UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Pacific Elections Assistance Program (PEAP)

Project Number: 01001333

Implementing Partner: Direct Implementation

Start Date: 1 November 2023, End Date: 31 March 2028, PAC Meeting date: 15 September 2023

Brief Description
The Pacific Elections Assistance Program (PEAP) has been designed to maximise the utility of UNDP's global elections experience by developing a dedicated office and focal point for UNDP electoral assistance in the Pacific. In support of Pacific Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) and the political and voting rights of all Pacific islanders, the Program will contribute to the enhancement of knowledge, capacity, and regional cooperation among Pacific electoral stakeholders. As part of UNDP Pacific Multi-Country Office Effective Governance Team, the PEAP will bring focused, efficient, continuous, elections support to Pacific Island Countries.   The program focuses on three Pacific regional-specific outputs: (1) EMBs deliver effective, efficient, and inclusive elections with increased capacity and resources. (2) EMBs make robust and informed decisions, safeguarding the integrity of elections with improved independence and stronger mandates. (3) Citizens actively engage, understand, and are committed to protecting democratic rights and values.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="7">Contributing Outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD or GPD):
Multi-Country Program Document (2023-2027)
Strategic Plan outcome: No-one left behind centring on equitable access to opportunities and a rights-based approach to human agency and human development.
Indicative Output(s) with gender marker[2]:
Output 1: EMBs deliver effective, efficient, & inclusive elections with increased capacity and resources GEN2
Output 2: EMB's make robust, inclusive, & informed decisions, safeguarding the integrity of elections with improved independence & stronger mandates GEN2
Output 3: Citizens actively engage, understand, and are committed to protecting democratic rights and values GEN3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Total resources required:</td><td colspan="2">USD $2,993,444</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Total resources allocated:</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>UNDP TRAC:</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Donor:</td><td>NZD 3,000,000</td></tr>
<tr><td>Government:</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>In-Kind:</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Unfunded:</td><td colspan="2">USD 1,147,291</td></tr>
</table>

Agreed by (signatures):

UNDP
DocuSigned by: *Tuya Altangerel*   6835C56A2FBF485...   Munkhtuya (Tuya) Altangerel   Resident Representative
Date: 25-Oct-2023

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1 DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

All Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are relatively young democracies, having gained independence since the early 1960s and most have adopted parliamentary-style governments. Their governance institutions (including electoral management bodies) are evolving. Democracy remains fragile, and evolving Pacific democracies are especially vulnerable. Pacific democracies are under pressure from changing national, regional, and global factors – such as heightened citizen expectations, geopolitical competition, climate change, COVID-19 induced economic hardship, advances in digital media, and other challenges.

"Resilient democracies need to be: representative; participative; transparent; non-corrupt; civil; and inclusive to and tolerant of a variety of ideas and ideologies, socio-demographic groups, and other forms of human difference." Elections are vital democratic processes with significant potential to impact national stability, either positively or negatively. Elections can highlight the fault-lines that exist in a society and reveal where (and with whom) the balance of power lies. While all the Pacific Island countries organise and hold regular elections, there are instances when tensions before, during and after elections have turned violent and threatened stability in some countries. The implications of well-managed electoral processes for conflict prevention, democracy and peacebuilding cannot be overstated. Strengthening EMBs to protect the integrity of national elections is crucial for democratic resilience.

All countries in the region are expected to hold national elections in the next five years (refer to the table below), and this initiative will make a meaningful contribution to how well they are conducted.

Pacific Electoral Events			
Country	Electoral Event	Date	Election Cycle
French Polynesia	Parliament	2023 (Nov)	5 years
Niue	Assembly	2026	3 years
Solomon Islands	Parliament	2024	4 years
Tokelau	General Fono	2026	3 years
Tuvalu	Parliament	2024	4 years
Federated States of Micronesia	Congress	2025	2 years
Republic of Marshall Islands	Parliament	2024	4 years
Kiribati	House of Assembly	2024	4 years
Tonga	Parliament (and Nobles)	2024	3 years
Palau	Senate & House of Delegates	2024	4 years
New Caledonia	Congress	2024	5 years
Bougainville	Autonomous Regional Government	2025	5 years
Nauru	Parliament	2025	3 years
Tokelau	Referendum (TBC)	2025/2026	N/A years
Cook Islands	Parliament	2026	4 years
Samoa	Legislative Assembly	2026	5 years
Vanuatu	Parliament	2026	4 years
Fiji	Parliament	2027	4 years
Papua New Guinea	Parliament	2027	5 years

The geography, cultures, and history of PICs creates vibrant and unique societies, but this wider context can also present structural challenges to democratic development:

> ➢ Dominant social institutions and elites can hinder inclusive democratic development: If political will does not exist, institutions such as electoral processes can be co-opted by dominant stakeholders and development gains can be reversed or slowed. Transitions to more stable democratic institutions cannot be achieved by simply transplanting new reforms and ideas (institutional practices) into a new context. They require acceptance and genuine political will and buy-in at elites' levels as well as by the public.

> ➢ Withstanding external and internal pressures: Elections are a key check on power within a democratic system – especially where close social connections often define access to power. They have faced increasing pressure and demands in parallel with growing global and regional trend towards authoritarianism. Some Pacific EMBs have been pulled beyond their legitimate mandates and/or experienced instances where other stakeholders encroach upon EMB boundaries – boundaries that are not always well understood or observed. This can undermine EMB neutrality and credibility. EMBs must have the ability to safeguard their fragile independence from domestic and external interference. In addition to domestic political pressures, democracies and democratic institutions in the Pacific are under further pressure from regional geopolitics, climate change, and vestiges of the COVID 19 pandemic.

> ➢ Economies of scale are almost impossible for many Pacific electoral management bodies: Electoral processes around the world generally require the same elements which are then scaled up as needed. Pacific nations must therefore maintain the same electoral institutions as larger ones[1]. While larger countries can draw on a broader set of domestic skills and experience, smaller countries often do not have the same experience available domestically. In some of the smaller PICs, EMBs are not even permanent institutions: elections are an added responsibility of public service officials, who are required to administer the same basic election tasks as larger and/or permanent EMBs. Decision makers often under-value the importance of EMBs and consequently under-fund them, especially in non-election years. Smaller budgets and capacities also reduce their opportunities to improve. Relative to other parts of the world, delivering elections in the Pacific is costly and logistically challenging due to difficult terrains, scattered populations, and poor infrastructure. These can impact EBM staff and voter safety, the opportunities people have to vote, and the overall fairness of elections.

> ➢ Transmission of ideas: The Pacific's geography of small, remote populations reduces both access to, and absorption of, new ideas and systems – slowing the development of democratic and societal norms. The limited penetration of external ideas can result in the continuation of existing institutional and social roles, often lasting beyond their ability to properly serve a society.

Structural challenges to managing electoral activities can manifest in the erosion of democratic standards, limited access to political processes for women and marginalised groups, a rise in authoritarianism due to weak respect for laws and rules and/or the disenfranchisement and distancing of citizens from electoral processes and political decision-making. They also impact EMBs abilities to administer elections by limiting capacity development.

These structural issues manifest directly into political representation imbalances and exclusions. For example, while in theory, the Pacific region today doesn't impose formal barriers to equal participation in national political and parliamentary processes. Nevertheless, in practice, a significant gender imbalance exists in the representation of women and men in Pacific legislatures, excluding Australia, New Zealand, and territories. On average, only 6.4% of members are women (up from 2% in 1994), while a striking 93.6% are men in our region's legislatures. In the Pacific region, women can encounter

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[1] The electoral operation timelines for Nauru (8,000 voters) and India (1 billion voters) are equivalent with the same inputs and steps needed to produce a result.

multiple obstacles in their pursuit of greater representation in politics. These challenges encompass institutional, cultural, and socio-economic factors that can impede their active participation in the political sphere.

While many Pacific Island cultures emphasize respect for women, employ matrilineal land ownership systems, and uphold traditions that necessitate women's approval for male community leadership, these positive cultural aspects are often overshadowed by persistent underrepresentation of women in political roles. Certain customary practices may even contribute to women being excluded from public decision-making platforms.

The persistence of gender stereotypes and the prevailing perception that politics is primarily 'men's work' affect both women who aspire to become candidates and how voters perceive female leaders. Even when women do engage in political decision-making, their roles tend to be behind the scenes and often fail to translate into substantial representation within contemporary political structures.

Another important group that faces challenges are people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. They are entitled to all the protections and rights set out in international human rights law and conventions. However, laws have often stripped people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities of their rights, including the right to vote and stand for election. Without the ability to influence the election of politicians or remove them from office, people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities are often 'off the radar' of elected politicians and are rendered politically invisible. Despite having signed or ratified the CRPD, a binding convention which guarantees their right to vote, many nations still have constitutional restrictions on the right to vote for people using outdated and sometimes offensive terminology. This disenfranchisement is often then incorporated into laws implementing those same restrictions.

2 PROGRAM STRATEGY

This Program aims to bring consistency and coordination to the UNDP's support for democratic governance in the Pacific region increasing UNDP's delivery efficiency, and by providing a regional platform, which is also capable of delivering a comprehensive package of assistance to national and regional partners where relevant. The ability to combine multinational electoral support into the program will provide substantial cost savings, through the creation of a small standing team of technical experts and administration resources that can provide technical advice across multiple countries and focus areas. Having a standing team in place will also enable the implementation of a continuous, long-term approach to analysing electoral challenges and responding accordingly, which will ensure timely program development and reduce last-minute applications for assistance from PICs. Continuous support and collaboration with Pacific EMBs will lift their ability and confidence to maintain their often-fragile independence. It will also enable an anticipatory approach to Pacific electoral support, which will ensure activities that are Programd following a request for support are aligned with stakeholder's priorities (through the Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) process), and with UN capacities and available funding, well in advance of need.

Proposed Regional Coverage:
Federated States of Micronesia
Fiji
Kingdom of Tonga
Kiribati*
Nauru
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Republic of the Marshall Islands
Samoa*
Solomon Islands*
Tuvalu*
Vanuatu
Cook Islands*
Tokelau*
Niue*
* NZ MFAT funding support in this Program

UNDP has already successfully implemented a range of projects in the Pacific to support EMBs and electoral processes; there are ongoing electoral support projects in Fiji, Nauru, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. UNDP also has very strong experience building regional common understanding in relation to complex and/or sensitive democratic governance issues, including through facilitation of South-South cooperation, learning, exchange, and by working in partnership with regional inter-governmental institutions and processes.

The program seeks to bring together UNDP's electoral advisory experience and the wider regional platform that defines UNDP's Effective Governance work in the Pacific. Previously, UNDP supported Pacific electoral processes and institutions individually within each PIC. The program provides a new approach by allowing the incorporation of a wider perspective into its programming and actively seeking connections within the whole Pacific electoral and governance sector.

Establishing this regional Program will also improve UNDP's ability to proactively coordinate with other partners, with the Program team better able to nurture relationships with other providers of technical assistance, as well as EMBs themselves. The Program envisages a very close partnership with the New Zealand Election Commission, which is also being funded by the New Zealand Government to provide elections support. The team will also ensure constant communication and better coordination with other electoral stakeholders such as The Pacific Islands, Australia, and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network, the Australian Election Commission (AEC), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI).

The Program will also benefit from UNDP's in-house expertise across the world, in particular expertise within the UNDP's Bureau for Asia and the Pacific based in Bangkok and the Bureau for Policy and Program Support based in New York. In addition, the Program will be implemented in close partnership with the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) of the UN's Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA). Finally, the Program will also collaborate with other UN bodies based on their mandates and comparative advantages including UN Women, UNOPS, UNESCO, and OHCHR.

The Program will directly respond to and align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a focus on Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 16 (peaceful societies, rule of law and institutions). Goal 16 aims to build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, and the Pacific Program will work towards three specific targets of Goal 16: a) ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels; b) providing legal identity for all, and c) ensuring public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms. It will also contribute toward Goal 5 and its targets of a) ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life; and b) adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. In doing so the Program will link with the work of the UN family including UN Women, UNICEF, UNESCO, and other agencies, to promote efficiency, consistency and coherence in support and avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

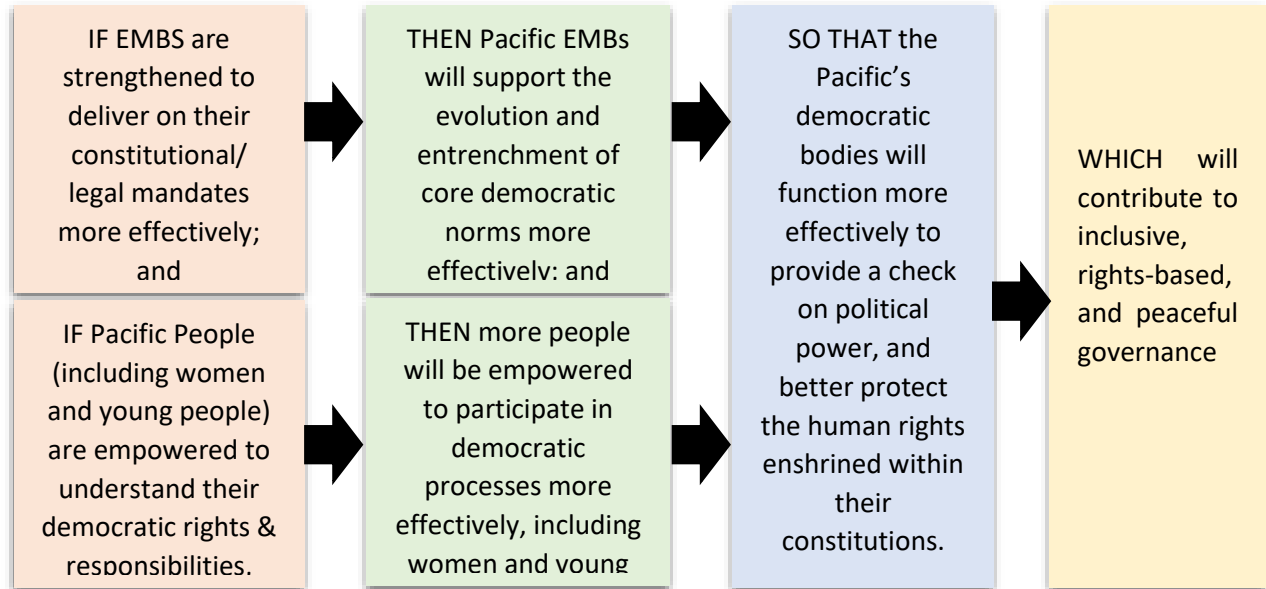## THEORY OF CHANGE

Building on the lessons learned from UNDP's global electoral support, as well as reviews undertaking by New Zealand and Australia of their electoral support activities,[2] this Program recognises that to

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[2] See for example, Making it count: Lessons from Australian Elections Assistance 2006-2016 and Evaluation of Australia's electoral assistance to PNG 2015-17 (dfat.gov.au)

address the democratic and development challenges described above, it will be essential to implement a multi-stakeholder program where UNDP will work with a range of different government and non-government partners to build a web of self-reinforcing national democratic constituencies committed to progressing the locally-contextualised, evolving democratic norms and processes in the Pacific.

Figure 1: Theory of Change

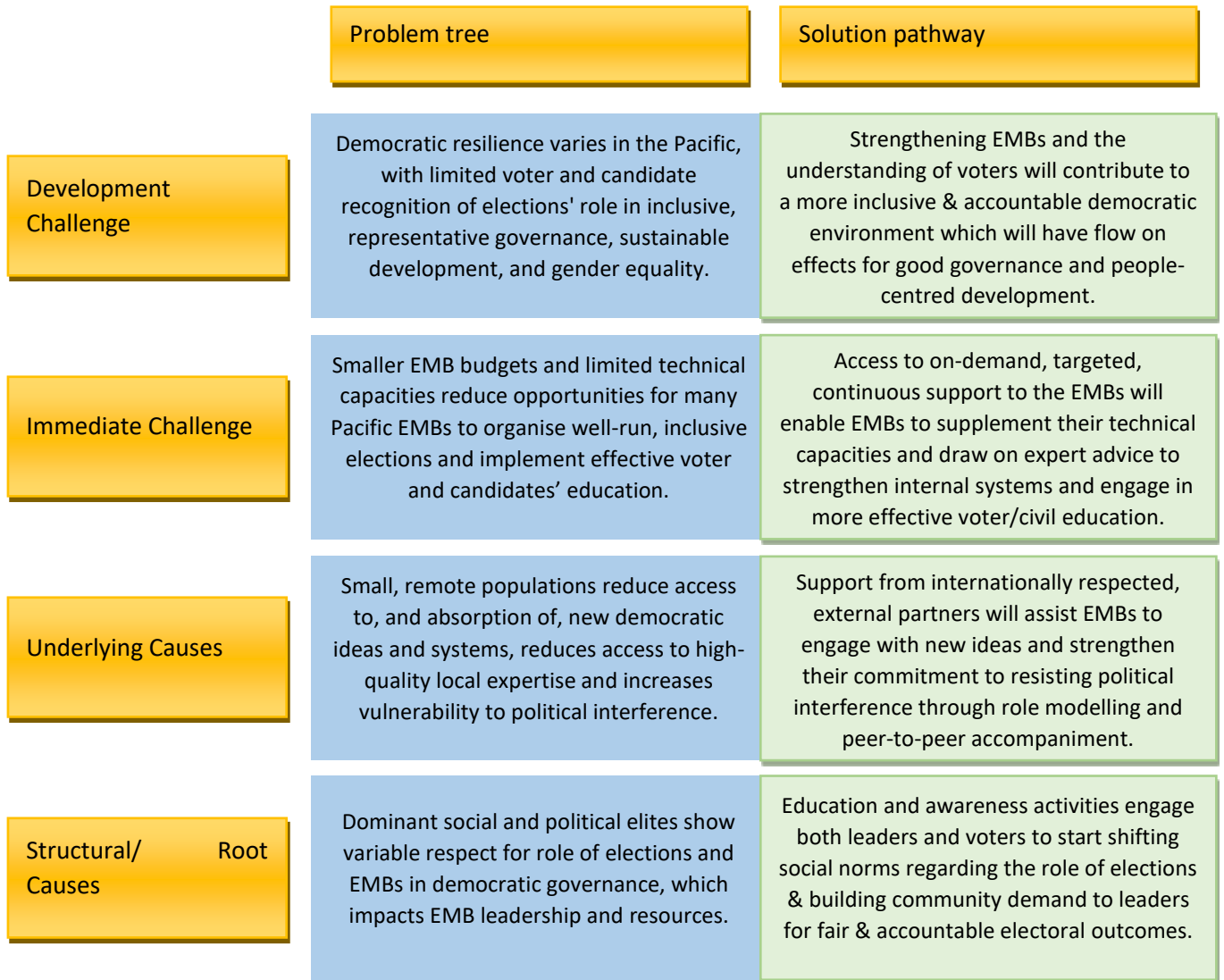| IF EMBS are strengthened to deliver on their constitutional/ legal mandates more effectively; and	THEN Pacific EMBs will support the evolution and entrenchment of core democratic norms more effectively; and	SO THAT the Pacific's democratic bodies will function more effectively to provide a check on political power, and better protect the human rights enshrined within their constitutions.	WHICH will contribute to inclusive, rights-based, and peaceful governance
IF Pacific People (including women and young people) are empowered to understand their democratic rights & responsibilities.	THEN more people will be empowered to participate in democratic processes more effectively, including women and young		

There is no single intervention or activity that can be effective in meeting the Program's overarching goal; rather, the theory of change relies on multiple stakeholders (Electoral Management Bodies, civil society and the public themselves) being supported by UNDP through multiple activities to engage more effectively throughout the electoral cycle, all of which should combine to build the support of all of these electoral stakeholders to understand, commit to, and entrench democratic values, through the strengthening of key democratic institutions and processes.

The theory of change in Figure 1 above demonstrates a two-pronged approach, whereby the Program will seek to strengthen both the supply and demand sides for good governance, by working with EMBs and related democratic institutions, as well as working to build understanding of the role of elections to democracy and development in voters, with specific activities for women, young people and marginalised people. The theory of change should be understood in the context of the development solutions pathway described in Figure 2 below. As the root cause analysis shows, many of these challenges relate to the very fundamentals of Pacific democracy. The Program looks to conduct activities that will both have an immediate impact on some of these challenges, while also recognising and allowing for much more work to be done over the long term to evolve social norms that also value the democratic norms, which underpin Pacific political systems, and guide human-rights based national development.

The international community has provided electoral support over the past two decades which has helped PICs conduct multiple elections; develop and promote key principles and standards. However, these interventions were often guided more by isolated short-term program objectives than by long-term, broad development cooperation strategies. In many cases, there was a tendency to target elections as isolated events, rather than integrating them into the broader democratic governance agenda. They also were often not addressed as part of an ongoing cyclical process, re-occurring every few years, at regular intervals.

Figure 2: Development Solutions Pathway

	Problem tree	Solution pathway
Development Challenge	Democratic resilience varies in the Pacific, with limited voter and candidate recognition of elections' role in inclusive, representative governance, sustainable development, and gender equality.	Strengthening EMBs and the understanding of voters will contribute to a more inclusive & accountable democratic environment which will have flow on effects for good governance and people-centred development.
Immediate Challenge	Smaller EMB budgets and limited technical capacities reduce opportunities for many Pacific EMBs to organise well-run, inclusive elections and implement effective voter and candidates' education.	Access to on-demand, targeted, continuous support to the EMBs will enable EMBs to supplement their technical capacities and draw on expert advice to strengthen internal systems and engage in more effective voter/civil education.
Underlying Causes	Small, remote populations reduce access to, and absorption of, new democratic ideas and systems, reduces access to high-quality local expertise and increases vulnerability to political interference.	Support from internationally respected, external partners will assist EMBs to engage with new ideas and strengthen their commitment to resisting political interference through role modelling and peer-to-peer accompaniment.
Structural/ Root Causes	Dominant social and political elites show variable respect for role of elections and EMBs in democratic governance, which impacts EMB leadership and resources.	Education and awareness activities engage both leaders and voters to start shifting social norms regarding the role of elections & building community demand to leaders for fair & accountable electoral outcomes.

To provide a more sustainable approach to electoral assistance, UNDP, together with international partners, has adopted the "electoral cycle approach" (see Figure 3), which looks at the electoral process over time and seeks to engage with different actors and entry points throughout the cycle, rather than channelling substantial resources and technical support only towards the delivery of a specific electoral event, at intermittent and disconnected points in time. The adoption of the electoral cycle helps implement electoral assistance within the broader framework of democratic governance with a proactive and strategic approach. The electoral cycle is divided into three broad phases – pre-electoral, electoral, and post-electoral – and at first glance, it may seem that the post-electoral component is the shortest. This is the longest period and perhaps the ripest opportunity for addressing systemic issues that impact the electoral process and wider democratic governance per se, including electoral system reform, electoral management design, boundary delimitation, political party charters, media training, and so forth.

Electoral cycle support needs to be properly anchored within broader democratic governance support to have a lasting impact on democracy in any given country. Linkages must be found, and activities promoted to ensure that electoral support is not isolated from broader democratic governance support, such as parliamentary development programming, support to strengthen political parties, and other activities to support women and young people to strengthen their political

participation. Rule of Law, accountable and transparent institutions, respect for human rights principles and anti-corruption are some of the important pivotal points in this regard.

The electoral cycle approach integrates gender priorities throughout the different phases of the electoral process, allowing for the integration of gender mainstreaming across the cycle and with all the electoral stakeholders including EMBs, voters, civil society organizations, media, and others. A comprehensive regional Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy on participation in electoral and political processes will be developed by the Program [3] in consultation with key electoral stakeholders in the region, which will guide work in areas such as advocacy for affirmative measures to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, the role of EMBs in enhancing the participation of women, young people and people with disabilities and media awareness on inclusive electoral reporting.

Figure 3: Electoral cycle approach
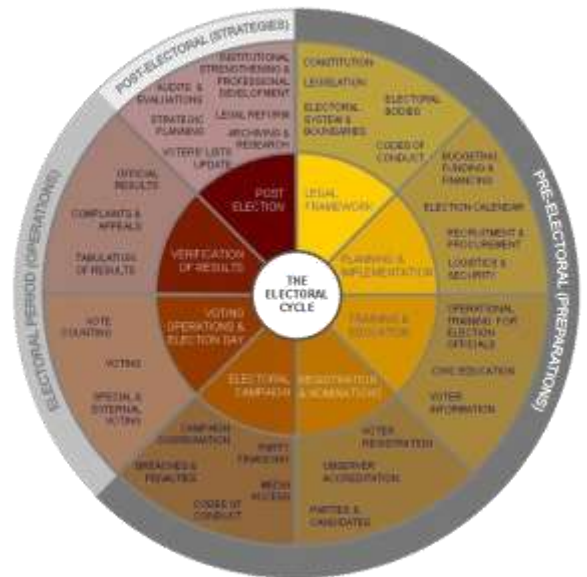
INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING

The Program aims to work on the electoral cycle as an entry point for building more inclusive democracies in the Pacific, which bring together all citizens to participate in one of the most important democratic activities that people can be a part of. Inclusivity will be mainstreamed across the whole Program, in terms of building more inclusive EMBs, through their own staff and their commitments to inclusivity, as well as by working with civil society and the public to promote more inclusive politics.

The Program will pursue a gender-inclusive approach, which will consider both Pacific and country-specific contexts to identify structural constraints to women's political participation and ensure equal opportunities for women to participate in democratic processes. The Program will also actively engage with young people, who often feel excluded from Pacific political systems which tend to value the leadership of elders over younger people. The Program will also engage with PWD organisations to increase their capacities and support activities envisioning increased participation in electoral processes and removal of structural and social barriers. This includes addressing the significant and prevalent legal barriers for persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. The Program will engage proactively with civil society organizations, recognising that they are also very good representatives of the "silent majority" of the public whose voices are often not heard during the electoral cycle.

The Program will also be inclusive in how it provides support and works with partners. The Program team will continue working closely with electoral stakeholders from different countries, most notably New Zealand and Australia, as well as with PIANZEA at the regional level. The Program will build and strengthen collaborations through existing global and regional electoral initiatives such as the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, and BRIDGE. The Program will prioritise cooperation with regional institutions such as the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, and international organizations supporting democracy initiatives including IDEA, Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB), and IFES (who have done a lot of work in area of intellectual disability). This cooperation seeks to enhance regional cooperation on broader issues of electoral democracy, increase regional knowledge and know-how

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[3] The gender strategy is to be developed within the first year of the program.

on electoral and democratic issues, enhance the capacities of regional stakeholders around issues of civic engagement and political participation, and promote policies and strategies for a greater and more effective role by women, marginalised groups, and youth in processes of social and political change. The regional approach also reflects the needs identified by the electoral and democratic governance initiatives currently underway in many Pacific countries including those raised by electoral management bodies, chief technical advisors, regional advisors, and governance team leaders.

UN COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

In line with the UN Secretary-General's "Sustaining Peace" agenda, UNDP's approach to the provision of electoral support has evolved from narrowly-offered technical support to strengthen EMBs ability to rollout voting processes, to addressing broader governance and conflict management issues around elections, including by: (1) building better capacitated, independent, gender-sensitive electoral institutions with capacities to competently manage the entire electoral cycle; (2) fostering public trust and confidence in electoral processes; (3) preventing/mitigating conflict before, during and after elections, including by supporting dispute resolution processes and facilitating inclusive stakeholder engagement; and (4) building strong citizen engagement through robust long-term civic and voter education and awareness.

> **Ongoing UNDP Electoral Support Projects:**
> Fiji
> Nauru
> Solomon Islands
> Vanuatu

UNDP is strategically well-placed to provide this support. UNDP has offices in Fiji, North Pacific, Solomon Islands, Samoa, and Papua New Guinea, which the program will work under, and in coordination with, to support these countries. UNDP is the major implementing body of the United Nations for support to developing electoral institutions, legal frameworks, processes, and events, managing 40-50 electoral projects every year. UNDP also has strong experience globally and in the Pacific region with supporting long-term institutional and capacity development, including the strengthening of EMBs between elections; there are ongoing electoral support projects in Fiji, Nauru, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. In addition to regional and country-level activities, UNDP globally produces important analysis and knowledge products on election-related issues.

LINK TO THE UNDP STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

The Program is in line with UNDP's commitment to the common agenda accelerating Sustainable Development Goal 16 to promote just, peaceful, and inclusive societies, and Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality. These SDGs recognise that without good and effective governance, and gender equality, achieving inclusive positive democratic development for people and achieving the SDGs overall will not be possible.

This Program also aligns with UNDP's global and regional strategic frameworks, which empower UNDP to provide governance assistance to partner Governments, including electoral support. It is in line with the implementation of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, especially "Signature Solution 2: Governance: Fairer, more effective governments for all", UNDP is moving towards more integrated governance programming.

To address the myriad global challenges impeding progress on Agenda 2030, we need governance systems that are inclusive, legitimate, accountable, and responsive. At the same time, the means and methodologies of governance systems are rapidly transforming. Complex governance environments require adaptivity, integrated partnerships and whole-of-society approaches – this includes electoral assistance. This program will approach electoral assistance holistically as part of a broader

governance umbrella integrating other governance areas such as parliamentary assistance, gender, human rights, rule of law, disability inclusion and information integrity, among many others.

Specifically, in the Pacific, this program will contribute to the following outcomes and outputs:
United Nations Pacific Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

- OUTCOME 4: By 2027, people enjoy and contribute to more accountable, inclusive, resilient, and responsive governance systems that promote gender equality, climate security, justice and peace, ensure participation, and protect their human rights.
- SUBOUTCOME 2: Inclusive political, structures and processes for human security and social cohesion and dialogue
- SDG 16.7.1: No. of countries with increased positions in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public service; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups.
- SUBOUTCOME 6: Expanded women's and youth's leadership and role in decision–making roles.
- SDG 5.5.1: No. of countries with increased proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments.

UNDP Multi-Country Program Document for the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu (2023-2027)

- OUTPUT 3.1. Governance institutions are accountable and have improved capacities for service delivery.

UN FRAMEWORK FOR ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

As endorsed by the General Assembly, the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and head of DPPA is designated as the UN Focal Point for electoral assistance matters. The focal point is responsible for approving and determining the parameters of all electoral assistance provided by any UN entity to Member States and is supported in that function by EAD. UNDP, as the largest provider of electoral assistance, maintains a close working relationship with DPPA and will engage closely with EAD, as well as the DPPA-DPO Asia-Pacific Division and the Pacific Peace and Development Advisor, on this program as well as individual country-specific initiatives, such as peacebuilding Programs.

Under the framework established by the General Assembly, UN electoral assistance is provided at the specific request of the Member State concerned or based on a mandate from the Security Council or General Assembly. Before agreeing upon and providing electoral assistance, the UN, led by EAD, assesses the needs and capacities of the Member State concerned to ensure that the type, parameters, and modalities of its support are tailored to the specific context. The Pacific Electoral Assistance Program is established under and will work within the bounds of, this framework.

3 RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

EXPECTED RESULTS

Pacific Islands Leaders have set clear goals for their own development, committing to building "a well-governed region that is stable, prosperous and resilient". To that end, this Program will implement a multi-pronged approach towards achieving two overarching objectives, namely (i) ensuring that key Pacific democratic institutions and processes are transparent, resilient and accountable and (ii)
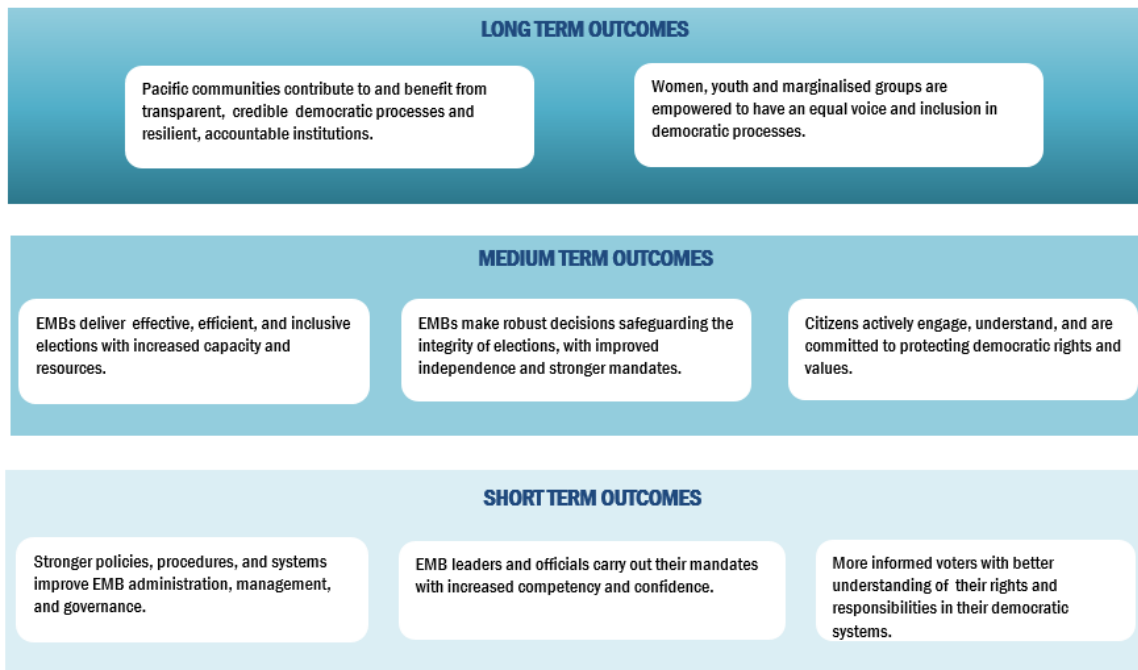
empowering women, youth and marginalised groups to have an equal voice and role in democratic processes.

The Program will work with electoral stakeholders to continually improve and redefine areas and strategies for long-term electoral support. The Program as currently formulated builds on the learning from previous and continuing national projects and closely reflects the identified needs, lessons learned and best practices for the implementation of electoral and democratic governance support in the Pacific, including:

- continued support to regional organizations to strengthen regional capacity (but also national EMB capacity),
- leveraging other UN Programs underway in the region, such as the parliament support for electoral candidate workshops, as an effective strategy for greater impact,
- specific and targeted interventions separately for women and youth, and
- sustainability of new practices and processes in the Pacific requires continued and long-term commitment.

PACIFIC ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

GOAL: A well-governed region that is stable, prosperous and resilient.

LONG TERM OUTCOMES

Pacific communities contribute to and benefit from transparent, credible democratic processes and resilient, accountable institutions.

Women, youth and marginalised groups are empowered to have an equal voice and inclusion in democratic processes.

MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES

EMBs deliver effective, efficient, and inclusive elections with increased capacity and resources.

EMBs make robust decisions safeguarding the integrity of elections, with improved independence and stronger mandates.

Citizens actively engage, understand, and are committed to protecting democratic rights and values.

SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

Stronger policies, procedures, and systems improve EMB administration, management, and governance.

EMB leaders and officials carry out their mandates with increased competency and confidence.

More informed voters with better understanding of their rights and responsibilities in their democratic systems.

The Program will implement electoral assistance within the broader framework of democratic governance by connecting it with existing regional UNDP governance projects, i.e. those working on parliamentary development (with its key focus on inclusive democratic systems for women and minorities), anti-corruption and transparency, and access to justice. The PEAP will work with these projects in a deliberate, coordinated manner and aim to link broader governance institutions with elections. In line with the UN Secretary-General's Sustaining Peace agenda, technical advisory support will also integrate conflict prevention and mitigation agenda as a key component.

The Program will focus on supporting and maximising the effectiveness of existing regional platforms and on increasing the frequency of dialogue. This will be combined with support for the professional development of national democratic institution stakeholders through the promotion of cooperation and coordination on a multilateral basis across Pacific EMBs, forums, associations, agencies, and programs on strengthening regional cooperation. This includes working with PIANZEA, funding partners, and the PIF for example, on events including regional conferences, and supporting BRIDGE

training programs, all with a focus on increasing collegiality and information exchange amongst Pacific EMBs.

OUTPUT 1: EMBs deliver effective, efficient, & inclusive elections with increased capacity and resources

The value of electoral technical and legal reform advisory support to EMBs by UNDP is well-known and well-appreciated by national partners. The program will utilise a multi-electoral cycle approach and look at electoral processes over time. It seeks to engage with different actors and entry points throughout each cycle and over many cycles, rather than channelling resources and technical support only towards the delivery of specific electoral events. Crucially, the Program will ensure coordination with existing and prospective activities based around peer-to-peer EMB support, in particular, through coordinated implementation of PEAP with the New Zealand Election Commission (NZEC), and collaborating with the AEC, PIANZEA and Pacific EMBs, as well as other assistance providers to ensure the EMBs receive the best level of support. This will also remove any duplication of effort.

The Program will also provide a platform which UNDP can utilise to ensure that EMBs and stakeholders are aware of the UN mandate, and processes involved in supporting requests for electoral assistance, as well as understanding the timeframes for assistance. If a request were to be made within the framework of an ongoing partnership with Pacific stakeholders, it should enable the request to be formulated in sufficient time and allow funding partners to be engaged early, maximising the utility of support provided.

There will also be strong coordination with UN agencies, INGOs and CSOs including UN Women, the Resident Coordinator's Office, and UNDP Effective Governance regional programs and projects. This can be used to ensure the wider structural issues can be fed into targeted information developed for electoral stakeholders – especially with support to equal access programs and civic education including curriculum development.

1.1 EMBs have strengthened capacities to organise credible, inclusive, accountable elections.

Through the provision of cost-effective technical assistance, the Program will be able to provide both smaller ad hoc assistance to EMBs and scale up to support full technical advisory programs on receipt of a request for support and completion of a needs assessment process. These can be managed regionally with deployments as required and using economies of scale that would come from reducing potential program management costs and structure duplication. Having the program in place will also dramatically reduce the mobilisation time required for a new national technical assistance operation.

Recognising that other EMBs are already receiving bilateral support from New Zealand MFAT, the Program will earmark MFAT funds to only support Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, and Tuvalu, as well as regional activities that bring together all Pacific EMBs including the French Territories to build solidarity and strengthen their voices. Additional countries in the Pacific may also be supported through additional funding depending during the period of the Program.

The Program will be able, upon request, to provide both smaller ad hoc assistance to EMBs and be able to scale up to support full technical advisory programs as needed. These can be managed regionally with deployments as required and using economies of scale that would come from reducing potential program management costs and structure duplication. Having the program in place will also dramatically reduce the mobilisation time required for any new national technical assistance operation.

1.2 High quality, responsive technical advice provided to additional EMBs, upon request, to strengthen their capacities to organise credible elections.

Recognising that PICs may seek to avail themselves of UNDP technical advice to their electoral institutions and processes during the term of the Program, support may be provided upon an official request from a PIC Government. In accordance with UN processes, assistance would be provided contingent on a needs assessment led by the UN Electoral Assistance Division, UN focal point approval and support from funding partners being raised.

Depending on the scope of support recommended by any needs assessment, the Program could provide direct technical assistance or develop new UNDP electoral support projects, harmonised and structured with a wider governance focus as appropriate. For example, UNDP is currently implementing an Integrated Governance Program in Nauru, which includes support for the EMB, parliament and civic education as well as new requests to support civil registry and rule of law institutions, and developing an Integrated Governance and Leadership Program for Tokelau where such capacity development support would be required.

> ## OUTPUT 2: EMB's make robust, inclusive, & informed decisions, safeguarding the integrity of elections with improved independence & stronger mandates

In a rapidly changing world, there are a range of new issues which EMBs will have to grapple with over coming years. New technologies can present opportunities for greater inclusion, accountability, transparency and the democratisation of information and participation in democratic processes, but they may also raise the serious threat of mis/disinformation and cyber-insecurity of key electoral information. It will be important that Pacific EMBs are well-informed and can access high-quality information and analysis in order to ensure that their own decisions are evidence-based and draw on the most recent good practices.

In order to ensure that Pacific EMBs are well-placed to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities, the Program will proactively develop itself as a trusted source of (comparative) knowledge, drawing on UNDP's global networks with EMBs and access to good practice and lessons learned from a vast range of jurisdictions that could be adapted and applied to a specific Pacific Focus. This output will therefore concentrate on the development of critical knowledge products and data platforms, which can be used by EMBs to strengthen their own analysis and decision-making. These products will be developed in conjunction with PIANZEA, EMBs, NZEC, AEC and EAD inputs.

To ensure the Program assistance is able to recognise the development challenges that vary for each EMB, and be able to build those challenges into future Program products and outputs, where possible, visits to each EMB will be done at the initiation of the Program. This will enhance ownership, partnership, and at the same time delve deeper into regional challenges that exhibit differently in each national context and provide insights for framing interventions and discussions, e.g. not enough is known about the extent and influence of mis/disinformation on voters in each country. Building an accurate picture on this will be key to effective regional aggregation of data and research.

2.1   Systematic knowledge gathered and shared with EMBs and other democratic partners on key electoral topics.

In order to provide EMBs with a stronger evidence-base on which to make decisions, and to assist them to come to terms with new issues and ideas of relevance to their role as key national democratic institutions, the Program will commission and/or publish a range of knowledge products designed to simply and quickly inform EMBs on a range of critical or emerging issues. Possible topics for such knowledge products include:

➢ Electoral calendars, tracking Pacific elections, including local governance elections.
➢ A Pacific Elections Compendium, with analysis of Pacific electoral topics.
➢ Plain language accounts and comparative analysis of electoral systems in the Pacific. This will include case studies that contextualise an election process within the national and pacific environment.
➢ Electoral research papers, aimed at furthering discussions on topics including:
  • Study on decreasing voter turnout in the Pacific
  • Voting access for people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in the Pacific
  • Approaches to voter and candidate age eligibility in the Pacific
  • Election funding legislation
  • Provision of voter & civic education in the Pacific
  • Mis/disinformation around elections in the Pacific
  • Electoral observation in the Pacific
  • Local government elections and their unique challenges/opportunities?
  • Climate change, elections, and Small Island States?
  • Voter registry systems and opportunities and challenges of integration with CRVS and national ID systems
  • Approaches to electoral legal frameworks in the Pacific,
  • Results management approaches in the Pacific
  • Pacific election dispute resolution
  • Regulation of political parties
➢ Technical barriers to access for women, youth, and PWD in candidate nomination and voting and recommendations for addressing them (cross-reference Outcome 3 as well)

Production of knowledge products will not be an endpoint; on specific topics, they will also be used to initiate conversations with EMBs and public discussions on structural issues, as well as broader discussions around inclusive democracy. The Program will co-organise regional knowledge and capacity development events for EMBs and other stakeholders with PIANZEA, based around the research produced, and leveraging high-profile opportunities such as International Democracy Day celebrations. The development process for some knowledge products will involve open-source research as well as discussions and interviews with EMBs and election stakeholders, which will also provide opportunities for the Program team to seed ideas with national partners and exchange knowledge.

The Program will seek to develop concepts, and potentially pilot community-based research projects and events structured toward community-owned discussions on specific topics including equal access to the democratic process and larger questions around how well the democratic systems serve the communities.

2.2 *User-friendly, searchable database/s of election-related legal frameworks and electoral event data created and maintained, with a specific membership platform for Pacific election practitioners.*

As Pacific Island Countries increasingly roll out digitalisation strategies, it is clear that the region is finally coming online in a systematic and sustainable way. Accordingly, online tools are becoming more useful to Pacific partners who now tend to have more reliable access to computers and the internet. Cognisant of that reality, the Program will work with EMBs and other partners such as the PIANZEA, the University of the South Pacific PacLII database, the AEC and NZEC to develop a set of online databases (which will be connected to each other as appropriate) which will:
  (1) Collect, tag, and share election related legal frameworks, including constitutions, electoral acts and related legislation, regulations, case law, observer reports, and analysis papers.

(2)   collect, share and allow the interrogation of electoral event data, including voter registration per event and votes per event, disaggregated by sex, age and electorates, and including local governance election data, as possible.

(3)   create a specific members-only portal for Pacific election practitioners to enable them to share their own information, ask questions and discuss sensitive issues with their peers and other experts. This will be done in coordination with PIANZEA web structures and aims to extend existing structures.

The Program will engage IT specialists to work on the design and development of the online database system/s, to ensure that the database is simple, sustainable and fit-for-purpose as a tool that can be used across the region, considering bandwidth access. An open-source content management system is preferred, if possible, to ensure sustainability, but this will need to be decided based on the final database specifications. The Program team will manage the collection of the data itself, in collaboration with electoral and other partners.

2.3   Upgrading and maintenance of the Pacific Women in Politics website and database as a trusted source of information on Pacific women in politics (cross-reference Activity Result 3.2)

The Pacific Women in Politics (PacWIP) website and online database of women candidates was developed and launched by UNDP in 2012, in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. PacWIP was designed as a platform to collect and share information about Pacific women in politics, including sharing information about elected women parliamentarians in all PIF countries at the national level and at the sub-national level (where that information was available), showcasing information on women candidates in the months leading up to an election and collecting laws, research publications, news items and videos about Pacific women in politics. The website has continued to be maintained by UNDP, but with very limited funding and staffing resources.

Under this Program, PacWIP will be more systematically updated and extended to ensure it is a cutting-edge source of data on Pacific women in politics. The Program will proactively collect biographical information on national women MPs as well as using partnerships with EMBs to collect data on women in elected local government positions (which is currently almost impossible to find for most Pacific jurisdictions). There will also be more systematic showcasing of women candidates, in partnership with national-level women NGOs and partners and more effort made to collect and share materials and resources. The Program will also reach out to other partners to build broader ownership over the website so that it becomes a stronger platform, including by engaging with UN Women, IFES, International IDEA, PIFS, and SPC/Pacific Women Lead.

OUTPUT 3: Citizens actively engage, understand, and are committed to protecting democratic rights and values

While EMBs and other democratic institutions are obviously critical to ensuring resilient Pacific democracies it is people who are at the heart of their own democracies. As such, it is imperative that this Program work not only with government institutions involved in the electoral cycle, but also directly with the people whose support for accountable, inclusive, and peaceful elections is essential to building a more resilient Pacific. Under this output, the Program will engage in activities aimed at strengthening civic and voter education activities run by EMBs as well as other stakeholders. Specific activities will also be targeted on promoting electoral inclusivity with a specific focus on (i) women's political participation (as candidates, party members and voters) and (ii) inclusive of people with physical and mental disabilities.

3.1: Promoting Gender Responsive Civic Education and Curriculums in PICs through Engagement with EMBs.

It is clear from research and the not-uncommon political unrest that has featured in some jurisdictions, that there is still variable understanding of and commitment to the fundamental principles of democratic governance based on inclusive elections amongst Pacific communities. A critical strategy for building commitment to democratic principles is well-designed and well-timed civic and voter education. Despite this, civic education often falls between the cracks of various government institutions and other stakeholder mandates, despite its obvious flow-on benefits to good governance and democratic stability.

UNDP has been one of the leading implementers of civic education activities, as part of its integrated democratic governance programming in a number of PICs. This Program will draw on that experience and expertise to advocate for and support the development of civic and/or voter education curriculums designed to strengthen Pacific citizens' knowledge of their constitutional democracies, governance structures and processes, and the role of elections and their own vote in progressing inclusive democracy and development. This important education has tended to fall between the cracks of the elections, governance, and education sectors. Special effort will be made to promote the role that women, young people, persons with disabilities and other groups who are often politically marginalised, play in electoral processes.

Efforts will include both regional and national level approaches. Regionally, through the commissioning of research on good practice and lessons learned, which can be shared at a knowledge event co-hosted with PIANZEA and other key partners working in this space. Building on that regional platform, and upon request, the Program can then produce specific curriculum products tailored to each country that build on best practices and previous work in the Pacific. This will be more cost-effective than requiring separate projects to provide such support, particularly for small islands PICs.

3.2: Women empowered to engage more effectively in political and electoral activities, as voters, party members and candidates.

Many organisations and NGOs are currently working to promote the political participation of women through a range of activities, including advocacy for temporary special measures (TSMs) for women, women candidates' training and Practice Parliaments and support for women's forums and networks. The Program will take care not to duplicate existing activities by working in close coordination with other programs, including other inclusive democracy programming by UNDP and other UN agencies, as well as activities being implemented by Pacific Women Lead, IFES, the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute and other development partners funded projects.

Leveraging the networks the Program will have with EMBs and other democracy institutions, as well as UNDP's existing portfolio of parliamentary projects and civic engagement activities with CSOs, the Program will focus on activities which seek to more effectively engage women in electoral events, as voters, party members and candidates. The Program will build on existing good work. Firstly, the Program will update and re-publish the seminal advocacy publication published by UNDP and PIFS in 2008 titled "Utilising Temporary Special Measures to Promote Gender Balance in Pacific Legislatures: A Guide to Options".[4] 2023 is the 15-year anniversary of the publication, providing an opportune time to update the technical information in the guide and use it as a chance to re-invigorate

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[4] Part 1: https://www.pacwip.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/TSM-Book-Part-1.pdf and Part 2: https://www.pacwip.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/TSM-Book-Part-2.pdf

the advocacy efforts of women across the region for TSMs. The updated guide will be used as a basis for offering training to national government and non-stakeholders to build their understanding of their national TSM options and support activities aimed at progressing TSMs depending on interest. The Program will also leverage UNDP's parliamentary projects to engage with decision-makers and thought-leaders, to build support for TSMs and any related law reforms.

As needed, the Program will also commission publications on the role of women in elections, and comparative studies on barriers to the power they face within the Pacific, as candidates, MPs, EMB workers and voters. The Program will also pilot community research efforts on societal perceptions of women in politics. This will connect back to the PacWip database referenced in Activity Result 2.3 and will also inform the civic education activities under Activity Result 3.1.

3.3: Promoting inclusive participation in Pacific democracies.

The Program will help foster an inclusive environment that empowers and supports the active participation and engagement for all, including exploring intersectional approaches with gender mainstreaming. By embracing diverse perspectives and voices, we aim to enhance democratic processes and promote equitable representation for all members of society.

One indicative activity includes individuals with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.

In 2021, UNDP published a guide on "Political Participation of Persons with Intellectual or Psychosocial Disabilities", which set out a number of recommendations for action to address the challenges still faced by many voters. The Program will complement that publication with specific Pacific research on access and barriers to voting by people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, with particular focus on intersectionality and the differentiated needs of women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. That research will be launched at a regional meeting with Pacific EMBs, policymakers and thought leaders, in collaboration with expert partners such as PIANZEA and the Pacific Disabilities Forum. The regional meeting will be used to share knowledge, build technical capacities and as an opportunity for advocacy in support of reforms. The Program will then continue to engage in advocacy with national stakeholders whose buy-in is critical for reform, and will support national level activities – including advocacy, awareness-raising, and law reform – as appropriate. Continuing advocacy on the topic throughout the Program life will allow the topic to remain foremost in discussions on democracy and how the most disadvantaged citizens are included in a fundamental expression of belonging.

RESOURCES REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED RESULTS

The required Program resources can be categorised into financial, technical, and managerial. Financial resources needed are indicated on the cover page of the Program Document. These resources will be used to procure the required technical and managerial services, mapped in the Multi-year Work Plan.

Technical and managerial assistance resources required have two main elements: (1) Capacity building of key Pacific democratic governance institutions; and knowledge development, civic education, and outreach efforts EMBs, regional democratic support bodies; and (2) Funding for national electoral activity support. Accordingly, there are two main forms of resources required to achieve the Program's outputs and outcome:

(1)   Technical advice: The most critical resource required to implement the Program is access to high quality technical advisory services. UNDP's Regional Electoral Advisor will act as the primary source of such advice, providing responsive advice and guidance to Program partners on electoral, governance, knowledge development, and civic education issues. His/her support will

be supplemented by technical advisors brought in via consultancies, who can provide more niche expertise, as necessary. For example, experts may need to be recruited to advise on electoral laws, voter registration and civic education approaches, both regionally and for specific nations (with appropriate requests and subsequent needs assessments). The Program will also benefit from technical advice provided by the UNDP Effective Governance Group and regional advisors, and subject-matter experts from UNDP and other UN agencies. The UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) will also provide input and guidance on the electoral elements of the Program.

(2) Funding for National Activity Support: The program includes a seed budget to allow for deployments as needed to support individual requests, and/or allow quick initiation of larger support programs.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

A full risk log is attached at Annex 4. One of the most critical risks affecting the Program will be ensuring there is sustained political will in support of strengthening EMBs across the region and related democratic frameworks and processes, with a particular risk that Program elements related to improving the inclusion of currently marginalised groups will result in pushback in favour of the status quo. It will be important for the Program to proactively engage not only with EMBs, but officials working in other key democratic institutions whose support to an inclusive and accountable electoral cycle is critical, most notably national legislatures. The Program will work closely with the UNDP Effective Governance team to make these connections and strengthen advocacy in support of inclusive electoral processes and institutions.

Technical advice is a critical factor that will drive the success of the Program. A major assumption is that the Program will be able to recruit and retain someone who has the expertise to provide quality advice to counterparts, and to be a self-starter who can operate largely on his/her own. Experience with other Pacific democratic governance projects has shown it can be difficult to attract technical specialists to smaller island states, though basing the position in Fiji which has regular flights in and out of the country may make that easier. UNDP will use its extensive network of electoral and governance contacts, including with the twinned arrangement already in place with the PIANZEA network, to identify good options for ensuring the provision of quality technical advice.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Key partners for the Program:

- Pacific EMBs: EMBs in the region will be a critical implementing partner, whose buy-in and active engagement are critical to the success of the Program. UNDP already has good relationships with many of the EMBs in the region, through regional events and subsequent follow up. It is clear from this engagement, that many would welcome quick-response access to technical advice and other support, on a needs basis. During the Program period, the Program team will work hard to establish very close partnerships with all Pacific EMBs.

- Pacific Islands, Australia, New Zealand Electoral Administrators Network (PIANZEA): This Network is well established in the Pacific and offers a good platform for Pacific EMBs both to share experiences and learn lessons from other organisations with similar mandates and resources. UNDP are already well acquainted with the work of PIANZEA and is committed to supporting the organisation to further increase its effectiveness and complement the Program's own work.

- New Zealand Election Commission: UNDP has been engaging with the New Zealand Government during the preparation of this Program Document, as well as the NZEC who will also

be provided with funding to support Pacific EMBs with technical assistance. This Program has been specifically designed to complement the work of the NZEC to ensure maximum impact and avoid duplication.

- Australian Election Commission (AEC): AEC has provided considerable support to Pacific EMBs over many years. The AEC is a trusted partner of Pacific EMBs and will be engaged as an active partner of this Program.

- UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD): EAD is responsible across the whole of the UN for providing guidance and advice to UN offices and Governments on electoral issues. The Program will engage EAD with Output 1. EAD will be critical to the success of this Program, with its deep, global comparative electoral experiences.

In terms of providers of services and expertise, the Program will draw on the expertise of several key organisations, many of whom already have the mandate to engage with the Pacific electoral sector:

- UNDP Pacific Office: The Pacific Office, based in Suva has regional parliamentary, public financial management, access to justice and anti-corruption programs within the Effective Governance Team, providing a wide scope of governance sector expertise. This expertise will be drawn upon by the Program to ensure the best quality activities are organised and consultants are selected. It will be supplemented by expertise available in the UNDP Samoa Multi-Country Office, including on digital transformation.

- Other Pacific UN Agencies: Depending on the development issue(s) being raised, the Program team will call on other UN agencies to ensure that technical and thematic issues related to the topic are addressed properly. Gender equality and inclusion, youth engagement and engaging people with disabilities are all areas where other UN agencies may be able to offer useful expertise. UNDP will proactively collaborate with UN Women to ensure that programming is complementary and draws on global gender and women's leadership good practices. The UN Resident Coordinator Offices in the Pacific incorporates the Peace and Development Advisors (PDAs) and will be extremely important as a source of expertise on conflict prevention topic areas.

- SPC/Pacific Women Lead: The Program will proactively collaborate with the Pacific regional project, "Balance of Power – Increasing Women's Participation and Voice in Political Processes" which is funded by the Australian Government and is engaging in national and regional support activities that aim to support women's political participation, including through candidate training and civil education.

- Pacific Islands Forum: The Pacific Islands Forum plays a vital role in promoting democratic processes and transparency through its electoral observation efforts. As an intergovernmental organization comprised of member states from the Pacific region, the Forum actively monitors and assesses electoral processes in the region to ensure they are conducted in a free, fair, and credible manner. Through its observer missions, the Forum provides technical assistance, observes election procedures, assesses the conduct of elections, and offers recommendations for improvement. By fostering regional cooperation and coordination among its members, the Pacific Islands Forum contributes to the promotion of democratic values and practices, enhances electoral integrity, and helps to build trust and confidence in the electoral processes of its member states.

- IDEA: The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. In the Pacific they are focused on Melanesia, and are currently working on public financing, anti-corruption, climate change elections, women's representation, and data systems. The Program will collaborate on thematic areas and knowledge exchange.

- IFES: The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) an international, non-profit organization founded in 1987. The organization provides assistance and support for elections and electoral stakeholders in new and emerging democracies. The Program will seek to engage collaboratively with them on thematic issues.

- Commonwealth Electoral Network: Many EMBs are already a part of this Network, which is a peer system that facilitates experience-sharing and promotes good practices. The Program will actively seek opportunities to collaborate and leverage the Network's expertise.

- National Parliaments in the Pacific: The Program will be able to quickly leverage the goodwill and trust generated through the ongoing UNDP regional parliamentary development projects – namely, 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. These projects will allow the Program to engage in civic education and curriculum development and provide a strong platform to support programs that promote women and marginalised sections of communities to engage in the political process of Pacific countries.

SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION (SSC/TRC)

South-south cooperation will remain a strong focus of the Program, facilitating south-south cooperation and triangular cooperation and knowledge exchange through the dissemination of evidence-based results and experiences on elections, to achieve impact at the regional and national levels. Ideally this would include at least one activity that brings SIDS from Pacific and Caribbean to explore similarities. Because development aid is more effective when developing countries work together to find solutions to common challenges, the Program will work to maximise opportunities for south-south and triangular cooperation among EMBs, to enable an analysis of the common challenges faced in managing and participating in elections, what has worked and what are the good practices from other regions and contexts that can be adopted in the Pacific; helping to foster innovation, and harmonize policies, legal frameworks and regulations that enhance citizen participation in electoral processes.

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

The Program will utilise digital solutions, where applicable, and sustainable, to ensure maximum effectiveness to address the development challenges in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs). Potential areas to be explored and advocated are digital technologies and solutions.

1. Online Civic Education and Engagement Platforms: To improve citizens' understanding and participation in democracy, the Program will explore online civic education platforms with Pacific EMBs. These platforms can offer interactive content, including video tutorials, webinars, and interactive quizzes, making it easier for citizens, including those in remote areas, to access essential information about democratic processes.

2. Election Monitoring Apps: With coordination with partners, digital solutions can be employed to create mobile apps for election monitoring. These apps will enable observer organizations to report irregularities and monitor electoral activities in real-time. Data collected through these apps will provide valuable insights for improving the transparency and integrity of elections.

3. Gender-Responsive Digital Campaigning: To address gender imbalances in politics, the Program will promote digital campaign strategies that are gender-responsive. This includes using social media and online advertising to encourage and support women's participation in politics. Online

campaigns will focus on breaking gender stereotypes and highlighting the importance of diverse representation.

4. Online Training and Capacity Building: To address the capacity challenges faced by smaller EMBs, the project will support online training and capacity-building programs wherever possible.

5. Digital Communication and Public Awareness Campaigns: The project will work with EMBs to enable them to leverage digital communication channels, such as social media and websites, to conduct public awareness campaigns. These campaigns will inform citizens about the importance of democratic participation, encourage voter turnout, and promote inclusivity and tolerance in politics.

6. Online Resource Centers: The project will seek to create online resource centers with comprehensive information on democratic governance, electoral processes, and related topics including empowering women in Democratic processes. These resource centers will be valuable references for electoral stakeholders, including EMBs, political parties, and civil society organizations.

By employing these digital technologies and solutions, the project aims to enhance the transparency, inclusivity, and efficiency of electoral processes in the Pacific Island Countries, ultimately contributing to the strengthening of democratic resilience in the region.

KNOWLEDGE

The Program will produce a range of knowledge products, most notably, the guidance notes and research products produced under Activity 2.1, searchable database/s of election-related legal frameworks and electoral event data which will be created under Activity 2.2 and the enhancement and development of the Pacific Women in Politics website under Activity 2.3. The Program will be proactive in disseminating knowledge products, through EMB networks but also through partnerships with other electoral support bodies, development partners and UN partners.

SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING UP

To ensure the sustainability of the support provided, the Program will continue to be guided by the concept of local ownership, which is made possible by designing and implementing activities and initiatives based on the local context and per the needs and demands of beneficiary partners. Support provided in the region, including to regional partners such as the PIANZEA, will be based on the needs and demands as identified by these organizations, and in line with the broad objectives and principles of the Program.

This Program recognizes and invests efforts in creating political will, building trust and leadership commitment for the support provided, helping to establish participants' ownership of the process and responsibility for its results. Given the political context in which the Program operates, engaging all stakeholders throughout the design and implementation process of activities is even more critical to ensuring inclusive decision-making, stronger networks, a sense of empowerment and creating solutions acceptable to everyone.

In addition to ensuring that support is locally owned, other strategies the regional platform will contribute to sustainability by:
- Including a strong focus on knowledge generation and knowledge sharing
- Facilitating networking among EMBs to devise solutions for common challenges, plan and deliver common thematic activities, pooling their human and financial resources

- Partnering with regional organizations and institutions including universities to plan and implement regional initiatives
- Advocating among Pacific EMBs for the need to focus on sustainability in their operational and programmatic design and planning
- Remaining flexible and innovative in the design, planning and implementation of activities

These strategies are aimed at sustaining the impact of UNDP support beyond the end of the Program and facilitating the continuation of PIANZEA as an active organization advocating for the professionalisation of elections in the region.

4 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

COST EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The Program will be able to provide both smaller *ad hoc* assistance to EMBs and be able to scale up to support full technical advisory support programs as needed. These too can be managed regionally with deployments as required and using economies of scale that would come from reducing potential program management costs and avoiding duplication. Having the Program in place will also dramatically reduce the mobilisation time required for a new national technical assistance operation. The utilisation of the Regional Electoral Advisor and staff will enable the Program to draw on readily available expertise without the challenge or expense of appointing individual advisors.

The Program design also uses economies of scale to reduce costs and allow it to broaden its scope beyond pure technical assistance to EMBs and into wider governance spheres. The value for money of the Program will be in its collaborations with other units within UNDP, where the Program will have access to a greater pool of experts and resources. Its linkages with the broader UNDP governance and peacebuilding cluster reduce costs to engage with colleagues working more efficiently in areas linked to elections (human rights, parliament, local governance, etc.). Similarly, the Program has access to global resources and expertise through the UN system; as well as collaborations with other regions including the Regional Electoral Support for the Middle East and North Africa, a Regional Component of the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support II.

Furthermore, with the continually evolving political environment and electoral calendars, the Program is also designed with the necessary level of flexibility to allow it to shift activities and resources as required. Given this continually changing context, the activities are designed beyond the timeframe of any specific election event in any given country. It supports the building of norms, practices, mechanisms, and institutions that can foster active civic engagement and democratic accountability in the Pacific. It will strengthen networks and processes as a contribution to the advancement of democratic norms. Throughout these and all its interventions, the Program will be guided by the principles of gender mainstreaming and focus on promoting the rights of women and other marginalized groups. The Program recognizes that sustainable capacity to hold credible elections means creating robust mechanisms and norms that support genuine political competition together with citizens making educated choices about their representatives, rather than exclusively focusing on strengthening the capacities of EMBs.

The Program will be delivered through a Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) as is the standard for projects which have a component related to United Nations Electoral Assistance. The Program will be implemented by the UNDP Effective Governance Team at the UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji under the overall guidance of the Program Board, which includes donors to the Program, the UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji, the UNDP Samoa Multi-Country Office and the UNDP Papua New Guinea Country Office. The implementation will be led by the UNDP Regional Electoral Advisor (project manager) under the

supervision of the Effective Governance and Peacebuilding Team Leader based in the Pacific Office in Fiji, and the UNDP Lead Electoral Advisor based in New York. The management and implementation of the Program will be closely coordinated with the UNDP Samoa Multi-Country Office, the UNDP Papua New Guinea Country Office and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP).

The Program will operate from the UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji with a team led by the Regional Electoral Advisor, with staff that will support Program implementation. This includes consultant technical experts with the expertise required for the various activities, recruited as needed.

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

The Regional Electoral Advisor will be supported by a part-time Project Assurance Officer, based in Suva, who will ensure compliance of the Program with UNDP's corporate policies. The Program will also be able to access the UNDP Pacific Office's finance, procurement, results management, and human resources team; In addition, the Program will benefit from the quality assurance and strategic guidance input by the Effective and Inclusive Governance Unit Team Leader.

The following team will manage the direct implementation of the Program and may be adjusted as needed.

- Regional Electoral Advisor/ Program Manager: This post will be critical to the achievement of the Program's objectives. The person recruited will have technical expertise and Program management skills. This person will provide direct technical advice and capacity development support to counterparts with all components and is responsible for the everyday management and decision-making of the Program.

- Electoral Program Analyst (National – full-time): The post will support the development of the Program's Pacific EMB stakeholder relationships, support the development of regional events, and will develop and produce a range of products and reports. She/he will also support the Program by leading the production of in-depth research gained through interviews, literature review and news monitoring on electoral topics in the pacific. This research area is unique in its scope and will be a central piece of the program outputs.

- Research/Communications Officer (National – full-time): This post will be responsible for managing the research program under Output 2 and ensuring that the Program proactively develops a community of practice amongst EMBs which can be used as a two-way mechanism to share information and ideas. Enhancing electoral knowledge amongst Pacific stakeholders is a key element of the Program, deserving of dedicated resources.

- Project Assurance Support Officer: (National - part-time) This post is already based in the UNDP Pacific Office and will be a shared resource, to ensure greater efficiencies. This person will support monitoring and evaluation activities, including advising the Electoral Advisor as needed.

- Consultants as required: The Program will consult, as the first point of call, the electoral roster managed by the UN's EAD. For other expertise, UNDP will support the Program to undertake value-for-money consultancy recruitments. The following consultants are envisaged to be retained on a Long-Term Agreement (LTA) basis, and recruited quickly when needed:
  o Legal Advisor (Election Dispute resolution, Legal Reform)
  o Operations/Procedures Advisor (developing manuals, procedures, office management systems, calendars, planning, computer skills etc.)

- o   Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Advisor
- o   Curriculum Advisor
- o   Community-Based Research Advisor
- o   Graphic Designer
- o   Voter Registration Advisor

Following the *Revised Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance* (2010), the UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji will submit status reports quarterly to the UNDP BBPS and UN-EAD to keep the Focal Point informed about the political and technical status of UN electoral assistance and facilitate UN-EAD's support and coordination at the headquarters level throughout the Program implementation.

The Program's Multi-Year Work Plan also includes a General Management Support (GMS) charge that covers the costs for UNDP that are not directly attributable to specific projects or services but are necessary to fund the corporate structure, management, and oversight costs of UNDP as per global UNDP practices. The GMS is applied to all projects funded by either member governments at 3% for projects implemented directly in those member countries, and at 8% for contributions from other development partners for all projects that are implemented by UNDP around the world.

5 RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNDAF/Country Program Results and Resource Framework: United Nations Pacific Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework   *OUTCOME 4:* By 2027, people enjoy and contribute to more accountable, inclusive, resilient, and responsive governance systems that promote gender equality, climate security, justice and peace, ensure participation, and protect their human rights.   *SUBOUTCOME 2:* Inclusive political, structures and processes for human security and social cohesion and dialogue   SDG 16.7.1: No. of countries with increased positions in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public service; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups.   *SUBOUTCOME 6:* Expanded women's and youth's leadership and role in decision–making roles.   SDG 5.5.1: No. of countries with increased proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments.   Multi-Country Program Document 2023-2027   OUTPUT 3.1. Governance institutions are accountable and have improved capacities for service delivery.
Outcome indicators as stated in the Regional Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: Indicator 3.1.   Number of countries with increased proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments, and (b) local governments.   Baseline (2021): 8   Target (2027): 14
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Output 2.2.2: Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency, and accountability.
Program Title and Quantum Program Number: Pacific Elections Assistance Program (PEAP) (01001333)

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)						DATA COLLECTION (METHODS & RISKS)
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	FINAL	
Output 1: EMBs deliver effective, efficient, and inclusive elections with increased capacity and resources.	Indicator 1.1. Number of procedural reforms adopted by electoral management bodies (IRRF 2.4.1)	Electoral management bodies, Signed Project Documents, Election Reports,	6	2021	6	7	9	12	14	14	Documentation Review; Stakeholder Interviews. Risks: Data Availability
	1.2 improve EMB's understanding of electoral topics through Effective Advocacy via Regional Thematic Workshops/Events.	Workshop/Event Registration Data, Workshop/Event Materials, Participant Feedback Forms, Pre- and Post-Workshop Assessments	0	2022	4	4	4	4	4	4	Surveys and Questionnaires, Document Analysis, Observation. Risks: Self-Reporting Bias, Limited Response Rate, Limited Availability of Documentation, Time and Resource Constraints
Output 2: EMBs make robust, inclusive, and informed decisions, safeguarding the integrity of elections with improved independence and stronger mandates.	2.1 EMBs demonstrate an increase in informed, data-driven electoral decisions by incorporating research papers on key electoral topics into their decision-making processes.	Publications, Election Reports, Interviews	0	2022	2	3	3	4	5	5	Surveys and Interviews with EMB officials, Document Analysis risks: Language and Cultural Barriers, EMB Capacity Constraints EMB Time Constraints
	2.2 # of EMBs able to leverage Regional & Global electoral institutions to inform electoral decision-making progress	Official Reports, EMB Documentation, Interviews and Surveys	0	2022	2	3	4	5	6	6	Documentation Review; Stakeholder Interviews. Risks: Limited Collaboration, Reliance on Self-Reported Data, Varying Levels of Engagement, Limited Availability of Documentation
	2.3 # of EMBs more aware of gender issues and their impact in Elections	Surveys, EMB Reports, Observations	0	2022	1 (AROB)	2	3	4	5	5	Quantitative Analysis, Qualitative Analysis, Document Analysis, Comparative Studies,

											Risks: Bias and Subjectivity, Data Validity, Confidentiality and Privacy
Output 3: Citizens actively engage, understand, and are committed to protecting democratic rights and values.	3.1 # of Pacific countries with active gender-responsive Civic Education Curriculums in their national education systems	Government Education Departments, Education Stakeholders,	1	2022	1	2	3	4	5	6	Desk Research, Key Informant Interviews, Comparative Analysis, Risks: Lack of Transparency, Variations in Terminology and Definitions, Limited Stakeholder Participation, Implementation Challenges
	3.2 # of EMBs receiving technical advice on Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) for increasing women's inclusion in democratic processes	Partnership Agreements and Program Reports, EMBs, Surveys and Interviews	0	2022	0	1	2	3	3	3	Document Analysis, Key Informant Interviews, Case Studies, Comparative Analysis Risks: Limited Documentation, Reliance on Self-Reported Data, Political Sensitivities, Varying Levels of Engagement, Limited Capacity for Evaluation

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Following UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the Program will use the following monitoring and evaluation tools:

Within the annual cycle

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

Annually

- Annual Progress Report. An Annual Progress Report shall be prepared by the Technical Advisor and Program manager and shared with the Project Board. The report will also be shared with EAD/DPA.

MONITORING PLAN

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Cost
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the Program in achieving the agreed outputs.	Quarterly	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by Program management.	
Monitor and Manage Risk	Monitoring visits based on the selection criteria. Based on the initial risk analysis, a risk log shall be activated in Quantum and regularly updated by reviewing the external environment that may affect the Program implementation. Spot checks and audits will be conducted following UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Quarterly	Risks are identified by Program management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.	10,000
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 Program.	At least annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the Program team and used to inform management decisions.	
Annual Program Quality Assurance	The quality of the Program will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify Program strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the Program.	Every 2nd yr. & Closure	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by Program management and used to inform decisions to improve Program 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.	
Program 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 Program quality rating summary, an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	Annually, and at the end of the Program (final report)		
Program Review (Project Board)	The Program's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular Program reviews to assess the performance of the Program and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the Program. In the Program's final year, the Program Board shall hold an end-of-Program review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and socialising Program results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	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	UNDAF/CPD Outcome	Planned Completion Date	Key Evaluation Stakeholders	Cost and Source of Funding
Final Evaluation	N/A	UNDP Strategic Plan: Output 2.2.2:	United Nations Pacific Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework: OUTCOME 4 Multi-Country Program Document 2023-2027: OUTPUT 3.1.	End of Program	EMBs, PIANZEA, NZEC, AEC, PIF	USD 30,000

MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year					PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
Output 1: EMBs deliver effective, efficient and inclusive elections with increased capacity and resources. [Gen 2]	1.1 - *EMBs have strengthened capacities to organise credible, inclusive, accountable elections*	$40,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000		Travel, Staff Services, Workshops	160,000
	1.2 *High quality, responsive technical advice provided to additional EMBs, upon request, to strengthen their capacities to organise credible elections*	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000		TA services workshops, Travel	$500,000
	1.3 - *Effective technical advisory services and Program management support*	$72,000	$72,000	$72,000	$72,000	$72,000		Staff costs (local & international)	$360,000
								Output Subtotal	**$1,020,000**
Output 2: EMBs make robust and informed decisions, safeguarding the integrity of elections with improved independence and stronger mandates. [Gen 2]	**2.1 -** *Systematic knowledge gathered and shared with EMBs and other democratic partners on key electoral topics*	$85,000	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000		Staff Services	$265,000
	2.2 - *User-friendly, searchable database/s of election-related legal frameworks and electoral event data created and maintained, with a specific membership platform for Pacific election practitioners*	$30,000	$40,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000		Staff Services, Website Development	$160,000
	2.3 - Upgrading a*nd maintenance of the Pacific Women in Politics website and database as a trusted source of information on Pacific women in politics*	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000		Staff Services, Website Development	$60,000

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year					PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
	2.4 - *Effective technical advisory services and Program management support*	$32,000	$32,000	$32,000	$32,000	$32,000		Staff costs (local & international)	$160,000
								Output Subtotal	**$645,000**
Output 3: Citizens actively engage, understand, and are committed to protecting democratic rights and values. [Gen 3]	**3.1** – *Gender-responsive civic education and curriculums are promoted to PICs by engaging with EMBs to encourage its uptake*	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000		TA services, Graphic Design Printing	$250,000
	3.2 - *Women empowered to engage more effectively in political and electoral activities, as voters, party members and candidates*	$80,000	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000	$60,000		Travel, Printing, meeting facilitation, Staff Services	$320,000
	3.3 - *Promoting inclusive participation in Pacific democracies*	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000		TA services workshops, Travel	$150,000
	3.4 - *Effective technical advisory services and Program management support*	$52,000	$73,750	$73,750	$73,750	$73,750		Staff costs (local & international)	$347,000
								Output Subtotal	**$1,067,000**
Year Totals		$583,000	$544,750	$534,750	$534,750	$534,750			
Evaluation						$30,000			
Delivery Enabling Services (DPC)		$10,654	$10,654	$10,654	$10,654	$10,654			$53,269
General Management Support		$43,974	$41,141	$40,400	$40,400	$42,623			$208,538
TOTAL		$637,628	$596,545	$585,804	$585,804	$618,026			$3,023,807

7 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

UNDP PROJECT BOARD

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

Project Executive: The Resident Representative, UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji

Senior supplier: Effective Governance Team Leader, UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji, **Samoa MCO, PNG CO**

Senior Supplier: Donors   Observers: NZEC
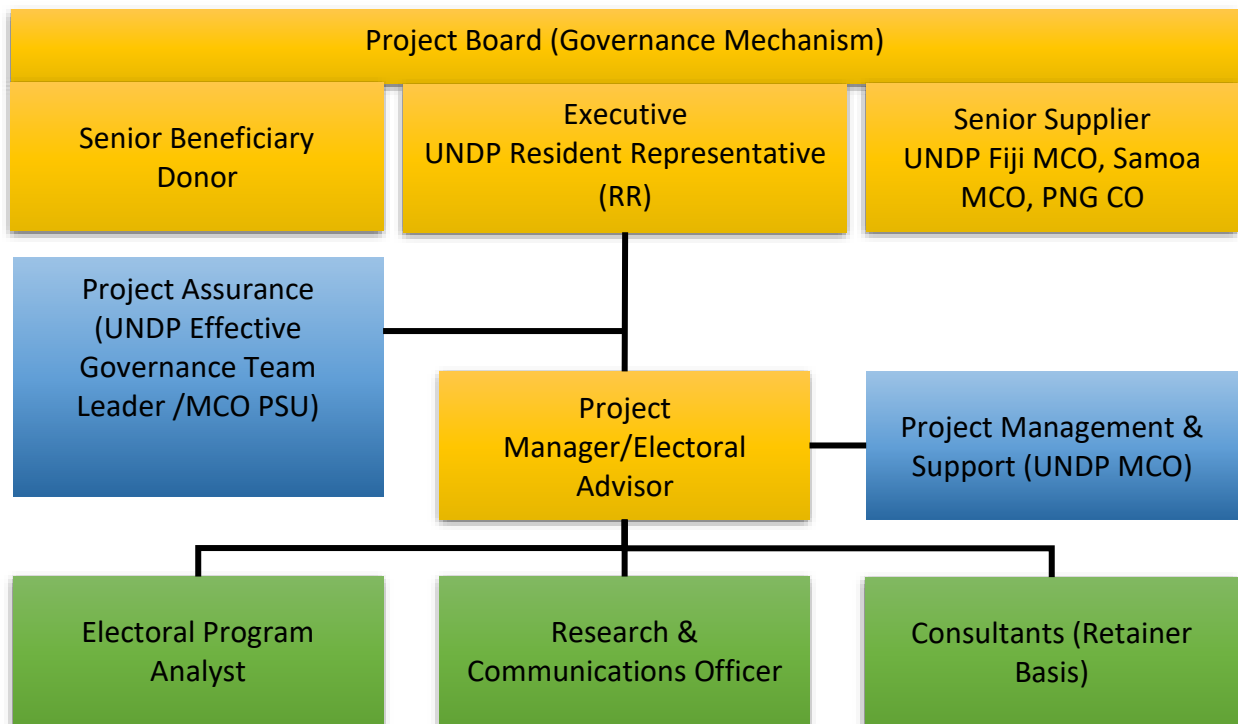
The Project Board will meet in person at least once a year and more often if required. Virtual Project Board may also take place throughout the year to ensure good communication and guidance for the Program. These project boards will be able to (a) provide strategic guidance to the Regional Component in the formulation and review of annual work plans, implementation, budget allocations and setting of annual targets; (b) review policy matters relating to the Program, the electoral process, and broader electoral assistance in the region; and (c) consider emerging issues and needs and provide advice and feedback to the Project Management Unit. Refer to Annex five for the complete ToR of the Project Board.

LEGAL CONTEXT

This Program forms part of an overall programmatic framework under which several separate associated country level activities will be implemented. When assistance and support services are provided from this Program to the associated country level activities, this document shall be the "Program Document" instrument referred to in: (i) the respective signed SBAAs for the specific countries; or (ii) in the Supplemental Provisions to the Program Document attached to the Project Document in cases where the recipient country has not signed an SBAA with UNDP, attached hereto and forming an integral part hereof. All references in the SBAA to "Executing Agency" shall be deemed to refer to "Implementing Partner."

This project will be implemented by the United Nations Development Program ("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 the best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition, the financial governance of UNDP shall apply.

8   RISK MANAGEMENT

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][5] [UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document][6] are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism , that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List, and that no UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document are used for money laundering activities. The United Nations Security Council Consolidated Sanctions List can be accessed via https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/un-sc-consolidated-list. 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 Program-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 Program 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.

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[5] To be used where UNDP is the Implementing Partner

[6] To be used where the UN, a UN fund/Program or a specialized agency is the Implementing Partner

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 Program 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 party's, 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 party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.

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. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient (each a "sub-party" and together "sub-parties") acknowledges and agrees that UNDP will not tolerate sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse of anyone by the sub-parties, and other entities involved in Project implementation, either as contractors or subcontractors and their personnel, and any individuals performing services for them under the Project Document.

(a) In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, each sub-party shall comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Secretary General's Bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 of 9 October 2003, concerning "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" ("SEA").

(b) Moreover, and without limitation to the application of other regulations, rules, policies and procedures bearing upon the performance of the activities under this Project Document, in the implementation of activities, each sub-party, shall not engage in any form of sexual harassment ("SH"). SH is defined as any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. SH may occur in the workplace or in connection with work. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, SH may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered.

d. In the performance of the activities under this Project Document, each sub-party shall (with respect to its own activities), and shall require from its sub-parties (with respect to

their activities) that they, have minimum standards and procedures in place, or a plan to develop and/or improve such standards and procedures in order to be able to take effective preventive and investigative action. These should include: policies on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse; policies on whistleblowing/protection against retaliation; and complaints, disciplinary and investigative mechanisms. In line with this, sub-parties will and will require that their respective sub-parties will take all appropriate measures to:

(i) Prevent its employees, agents or any other persons engaged to perform any services under this Project Document, from engaging in SH or SEA;

(ii) Offer employees and associated personnel training on prevention and response to SH and SEA, where sub-parties have not put in place its own training regarding the prevention of SH and SEA, sub-parties may use the training material available at UNDP;

(iii) Report and monitor allegations of SH and SEA of which any of the sub-parties have been informed or have otherwise become aware, and status thereof;

(iv) Refer victims/survivors of SH and SEA to safe and confidential victim assistance; and

(v) Promptly and confidentially record and investigate any allegations credible enough to warrant an investigation of SH or SEA. Each sub-party shall advise UNDP of any such allegations received and investigations being conducted by itself or any of its sub-parties with respect to their activities under the Project Document, and shall keep UNDP informed during the investigation by it or any of such sub-parties, to the extent that such notification (i) does not jeopardize the conduct of the investigation, including but not limited to the safety or security of persons, and/or (ii) is not in contravention of any laws applicable to it. Following the investigation, the relevant sub-party shall advise UNDP of any actions taken by it or any of the other entities further to the investigation.

e. Each sub-party shall establish that it has complied with the foregoing, to the satisfaction of UNDP, when requested by UNDP or any party acting on its behalf to provide such confirmation. Failure of the relevant sub-party to comply of the foregoing, as determined by UNDP, shall be considered grounds for suspension or termination of the Project.

f. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will ensure that any project activities undertaken by them will be implemented in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards and shall ensure that any incidents or issues of non-compliance shall be reported to UNDP in accordance with UNDP Social and Environmental Standards.

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

h. 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 (b) UNDP Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Policy; and (c) 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.

i. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP will conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP Programs 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.

j. 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, corruption other financial irregularities 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.

k. 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 corruption, other financial irregularities 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.

    Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient agrees that donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities under this Project Document, may seek recourse to such responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud, corruption or other financial irregularities, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

    Note: The term "Project Document" as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

l. 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.

m. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project or Program, 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.

n. 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.

ANNEX 1: PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

Project QA Assessment: Design and Appraisal				
Overall Project				
Exemplary (5) ◎◎◎◎◎	Highly Satisfactory (4) ◎◎◎◎○	Satisfactory (3) ◎◎◎○○	Needs Improvement (2) ◎◎○○○	Inadequate (1) ◎○○○○
At least four criteria are rated Exemplary, and all criteria are rated High or Exemplary.	All criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and at least four criteria are rated High or Exemplary.	At least six criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only one may be rated Needs Improvement. The Principled criterion must be rated Satisfactory or above.	At least three criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only four criteria may be rated Needs Improvement.	One or more criteria are rated Inadequate, or five or more criteria are rated Needs Improvement.
DECISION				
- APPROVE – the project is of sufficient quality to be approved in its current form. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner. - APPROVE WITH QUALIFICATIONS – the project has issues that must be addressed before the project document can be approved. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner. - DISAPPROVE – the project has significant issues that should prevent the project from being approved as drafted.				
RATING CRITERIA For all questions, select the option that best reflects the project				
Strategic				

1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the Program's Theory of Change?	3	2
	1	
3: The project is clearly linked to the Program's theory of change. It has an explicit change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome level change and why the project's strategy will likely lead to this change. This analysis is backed by credible evidence of what works effectively in this context and includes assumptions and risks. 2: The project is clearly linked to the Program's theory of change. It has a change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome-level change and why the project strategy will likely lead to this change. 1: The project document may describe in generic terms how the project will contribute to development results, without an explicit link to the Program's theory of change. *Note: Projects not contributing to a Program must have a project-specific Theory of Change. See alternative question under the lightbulb for these cases.	Evidence Refer to Page 6	

2. Is the project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?		3	2
• 3: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan[7] and adapts at least one Signature Solution[8]. The project's RRF includes all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true) • 2: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan[4]. The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true) • 1: The project responds to a partner's identified need, but this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.		1	
		Evidence: Project is clearly linked UNDP Strat Plan - Output 2.2.2,	
3. Is the project linked to the Program outputs? (i.e., UNDAF Results Group Workplan/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for global projects/strategic interventions not part of a Program)		Yes	No
Relevant			
4. Does the project target groups left furthest behind?		3	2
• 3: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritising discriminated and marginalized groups left furthest behind, identified through a rigorous process based on evidence. • 2: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing groups left furthest behind. • 1: The target groups are not clearly specified. *Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1. Projects that build institutional capacity should still identify targeted groups to justify support Evidence: Project has a clear strategy that promotes a "whole of society" approach, including: an entire output on promoting inclusion and in particular women in democratic processes, and a strong civic education component that targets the furthest behind including people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.		1	
5. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design?		3	2
• 3: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by credible evidence from sources such as evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, and/or monitoring have been explicitly used, with appropriate referencing, to justify the approach used by the project. • 2: The project design mentions knowledge and lessons learned backed by evidence/sources but have not been used to justify the approach selected. • 1: There is little, or no mention of knowledge and lessons learned informing the project design. Any references made are anecdotal and not backed by evidence. *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1 Evidence: Project builds on ongoing work and experiences of UNDP electoral projects globally, using existing networks, approaches, and practices. Similar regional programs in South America and MENA have been consulted at the program formulation stage.		1	
6. Does UNDP have a clear advantage to engage in the role envisioned by the project vis-à-vis national/regional/global partners and other actors?		3	2
• 3: An analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and credible evidence supports the proposed engagement of UNDP and partners through the project, including		1	

identification of potential funding partners. It is clear how results achieved by partners will complement the project's intended results and a communication strategy is in place to communicate results and raise visibility vis-à-vis key partners. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have been considered, as appropriate. (all must be true)

- 2: Some analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and relatively limited evidence supports the proposed engagement of and division of labour between UNDP and partners through the project, with unclear funding and communications strategies or plans.

- 1: No clear analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area that the project intends to work. There is risk that the project overlaps and/or does not coordinate with partners' interventions in this area. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have not been considered, despite its potential relevance.

*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1

Evidence: Project clearly outlines partners to be engaged and their comparative advantage at national, regional, and global levels. This includes a thorough consultation with other partners and the development of a coordination mechanism with NZEC – a partner funded by MFAT at the same level as this project. The project has been developed to enable it to adapt to developments with other partners and to foster collection and coordinated approaches to work on thematic issues

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[7] The three development settings in UNDP's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan are: a) Eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions; b) Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development; and c) Build resilience to shocks and crises
[8] The six Signature Solutions of UNDP's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan are: a) Keeping people out of poverty; b) Strengthen effective, inclusive, and accountable governance; c) Enhance national prevention and recovery capacities for resilient societies; d) Promote nature based solutions for a sustainable planet; e) Close the energy gap; and f) Strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Principled		
7. Does the project apply a human rights-based approach?	3	2
3: The project is guided by human rights and incorporates the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination in the project's strategy. The project upholds the relevant international and national laws and standards. Any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were rigorously identified and assessed as relevant, with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true) 2: The project is guided by human rights by prioritizing accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination. Potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were identified and assessed as relevant, and appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into the project design and budget. (both must be true) 1: No evidence that the project is guided by human rights. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were considered. *Note: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	1 || Evidence: The project is anchored in a human rights-based approach and all Outputs have elements of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination, be it elections, governance, or civic education.	
8. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design?	3	2
3: A participatory gender analysis has been conducted and results from this gender analysis inform the development challenge, strategy and expected results sections of the project document. Outputs and indicators of the results framework include explicit references to gender equality, and specific indicators measure and monitor results to ensure women are fully benefitting from the project. (all must be true) 2: A basic gender analysis has been carried out and results from this analysis are scattered (i.e., fragmented and not consistent) across the development challenge and strategy sections of the project document. The results framework may include some gender sensitive outputs and/or activities but gender inequalities are not consistently integrated across each output. (all must be true) 1: The project design may or may not mention information and/or data on the differential impact of the project's development situation on gender relations, women, and men, but the gender inequalities have not been clearly identified and reflected in the project document. *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	1 || Evidence: All outputs have rating of Gen 2 (page 1), with specific activities that target women's participation / benefit. Outputs 2 and 3 have specific indicators that make explicit references to gender equality.	
9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems?	3	2
3: Credible evidence that the project addresses sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges, which are integrated in the project strategy and design. The project reflects the interconnections between the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and rigorously assessed with appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true). 2: The project design integrates sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and assessed, and relevant	1 || Evidence: The project approach supports strengthening the resilience and sustainability of institutions key to the political and social governance in the Pacific	

management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (both must be true) • 1: Sustainability and resilience dimensions and impacts were not adequately considered. *Note: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1		
10. Has the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) been conducted to identify potential social and environmental impacts and risks? The SESP is not required for projects in which UNDP is Administrative Agent only and/or projects comprised solely of reports, coordination of events, trainings, workshops, meetings, conferences and/or communication materials and information dissemination. [if yes, upload the completed checklist. If SESP is not required, provide the reason for the exemption in the evidence section.]	Yes	No
	SESP Not Required	
Management & Monitoring		
11. Does the project have a strong results framework? • 3: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the key expected development changes, each with credible data sources and populated baselines and targets, including gender sensitive, target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators where appropriate. (all must be true) • 2: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators, but baselines, targets and data sources may not yet be fully specified. Some use of target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators, as appropriate. (all must be true) • 1: The project's selection of outputs and activities are not at an appropriate level; outputs are not accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the expected change and have not been populated with baselines and targets; data sources are not specified, and/or no gender sensitive, sex-disaggregation of indicators. (if any is true) *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	3	2
	1	
	Evidence: The project outputs and activities are at an appropriate level, with results-oriented indicators, and with baselines.	
12. Is the project's governance mechanism clearly defined in the project document, including composition of the project board? • 3: The project's governance mechanism is fully defined. Individuals have been specified for each position in the governance mechanism (especially all members of the project board.) Project Board members have agreed on their roles and responsibilities as specified in the terms of reference. The ToR of the project board has been attached to the project document. (all must be true). • 2: The project's governance mechanism is defined; specific institutions are noted as holding key governance roles, but individuals may not have been specified yet. The project document lists the most important responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality assurance roles. (all must be true) • 1: The project's governance mechanism is loosely defined in the project document, only mentioning key roles that will need to be filled later. No information on the responsibilities of key positions in the governance mechanism is provided.	3	2
	1	
	Evidence: Project governance mechanism is clearly defined – Project Board, Project Management, team members and their roles.	

*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1		
13. Have the project risks been identified with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risk? • 3: Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the Program's theory of change, Social and Environmental Standards and screening, situation analysis, capacity assessments and other analysis such as funding potential and reputational risk. Risks have been identified through a consultative process with key internal and external stakeholders. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, reflected in project budgeting and monitoring plans. (both must be true) • 2: Project risks related to the achievement of results are identified in the initial project risk log based on a minimum level of analysis and consultation, with mitigation measures identified for each risk. • 1: Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk log, but no evidence of consultation or analysis and no clear risk mitigation measures identified. This option is also selected if risks are not clearly identified and/or no initial risk log is included with the project document. *Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1	3 **2** 1 Evidence: The project risks related to the achievement of results are clearly articulated (page 17) and risk management measures also outlined	
Efficient		
14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design? This can include, for example: i) using the theory of change analysis to explore different options of achieving the maximum results with the resources available; ii) using a portfolio management approach to improve cost effectiveness through synergies with other interventions; iii) through joint operations (e.g., monitoring or procurement) with other partners; iv) sharing resources or coordinating delivery with other projects, v) using innovative approaches and technologies to reduce the cost of service delivery or other types of interventions. Evidence: Iii, iv, v are relevant. For example, coordinating delivery with other partners as mentioned above and leveraging on their expertise and resource.	**Yes (3)**	No (1)
15. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates? • 3: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, and is specified for the duration of the project period in a multi-year budget. Realistic resource mobilisation plans are in place to fill unfunded components. Costs are supported with valid estimates using benchmarks from similar projects or activities. Cost implications from inflation and foreign exchange exposure have been estimated and incorporated in the budget. Adequate costs for monitoring, evaluation, communications, and security have been incorporated. • 2: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, when possible, and is specified for the duration of the project in a multi-year budget, but no funding plan is in place. Costs are supported with valid estimates based on prevailing rates. • 1: The project's budget is not specified at the activity level, and/or may not be captured in a multi-year budget.	3 **2** 1 Evidence The project has a multi-year budget with specific activities and potential partial funding from UNDP and NZ. There remains an unfunded portion of the budget.	
16. Is the Country Office/Regional Hub/Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?	3	**2**

• **3:** The budget fully covers all project costs that are attributable to the project, including Program management and development effectiveness services related to strategic country Program planning, quality assurance, pipeline development, policy advocacy services, finance, procurement, human resources, administration, issuance of contracts, security, travel, assets, general services, information and communications based on full costing in accordance with prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL.) • **2:** The budget covers significant project costs that are attributable to the project based on prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL) as relevant. • **1:** The budget does not adequately cover project costs that are attributable to the project, and UNDP is cross-subsidizing the project. *Note: Management Action must be given for a score of 1. The budget must be revised to fully reflect the costs of implementation before the project commences.	1	
	Evidence: Refer page 1	
Effective		
17. Have targeted groups been engaged in the design of the project?	3	2
• **3:** Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising discriminated and marginalized populations that will be involved in or affected by the project, have been actively engaged in the design of the project. The project has an explicit strategy to identify, engage and ensure the meaningful participation of target groups as stakeholders throughout the project, including through monitoring and decision-making (e.g., representation on the project board, inclusion in samples for evaluations, etc.) • **2:** Some evidence that key targeted groups have been consulted in the design of the project. • **1:** No evidence of engagement with targeted groups during project design.	1	
	Evidence: Formal requests for support have been received for Samoa, Tuvalu and Fiji in advance of the finalisation of this Pro Doc.	
18. Does the project plan for adaptation and course correction if regular monitoring activities, evaluation, and lesson learned demonstrate there are better approaches to achieve the intended results and/or circumstances change during implementation?	Yes (3)	No (1)
19. The gender marker for all project outputs are scored at GEN2 or GEN3, indicating that gender has been fully mainstreamed into all project outputs at a minimum. *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of "no"	Yes (3)	No (1)
Sustainability & National Ownership		
20. Have national/regional/global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the project?	3	2
	1	
• **3:** National partners (or regional/global partners for regional and global projects) have full ownership of the project and led the process of the development of the project jointly with UNDP. • **2:** The project has been developed by UNDP in close consultation with national/regional/global partners. • **1:** The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners.	Evidence: Results and Partnerships are clearly established, with PIANZEA, PIF, IDEA, UNDPPA, UNWomen, NZEC, AEC, FEO	
	3	2
	1	

21. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific/ comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted? • <u>3:</u> The project has a strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on a completed capacity assessment. This strategy includes an approach to regularly monitor national capacities using clear indicators and rigorous methods of data collection and adjust the strategy to strengthen national capacities accordingly. • <u>2:</u> A capacity assessment has been completed. There are plans to develop a strategy to strengthen specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on the results of the capacity assessment. • <u>1:</u> Capacity assessments have not been carried out. Score Evidence: As mentioned above, this project builds on networks and relationships and experiences of ongoing UNDP projects like NEC and Parliamentary Strengthening. These two projects already work on institutional building and understand the lack thereof (NEC and Nauru Parliament), and the forthcoming project is tailored to build on institutional capacity strengthening.		
22. Is there is a clear strategy embedded in the project specifying how the project will use national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluations, etc.,) to the extent possible? No – N/A – DIM Project	Yes (3)	No (1)
23. Is there a clear transition arrangement/ phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilisation and communications strategy)? Evidence: Refer to section on sustainability and scaling up – Program aims to strengthen existing platforms and stakeholders rather than create new ones.	Yes (3)	No (1)

ANNEX 2: SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

Project Information

Project Information	
1. Project Title	Pacific Elections Assistance Program (PEAP)
2. Project Number	01001333
3. Location (Global/Region/Country)	Pacific

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

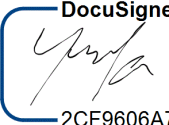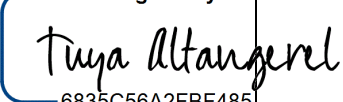| QUESTION 1: How Does the Project Integrate the Overarching Principles in order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability? |
|---|
| Briefly describe in the space below how the Project mainstreams the human-rights based approach |
| The Program mainstreams a human rights-based approach by enhancing the capacities and the role of Pacific EMBs and electoral stakeholders in the protection and realisation of human rights by developing the institutional structures, processes, and mechanism to put human rights at the centre of their core functions. The project works with EMBs to effectively fulfil its constitutional mandate of conducting periodical, free, fair, and credible elections, and upholding citizens right to vote and be elected in a genuine election, a necessary and fundamental component of an environment that protects and promotes human rights. The right to vote and be elected in genuine, periodic elections is intrinsically linked to a number of other human rights, the enjoyment of which is crucial to a meaningful electoral process. These prerequisite rights include the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the right to freedom of association and of peaceful assembly, and the right to freedom of movement. |
| Briefly describe in the space below how the Project is likely to improve gender equality and women's empowerment |
| The project has targeted work to promote gender equality ensure that women of all ages are more engaged in democratic processes. It also had a dedicated activity working to mainstream gender quality and empowerment in political process "3.2 - Women empowered to engage more effectively in political and electoral activities, as voters, party members and candidates." |
| Briefly describe in the space below how the Project mainstreams environmental sustainability |
| The project does not have any direct negative environmental effects. |

Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks?	QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks?			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 Probability	Significance	Comments	Description of assessment and management measures
No Risks Identified				
	QUESTION 4: What is the overall Project risk categorization?			
	Low Risk		✓	
	Moderate Risk			
	High Risk			

Final Sign Off

Signature	Date	Description
DocuSigned by: *Rustam Pulatov* 479CAAA23D024A5... Rustam Pulatov QA Assessor		UNDP staff member responsible for the project, typically a UNDP Program Officer. Final signature confirms they have "checked" to ensure that the SESP is adequately conducted.
DocuSigned by: 2CF9606A75D94B3... Yemesrach Workie QA Approver		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.
DocuSigned by: *Tuya Altangerel* 6835C56A2FBF485... Tuya Altangerel PAC Chair		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.

ANNEX 3. SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISK SCREENING CHECKLIST

Checklist Potential Social and Environmental <u>Risks</u>	Yes /No
Principles 1: Human Rights	
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? [9]	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?	No
6. Is there a risk that rights-holders do not have the capacity to claim their rights?	No
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
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?	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?	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

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[9] 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.

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?	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?	No
Standard 2: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation		
2.1	Will the proposed Project result in significant[10] 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)?	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
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 labour 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

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[10] 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.]

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?	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)?	Yes
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)?	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?	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

ANNEX 4. RISK ANALYSIS

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
1	There is a risk that the potential occurrence of disruptive political events, which pose a destabilisation threat to the Program, leading to adverse impacts on Program implementation, priorities, and funding.	As a result of political instability, conflicts, shifting government priorities, regulatory changes, delays or suspensions of critical political events, resource diversion, donor uncertainty, and stakeholder reactions.	Which will impact Program implementation, with external factors negatively changing partner priorities, and an elevating risk of funding interruptions, hindering progress, and introducing uncertainty regarding the Program's financial stability and operational effectiveness.	**8. SAFETY AND SECURITY (8.2. Political instability) - UNDP Risk Appetite: CAUTIOUS**	Likelihood: **2 - Low likelihood** Impact: **2 - Minor** Risk level: **LOW (equates to a risk appetite of CAUTIOUS)**	From: 01-Jan-24 To: 31-Dec-28	Program Manager Daniel Hinchcliff	Risk Treatment 1.1: continuous engagement with EMBs and key stakeholders, including financial partners to build trust, ensure joint stakeholder risk ownership, and enhance accountability through Program Board oversight. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager Risk Treatment 1.2: Establish diverse formal and informal networks, collaboration, and advocacy, strengthening the Program's resilience against political disruptions. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager
2	There is a risk that the engagement of key stakeholders by Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) may not reach the originally envisioned extent, thereby compromising the inclusivity of the program's outcomes.	As a result of various factors, which may include insufficient resources allocated to stakeholder outreach efforts, EMBs facing organizational constraints or bureaucratic challenges, changing political dynamics affecting EMB priorities, or difficulties in reaching and involving certain stakeholders due to logistical or communication hurdles.	Which will impact the Program by potentially resulting in less diverse input, reduced stakeholder buy-in, and a diminished ability to address the needs and concerns of all relevant parties, ultimately affecting the overall effectiveness and success of the program.	**1. SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL (1.12. Stakeholder engagement) - UNDP Risk Appetite: CAUTIOUS**	Likelihood: **3 - Moderately likely** Impact: **2 - Minor** Risk level: **LOW (equates to a risk appetite of CAUTIOUS)**	From: 01-Jan-24 To: 31-Dec-28	Program Manager Daniel Hinchcliff	Risk Treatment 2.1: Proactive Engagement and Education: The Program team will collaborate closely with EMBs and stakeholders to enhance their understanding of the critical role of inclusion in democratic activities, especially during elections, and promote necessary reforms. This will enhance stakeholder awareness and reduce the risk of limited engagement. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
3	There is a risk that stakeholders may undergo a shift in their priority areas, potentially leading to a reduced emphasis on implementing Program activities.	As a result of various factors such as changes in economic conditions, evolving organizational objectives, or shifting societal needs, stakeholders may undergo a change in their priority areas. These factors can impact their resource allocation and strategic focus, potentially leading to a reduced emphasis on implementing Program activities.	Which will impact the Program by potentially causing delays or interruptions in the execution of planned activities, a misalignment of Program objectives with stakeholder priorities, and a heightened risk of resource allocation challenges. Ultimately, this may lead to decreased Program effectiveness, increased Program costs, and potentially hinder the achievement of Program goals within the stipulated time frame.	**1. SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL (1.12. Stakeholder engagement) - UNDP Risk Appetite: CAUTIOUS**	Likelihood: **2 - Low likelihood** Impact: **2 - Minor** Risk level: **LOW (equates to a risk appetite of CAUTIOUS)**	From: 01-Jan-24 To: 31-Dec-28	Program Manager Daniel Hinchcliff	Risk Treatment 3.1: Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation: monitor stakeholder priorities and adapt Program activities accordingly. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager Risk Treatment 3.2: Regular progress reporting to the Program Board, UNDP, and donors. Actively flag possible changes in prioritization for discussion, promptly address any shifts in stakeholder priorities are and aligned with Program goals. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager Risk Treatment 3.3: Diversified Stakeholder Engagement: Broaden the scope of stakeholder engagement by involving a diverse range of stakeholders, to help identify and address potential challenges early on. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager
4	There is a risk that natural disasters cause stakeholders to experience disruptions to their daily lives and organizational functions, diminishing their capacity to participate in and implement Program activities.	As a result of climate change exacerbating natural disasters including events such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones, or tsunamis.	Which will impact Program activities, leading to delays and interruptions, as well as resource constraints and diverted stakeholder attention, especially in the context of election operations.	**1. SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL (1.5. Climate change and disaster risks) - UNDP Risk Appetite: CAUTIOUS**	Likelihood: **3 - Moderately likely** Impact: **3 - Intermediate** Risk level: **LOW (equates to a risk appetite of CAUTIOUS)**	From: 01-Jan-24 To: 31-Dec-28	Program Manager Daniel Hinchcliff	Risk Treatment 4.1: Disaster Monitoring: Program staff to monitor and stay vigilant and informed about potential threats to elections. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager Risk Treatment 4.2: Close collaboration with Election Authorities: to integrate program activities within broader disaster response and recovery efforts as appropriate. This collaborative approach can enhance the resilience of election operations during and after natural disasters. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
5	There is a risk that Program funds may not be fully mobilized or expended as intended.	As a result of a combination of factors, including unforeseen natural disasters, changing stakeholder priorities, and disruptions to Program activities.	Which will impact the Program's financial performance. Additionally, if stakeholders are unable to fully engage due to the impact of natural disasters or shifting priorities, it can result in unspent Program funds	**2. FINANCIAL (2.5. Delivery) - UNDP Risk Appetite: MINIMAL TO CAUTIOUS**	Likelihood: **1 - Not likely** Impact: **3 - Intermediate** Risk level: **LOW (equates to a risk appetite of MINIMAL)**	From: 01-Jan-24 To: 31-Dec-28	Program Manager Daniel Hinchcliff	Risk Treatment 5.1: Structured Initial Program Development: Carefully structuring initial Program development to realistically achievable levels prevent over-ambitious planning and unspent funds. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager Risk Treatment 5.2: Monitoring and Evaluation: Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation processes with Program Board oversight ensures efficient resource utilization and keeps activities on track. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager Risk Treatment 5.3: Activity Prioritization: Establishing a prioritization mechanism within Annual Work Plans (AWPs) when full resource mobilization is not achieved maximizes Program impact within budget constraints by focusing on critical activities. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager
6	There is a risk that Currency fluctuations negatively impact the Program budget causing unexpected cost increases or reductions. challenging effective fund allocation	As a result of inherent volatility in exchange rates between the United States Dollar (USD) and the New Zealand Dollar (NZD).	Which will impact the Program by leading to budgetary variances and financial uncertainties for the Program, including resource management, project planning, and financial oversight.	**2. FINANCIAL (2.4. Fluctuation in credit rate, market, currency) - UNDP Risk Appetite: MINIMAL TO CAUTIOUS**	Likelihood: **3 - Moderately likely** Impact: **2 - Minor** Risk level: **LOW (equates to a risk appetite of CAUTIOUS)**	From: 01-Jan-24 To: 31-Dec-28	Program Manager Daniel Hinchcliff	Risk Treatment 6.1: Regular Donor Updates: Maintain a consistent line of communication with donors, providing periodic updates on project progress and budget management, fostering confidence and collaboration in managing currency risk. Risk Treatment Owner: CTA/Program Manager

ANNEX 5: PROJECT BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

1) Overall Objective of the Project Board

The overall objective of the Project Board is to provide guidance and support to the Project management team to reach the Project's overall objective.

2) Overall responsibilities

The Project Board is the group responsible for making consensus management decisions for a project when guidance is required by the Technical Advisor, including the recommendation for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project plans and revisions. To ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, Project Board decisions should be made following standards that shall ensure the best value for money, fairness, integrity transparency and effective international competition[11]. In case a consensus cannot be reached, the final decision shall rest with the UNDP Program Manager. Project reviews by this group are made at designated decision points during the running of a project, or as necessary when raised by the Technical Advisor. This group is consulted by the Technical Advisor for decisions when PM tolerances (normally in terms of time and budget) have been exceeded.

Based on the approved Annual Work Plan (AWP), the Project Board may review and approve project quarterly plans when required and authorizes any major deviation from these agreed quarterly plans. It is the authority that signs off the completion of each quarterly plan as well as authorizes the start of the next quarterly plan. It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts within the project or negotiates a solution to any problems between the project and external bodies. In addition, it approves the appointment and responsibilities of the Technical Advisor and any delegation of its Project Assurance responsibilities.

3) Composition and organization

This group contains three roles, including:

1) An Executive: individual representing the project ownership to chair the group.
2) Senior Supplier: individual or group representing the interests of the parties concerned which provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project. The Senior Supplier's primary function within the Board is to guide the technical feasibility of the project.
3) Senior Beneficiary: individual or group of individuals representing the interests of those who will ultimately benefit from the project. The Senior Beneficiary's primary function within the Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries.

4) Specific responsibilities

Initiating a project

- Agree on the Technical Advisor's responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of the other members of the Project Management team
- Delegate any Project Assurance function as appropriate

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[11] UNDP Financial Rules and Regulations: Chapter E, Regulation 16.05: a) The administration by executing entities or, under the harmonized operational modalities, implementing partners, of resources obtained from or through UNDP shall be carried out under their respective 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. b) Where the financial governance of an executing entity or, under the harmonized operational modalities, implementing partner, does not provide the required guidance to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency, and effective international competition that of UNDP shall apply.

- Review the Progress Report for the Initiation Stage (if an Initiation Plan was required)
- Review and appraise detailed Project Plan and AWP, including Quantum reports covering activity definition, quality criteria, issue log, updated risk log and the monitoring and communication plan.

5) Running a project

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints
- Address project issues as raised by the Technical Advisor
- Provide guidance and agree on possible countermeasures/management actions to address specific risks
- Agree on Technical Advisor's tolerances in the Annual Work Plan and quarterly plans when required
- Conduct regular meetings to review the Project Quarterly Progress Report and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans
- Review Combined Delivery Reports (CDR) before certification by the Implementing Partner
- Appraise the Project Annual Review Report, make recommendations for the next AWP, and inform the Outcome Board about the results of the review
- Review and approve end project report, make recommendations for follow-on actions
- Provide ad-hoc direction and advice for exception situations when Technical Advisor's tolerances are exceeded
- Assess and decide on project changes through revisions.

6) Closing a project

- Assure that all Project deliverables have been produced satisfactorily
- Review and approve the Final Project Review Report, including Lessons-learned
- Make recommendations for follow-on actions to be submitted to the Outcome Board
- Commission project evaluation (only when required by partnership agreement)
- Notify operational completion of the project to the Outcome Board.

7) Executive

The Executive is ultimately responsible for the project, supported by the Senior Beneficiary and Senior Supplier. The Executive's role is to ensure that the project is focused throughout its life cycle on achieving its objectives and delivering outputs that will contribute to higher-level outcomes. The Executive has to ensure that the project gives value for money, ensuring a cost-conscious approach to the project, balancing the demands of beneficiary and supplier.

Specific Responsibilities (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board)

- Ensure that there is a coherent project organisation structure and logical set of plans
- Set tolerances in the AWP and other plans as required for the Technical Advisor
- Monitor and control the progress of the project at a strategic level
- Ensure that risks are being tracked and mitigated as effectively as possible
- Brief Outcome Board and relevant stakeholders about project progress
- Organise and chair Project Board meetings

The Executive is responsible for the overall assurance of the project as described below. If the project warrants it, the Executive may delegate some responsibility for the project assurance functions.

8) Senior Beneficiary

The Senior Beneficiary is responsible for validating the needs and for monitoring that the solution will meet those needs within the constraints of the project. The role represents the interests of all those

who will benefit from the project, or those for whom the deliverables resulting from activities will achieve specific output targets. The Senior Beneficiary role monitors progress against targets and quality criteria. This role may require more than one person to cover all the beneficiary interests. For the sake of effectiveness, the role should not be split between too many people.

Specific Responsibilities (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board)

- Ensure the expected output(s) and related activities of the project are well defined
- Make sure that progress toward the outputs required by the beneficiaries remains consistent from the beneficiary's perspective
- Promote and maintain focus on the expected project output(s)
- Prioritise and contribute beneficiaries' opinions on Project Board decisions on whether to implement recommendations on proposed changes
- Resolve priority conflicts.

The assurance responsibilities of the Senior Beneficiary are to check that:

- Specification of the Beneficiary's needs is accurate, complete, and unambiguous
- Implementation of activities at all stages is monitored to ensure that they will meet the beneficiary's needs and are progressing towards that target
- The impact of potential changes is evaluated from the beneficiary's point of view
- Risks to the beneficiaries are frequently monitored
- Where the project's size, complexity or importance warrants it, the Senior Beneficiary may delegate the responsibility and authority for some of the assurance responsibilities (see also the section below).

9)   Senior Supplier

The Senior Supplier represents the interests of the parties which provide funding and/or technical expertise to the project (designing, developing, facilitating, procuring, implementing). The Senior Supplier's primary function within the Board is to guide the technical feasibility of the project. The Senior Supplier role must have the authority to commit or acquire the supplier resources required. If necessary, more than one person may be required for this role. Typically, the implementing partner, UNDP and/or donor(s) would be represented under this role.

Specific Responsibilities (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board)
- Make sure that progress towards the outputs remains consistent from the supplier perspective
- Promote and maintain focus on the expected project output(s) from the point of view of supplier management
- Ensure that the supplier resources required for the project are made available
- Contribute supplier opinions on Project Board decisions on whether to implement recommendations on proposed changes
- Arbitrate on, and ensure resolution of, any supplier priority or resource conflicts
- The supplier assurance role responsibilities are to:
- Advise on the selection of strategy, design and methods to carry out project activities
- Ensure that any standards defined for the project are met and used to good effect
- Monitor potential changes and their impact on the quality of deliverables from a supplier perspective
- Monitor any risks in the implementation aspects of the project.

If warranted, some of this assurance responsibility may be delegated (see also the section below)

10)   Project Assurance
Overall responsibility: Project Assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member; however the role can be delegated. The Project Assurance role supports the Project Board by carrying out

objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed.

Project Assurance has to be independent of the Technical Advisor therefore the Project Board cannot delegate any of its assurance responsibilities to the Technical Advisor. A UNDP Program Officer typically holds the Project Assurance role.

The implementation of the assurance responsibilities needs to answer the question "What is to be assured?" The following list includes the key suggested aspects that need to be checked by the Project Assurance throughout the project as part of ensuring that it remains relevant, follows the approved plans, and continues to meet the planned targets with quality.

- Maintenance of thorough liaison throughout the project between the members of the Project Board
- Beneficiary needs and expectations are being met or managed
- Risks are being controlled
- Adherence to the Project Justification (Business Case)
- Projects fit with the overall Country Program
- The right people are being involved
- An acceptable solution is being developed
- The project remains viable
- The scope of the project is not "creeping upwards" unnoticed
- Internal and external communications are working
- Applicable UNDP rules and regulations are being observed
- Any legislative constraints are being observed
- Adherence to RMG monitoring and reporting requirements and standards
- Quality management procedures are properly followed
- Project Board's decisions are followed, and revisions are managed in line with the required procedures.

Specific responsibilities would include:

Initiating a project

- Ensure that project outputs definitions and activity definitions including description and quality criteria have been properly recorded in the Quantum Project Management module to facilitate monitoring and reporting
- Ensure that people concerned are fully informed about the project
- Ensure that all preparatory activities, including training for project staff, and logistic support are timely carried out.

Running a project

- Ensure that funds are made available to the project
- Ensure that risks and issues are properly managed and that the logs in Quantum are regularly updated
- Ensure that critical project information is monitored and updated in Quantum, using the Activity Quality log in particular
- Ensure that Project Quarterly Progress Reports are prepared and submitted on time, and according to standards in terms of format and content quality
- Ensure that CDRs and FACE are prepared and submitted to the Project Board and Outcome Board
- Perform oversight activities, such as periodic monitoring visits and "spot checks"
- Ensure that the Project Data Quality Dashboard remains "green".

Closing a project
- Ensure that all financial transactions are in Quantum-based on the final accounting of expenditures
- Ensure that the project is operationally closed in Quantum
- Ensure that project accounts are closed, and status set in Quantum accordingly

ANNEX 6: PEAP STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE GROUP

In view of the UNDP Project operating in parallel and in coordination with the New Zealand Electoral Commission (NZEC) and under the umbrella of New Zealand MFAT's Pacific Elections Assistance Program (PEAP), a coordination structure will be created to ensure that MFAT funded programs will align with NZEC activities. This structure is detailed below:

PEAP Governance Structure

The Strategic Governance arrangement for the PEAP is set out below and includes representatives from each of the three partners. MFAT, NZEC, and UNDP see value in including the PIANZEA Advisory Group (PAG) and the dotted line in the diagram indicates their participation will be by invitation in an observer status. The proposed PEAP Governance mechanism is designed to ensure Pacific islands' EMBs ownership and engagement in annual work programming exercises.

1.   Overall Objective of the PEAP Governance Group

The overall objective of the PEAP Governance Group is to provide co-ordination, guidance and support to the PEAP activity team in order to reach the PEAP's overall objectives.

2.   Specific Objectives of the PEAP Governance Group

The specific objectives of the PEAP Governance Group are as follows:

- Provide a forum for the overall co-ordination of the PEAP, to enhance collaboration and inclusiveness.
- Provide an opportunity for PEAP regional stakeholders – via PAG – to contribute to the regional overview.
- Appraise the PEAP Annual Reports and/or any Progress Reports and provide guidance and recommendations for upcoming Work Plans.
- Consider risks and provide guidance and recommendations on possible mitigations to address specific risks.
- Consider any issues escalated to the Group and provide guidance and recommendations for their resolution.

3.   Composition of the PEAP Governance Group

The PEAP Governance Structure is depicted in the diagram below. Under this PEAP, the Governance Group (orange) provides program directional guidance, endorsement of annual plans and support to the PEAP activity team (blue).

The Strategic Governance Group will consist of relevant representatives of MFAT, UNDP and NZEC, with the level of seniority as indicated. PAG and Pacific EMBs will be invited to participate as indicated by the dotted lines.
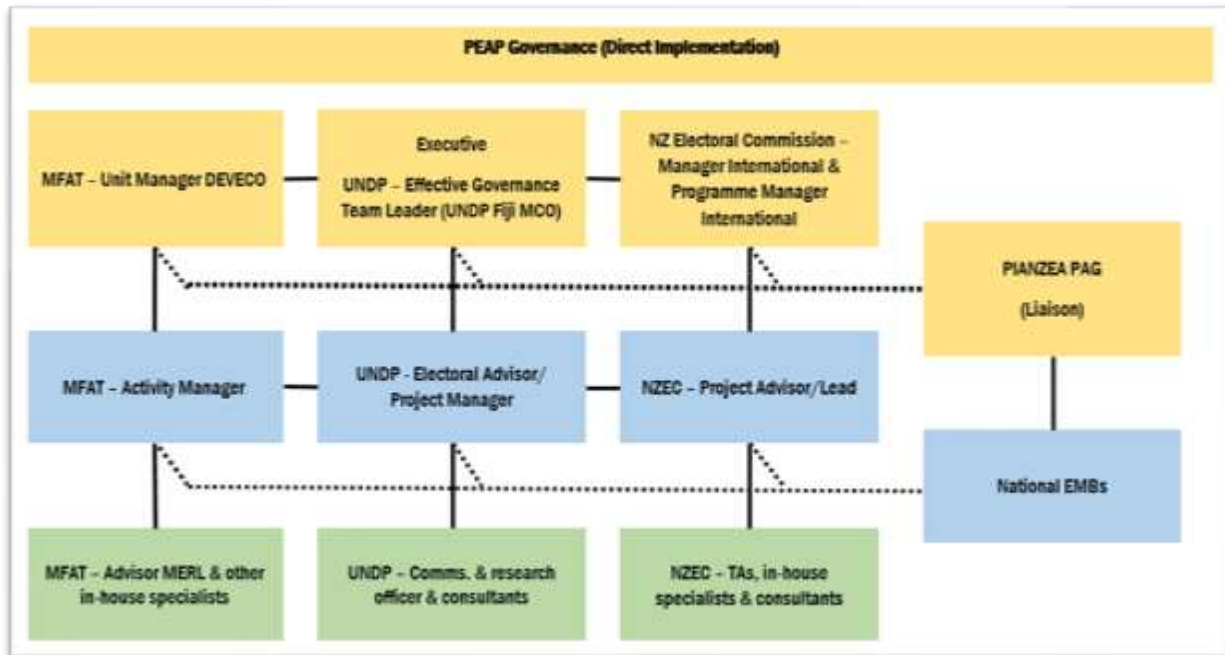
4.   Organization of PEAP Governance Group Meetings

The PEAP Governance Group will meet annually, and more frequently if decided by the Group. The meetings will be held at a place, date and time convenient for all representatives to attend – virtually or in person.

One week before the meeting, the following documents will be circulated to Group members:

- Agenda.
- Minutes from previous meeting.
- Summary documents for review, such as annual work plans and progress reports.
- Other documentation considered relevant.

For urgent matters or unforeseen difficulties in respect to the PEAP, an ad hoc Governance Group meeting may be convened upon the request of any of the Group members.

5.   Outputs of the PEAP Governance Group

The PEAP Governance Group will designate a person to prepare minutes of each meeting. Within a week of the meeting, a draft of the minutes will be circulated to Group members for comment, and any comments should be sent back within the following week. The final minutes will be produced within a week of receipt of comments, and re-circulated.

Aside from these minutes, it is anticipated that the PEAP Governance Group will have a positive effect on the dissemination of information among the stakeholders to the PEAP and reinforce co-operation and collaboration.