation Action	Timeframe	Mitigation Action Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Project is fully staffed and supporting Project teams provide effective and timely services. • Active Project Board monitoring and oversight are taking place. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural disasters (including pandemic outbreaks) directly impact the ability of the Project team and advisors to implement and participate in Nauru Parliamentary and electoral activities due to inaccessibility. • Impacts are the reduction in the ability to do direct capacity development and participate in key democratic processes such as national polls/referenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a flexible schedule for activity implementation to minimise the potential impact on outputs and ensure sequenced and timely implementation of Project activities, with adjustments made where necessary. • Capitalise on the use of digital technologies to do remote delivery of capacity development. 	Length of the Project with a focus on the election period	<p>Redundancy planning is in operational planning.</p> <p>Regular conference calls with NEC and Parliament are in place to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. Staff have quarantined as required and extended stays in Nauru.</p>

Part 5: Knowledge Management and Communication

The following key documents were produced in 2022.

- Constitution of Nauru (updated, corrected, and reprinted)
- Voter Guide
- Observer Guide
- Candidate Guide
- Polling Manual
- How to Vote – Quick Guide
- Candidate Posters
- Ballot template
- Results management templates

2022 Nauru Election Results									
Electoral District	Contestant	Party	Number of Votes	Percentage of Votes	Percentage of Total Votes	Percentage of Valid Votes	Percentage of Invalid Votes	Percentage of Spoiled Ballots	Percentage of Blank Ballots
...



Part 6: Key Lessons Learnt and Challenges

Impact of Covid

The project staff were able to successfully go to Nauru, however, their arrival was preceded by an extended period of quarantine in Q1 and Q2. Despite this, their physical presence on location was deemed essential in order to achieve positive outcomes for the project. The implementation of both the electoral and parliamentary components of the project experienced minor delays as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The electoral commission experienced a significant increase in confidence as a result of the availability of four technical advisors during the election operation period. This enabled the commission to effectively address and resolve any issues that arose in a timely manner.

Institutional Development

As the NEC gains more experience and becomes more established, it's crucial to keep supporting it to solidify the organization's election expertise and ensure consistency in every step of the electoral process. While the basics of polling and counting are becoming routine, other crucial tasks like managing proxy forms, producing ballots, selecting candidates, and organizing early voting, still require careful attention to detail. Without proper guidelines in place, these procedures can easily be mishandled, which is why it's essential to formalize them for future reference. With each step codified, the NEC can maximise the likelihood that every election runs smoothly and without confusion.

The revised structure of the NEC has resulted in the need for internal disambiguation of roles that has delayed the implementation of several key activities. This continues to be a requirement. Being able to hold face-to-face discussions was key to ensuring that all parties were happy with the new arrangements and that priorities can be set as needed. These conversations have been key to reaching a consensus and setting priorities. Despite these efforts, the process of aligning roles and responsibilities is an ongoing process, one that requires constant attention and commitment.

Maintaining Progress

The absence of permanent project personnel in Nauru within the Parliament has resulted in a lack of ownership of activities by local counterparts. Despite efforts to maintain engagement with international experts, the continuity of implementation can be affected when these experts are not present. To address this, the project plans to hire a staff member to be based in Nauru, starting on 20 February, in order to enhance the timeliness of implementation and improve collaboration. The recruitment of this Staff position is something the Project looks forward to, to ensure timely implementation and a stronger relationship.

Capacity Challenges: The Parliament of Nauru is facing significant capacity challenges that require urgent attention. In order to overcome these challenges, the parliament must invest in the upskilling of current staff and the recruitment of qualified individuals for key positions such as Committee Secretaries and Information Technology specialists. This

investment will ensure that the parliament has the necessary resources to effectively carry out its duties and responsibilities.

National Ownership: The Speaker of Parliament plays a crucial role in the success of the parliament, however, due to a tight mission schedule, it has been challenging to facilitate activities without his approval and presence in country. This has greatly impacted the ability of parliament staff to feel a sense of ownership over the project and has resulted in delays in the timely implementation of the NAIG - Parliament component.

Logistics: Logistics can often be a challenge when working in remote locations such as Nauru. The limited number of vendors and contractors in the country makes it difficult to meet the procurement requirements set by the UNDP to facilitate an event. This requires creative thinking and innovative solutions to overcome these logistical challenges and ensure the success of the project.

Part 7: Sustainability and Scaling Up

Sustainability

The NEC's codification of processes continues to be a top priority for the NAIG Project, as evidenced by the smooth polling operation in 2022. Standards have been set and an experienced team of polling and counting staff have been established in Nauru, ready to support future electoral processes.

The Project has not only focused on event-specific procedures but also on creating manuals and processes that can be used for many future events. While polling may be a well-established process now, counting still requires refinement and improved documentation to fully utilize the Borda count system.

To further strengthen the electoral process, the NAIG has refined templates to produce high-quality ballots without international support. This effort is ongoing and includes the development of ballot posters, results templates, and finalization of all electoral process forms.

There is a growing understanding among voters and other stakeholders of the electoral system and their role in it. To maintain this progress, civic education and outreach programs must be continued and strengthened.

Scaling Up

The Project's manuals have the potential to promote development in the way elections are conducted across the Pacific, by providing easy-to-read, informative, and user-friendly materials that empower voters to make informed decisions and communicate complex ideas simply and clearly to staff.

The 2022 election saw the successful implementation of a comprehensive range of outreach products, which have set a new standard for future operations. These products not only established key themes and messaging but also set expectations for both voters and candidates. The effectiveness of new delivery methods, such as tea towels, constitutions, and voter guides, will be evaluated with the goal of maximizing their potential for reuse in future elections.

As previously noted in 2021, the curriculum and outreach products developed by the Project can be easily adapted to other Pacific contexts, serving as a blueprint for similar initiatives in other countries. This has already been demonstrated by the UNDP Vanuatu Electoral Environment Project (VEEP) Project's work in Vanuatu.

The parliamentary component of the Project also presents significant opportunities for growth, particularly in the areas of civic education and public engagement. As well as increasing public understanding of the role of parliament, the project can ensure that parliamentarians are fully informed and equipped to make informed decisions with ongoing support for parliamentary committees, which is essential to achieving this goal.

Part 8: 2022 Financial Report

	Activity	2022 Budget	Expenditure
	Outcome 1: National Electoral Commission Processes and Capacities Strengthened	761,626	592,257
1.1	Improve electoral legislation and processes	20,358	55,751
1.2	Ensure NEC institutional strengthening to deliver elections	300,780	309,394
1.3	Support NEC to undertake voter and civic education	255,636	41,743
1.4	Effective technical advisory services and project management support (including DPC)	184,852	185,369
	Outcome 2: Strengthen National Parliament capacities to ensure inclusive, accountable governance	525,686	474,600
2.1	Support legal and /or operational efforts to entrench parliamentary autonomy	68,580	139,327
2.2	Support parliamentary institutional strengthening	289,980	285,333
2.3	Strengthen the oversight role of parliament	59,940	9,811
2.4	Support parliamentary education and public outreach	33,210	20,138
2.5	Effective technical advisory services and project management support (including DPC)	73,976	19,991
	Outcome 3: Strengthen the engagement of women in politics and public life	102,103	36,164
3.1	Undertake participatory research and discussion on women's leadership in Nauru	39,690	6,674
3.2	Support capacity development and mentoring of (potential) women leaders	12,960	9,797
3.3	Support male advocates for gender equality and women's leadership	3,240	0
3.4	Effective technical advisory services and project management support (including DPC)	46,213	19,693
	Outcome 4: Pilot and roll out national civic education initiatives	108,133	145,888
4.1	Implement civic education in the school curriculum	21,600	0
4.2	Design and implement national civic education activities	30,240	45,009
4.3	Effective technical advisory services and project management support (including DPC)	56,293	100,879
	TOTAL	1,497,547	1,248,909

Part 9: Evidence

- 2022 Election Report
<https://election.com.nr/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2022-PE-Final-Report-web2.pdf>
- Election Guide
https://election.com.nr/election-guide_web/
- Voter Guide
https://election.com.nr/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Voting-Guide-2022_web-Ver2-2022.09.01.pdf
- Candidate Guide
https://election.com.nr/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Candidate-Guide-2022_web.pdf
- Polling Manual
<https://election.com.nr/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Polling-Manual-2022-web.pdf>
- Count Manual
https://election.com.nr/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Counting-Manual-2022_web.pdf
- Constitution
https://election.com.nr/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Nauru-Constitution-2022.07-Reprint_Web.pdf



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