

Assistance in capacity building of the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan

Final Project Review Report

GOVERNMENT OF TURKMENISTAN



Implementing Agency:	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Project ID:	<u>01002152</u>
Gender Marker:	Gen 2
Digitalization Marker:	N/A
Project Title:	Assistance in Capacity Building of the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan
Project Duration:	01 March 2024 – 31 December 2025
Country / Region:	Turkmenistan/RBEC
Funding Partner/s:	Government of Turkmenistan
Responsible Parties:	UNDP
Reporting Period:	01 March 2024 – 31 December 2025
Project Manager:	Lachin Artykova, Human Rights and Rule of Law Projects Manager, <u>lachin.artykova@undp.org</u>

Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary 4

II. Introduction / Background7

III. Progress Review: Key Activities and Results, <specify reporting period>.....8

Section 1: Analysis of Theory of Change17

Section 2: Overall progress against outcomes17

Section 3: Monitoring and Evaluation of activities.18

Section 4: Progress against each output20

Section 5: Cross-Cutting Integration25

IV. Partnerships and Sustainability26

V. Update on risks and mitigation measures28

VI. Key Challenges, Lessons Learned and Recommendations29

VII. Financial Summary31

VIII. Annexes.....32

Annex I: Progress Review: detailed matrix of activities and results 17

Annex II: Updated Risk Log18

Annex III: Annual Work Plan for (next year)19

Annex IV: Assets List.19

Annex V: Knowledge Generation19

(Note: Please use table of contents maker to ensure automatic updating of pages and content).

Acronyms

CEC	Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan
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EAD	Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs United Nations
GEWEE	Gender Equality and Women`s Economic Empowerment
LEC	Local Electoral Commission
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan
REC	Regional Electoral Commission
RBEC	Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
TSM	Temporary Special Measures
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN	United Nations

I. Executive Summary

During the reporting period of the joint UNDP–CEC project “*Assistance in Capacity Building of the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan*,” advanced its overarching objective of strengthening institutional, technical, and gender-responsive capacities of electoral administration bodies. The project contributes to national priorities outlined in Turkmenistan’s Constitution and Unified Electoral Code, which guarantee universal and equal suffrage (Article 119) and mandate the Central Election Commission of Turkmenistan for Holding Elections and Referendums (CEC) to organize transparent, inclusive elections (Articles 21 & 25 of the Electoral Code). Within this context, the project directly supports the Government’s ongoing electoral reforms and modernization efforts—particularly the development of a single voter registry with gender-disaggregated data and enhanced training systems for election officials.

Progress Toward Outputs and Outcomes

Despite funding and scheduling challenges, the project achieved substantial progress toward its planned outputs:

Output 1: Strategy for establishing a unified voter register with gender disaggregated data developed

Activity 1.1. Support national stakeholders to study and learn from relevant regional examples and international best practices

The study visit to Armenia to facilitate peer learning on electoral management and digital voter registries was organized from 13 to 17 November 2025. The implementation of this activity had been postponed earlier in the year due to several challenges, including the late approval of the project’s no-cost extension and election-related scheduling conflicts in Kyrgyzstan and Georgia, which were initially considered as potential host countries. The UNDP Country Office in Turkmenistan successfully coordinated the organization of the visit to the CEC of Armenia, with strong support from the UNDP Country Office in Armenia, which ensured full readiness to host and provide technical support to the Turkmenistan CEC delegation in November 2025.

Activity 1.2. Organize seminars and workshops to consider and discuss various options for creating single voter registry with gender disaggregated data :

A two-day national workshop on developing a unified voter registry with gender-disaggregated data was successfully held on 9–10 December 2024 at the CEC headquarters. More than 50 percent of the 40 participants were women, reflecting strong gender representation. The training was facilitated by an international expert and adopted a training-of-trainers (TOT) model to ensure local replication across velayat and etrap election commissions. Participants reported increased knowledge of inclusivity, transparency, and integrity in voter registration systems, in line with NAM 2022 recommendations.

Activity 1.3. Support the CEC and other stakeholders in drafting an “options paper” for developing a single voter registry with gender data :

The “Options Paper on Developing a Single Voter Registry” was successfully developed with legal analysis and recommendations provided by international consultant Gulnara Iskakova. The paper outlines the necessary legislative amendments to strengthen the legal framework and ensure the integration of gender-disaggregated data into the voter registry system.

This document was submitted to the national partner in March 2025, and its recommendations were taken into account when preparing the proposal submitted to the Parliament of Turkmenistan for the draft of the country's first Law on the Single Voter Registry. On 28 June 2025, the new law was officially adopted.

Output 2: Capacity of electoral officials improved

Activity 2.1. Organizing BRIDGE trainings for the CEC with gender responsive approach:

A four-day BRIDGE training for CEC and local election officials was conducted on 18–21 February 2025 with participation from all regions. The workshop enhanced participants' knowledge of electoral operations, transparency mechanisms, and gender-inclusive practices, and all participants received BRIDGE certificates.

Activity 2.2. Establishing a training center including a training library in the elections commission

Originally, the project planned to institutionalize capacity-building and sustainability processes by assisting the CEC and lower-level election commissions in establishing a permanent Training Center, which would serve as a central repository of knowledge on electoral issues. The Center was envisioned to include a library of books in Turkmen, Russian, and English, along with sample electoral materials from Turkmenistan and other countries. It was intended not only to strengthen the sustainable capacity building of electoral stakeholders but also to serve as a resource hub for academia, students, and others interested in electoral research and learning.

However, due to budget reductions and the revised project document, this activity was successfully implemented in an e-library format, accompanied by the reformation of the CEC website. The redesigned platform aligns with regional trends, providing comprehensive information and digital resources similar to established e-centers in neighboring countries. This initiative was successfully finalized in December 2025, ensuring long-term accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of electoral knowledge and training resources.

Output 3: Political participation of women increased

Activity 3.1: Analysis of trends and relevant examples on improving political participation of women, including introduction of Temporary Special Measures (TSM)

Activity 3.2. Analysis of the electoral legislation of Turkmenistan and development of draft amendments for introduction of TSM

These two analyses were consolidated into a single Terms of Reference (TOR) for the international expert engaged to introduce Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) aimed at enhancing women's representation in electoral processes. The expert's work commenced in November 2025, following the timely completion of preliminary groundwork—including close work with the project manager to receive the required documents for the comprehensive data review—by the end of October 2025. A workshop was held for key stakeholders, including representatives of political parties, members of Parliament, staff, and members of the CEC, as well as civil society organizations (CSOs) in Turkmenistan. Conducted in close consultation with relevant parliamentary committees, the CEC, and other stakeholders, the project deliverables – including this analysis of existing legislation and the development of proposals for its improvement, with a particular focus on ensuring voting rights for persons with disabilities and introducing TSMs will be sent via NV to national stakeholders in January 2026 considering that the project was technically extended till January 31, 2026. It is worth mentioning the contribution of the international expert for these activities to the International Forum on Women, Peace and Security on December 10, 2025,

dedicated to the International Year of Peace and trust and the 30th anniversary of Turkmenistan's permanent neutrality.

Challenges and Risks

Implementation of the project during 2024 faced several operational and contextual challenges that required adaptive management and close coordination among partners.

The delayed budget release at the end of the third quarter of 2024 disrupted early-year planning and activity implementation. To mitigate this, the project team revised the sequencing of activities, prioritized cost-efficient centralized events, and secured provisional approval for a project extension to ensure the achievement of key outputs.

Political instability and scheduling conflicts in partner countries also affected the organization of regional exchanges. As a mitigation measure, the planned study visit was shifted to 2025, while cross-office coordination continued through regular engagement between UNDP Resident Representatives across the region. UNDP facilitated official correspondence and coordination between the commissions, ensuring diplomatic and procedural alignment.

Budget reductions by the national partner constrained the scope of field-level activities. To maintain impact under limited resources, the project adopted a quality-focused approach through a "training-of-trainers" (TOT) model, ensuring sustainable knowledge transfer despite smaller participant numbers.

Finally, under the pressure of limited resources, the project prioritized gender balance, achieving over 50% women's participation in training activities. This outcome demonstrates UNDP's continued commitment to SDG 5 and the promotion of gender equality in electoral governance.

Utilization Update

The total project budget for the 2024–2025 cycle amounts to 166,414 USD. Expenditures during the reporting period were directed toward workshops, BRIDGE training sessions, and consultant fees and utilized in compliance with the AWP according to UNDP rules and procedures. Although disbursement delays affected the early implementation phase, utilization rates are projected to reach the planned targets by the end of 2025, following the completion of postponed activities.

Key Recommendations and Achievements

- The project was requested to be continued by the Government of Turkmenistan
- This request was approved by the UN Under Secretary General for the desk review of the project implementation and results.
- Desk review of the results of project implementation was conducted in November 2025 jointly with EAD, UN RCO, UNDP, MFA, and CEC, with recommendations for the next phase of the project to ensure sustainability.
- Recommendation of the Desk review report was shared by EAD with national partners, UN RCO, and UNDP in Turkmenistan.

II. Introduction / Background

Background and Rationale

The electoral system of Turkmenistan has advanced through constitutional and institutional reforms promoting public participation and transparency. Under Articles 45 and 46 of the Constitution, citizens have the right to elect and be elected to public bodies, while the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan (CEC) ensures compliance with the principles of universal and equal suffrage. Following a request from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a UN Electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) was deployed in July 2022. The NAM recognized progress in the electoral framework but identified the need for strengthened institutional capacity, digital modernization, and gender-responsive participation mechanisms.

Project Objective and Expected Results

The joint UNDP–CEC project “Assistance in Capacity Building of the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan” seeks to enhance the institutional, technical, and gender capacities of the CEC and subordinate election bodies. Key outcomes include (i) development of a unified voter registry with gender-disaggregated data, (ii) improved capacity of electoral officials through BRIDGE and TOT trainings, and (iii) increased women’s participation in electoral processes through targeted measures and policy recommendations.

Strategic and Policy Context

The project aligns with SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and contributes to the UNSDCF 2021–2025 priority on effective and inclusive governance. It also supports Turkmenistan’s commitments under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and regional cooperation frameworks such as the OSCE and CIS. The project builds on earlier UNDP assistance (2008–2014) and reinforces the country’s efforts to institutionalize transparency, accountability, and gender equality in electoral governance.

Implementation and Coordination

Jointly implemented by UNDP Turkmenistan and the CEC, with guidance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the project had regular coordination meetings to ensure alignment with national priorities and synergy with other governance and gender initiatives. The CEC provides institutional leadership, while UNDP supports policy advisory, capacity building, and donor coordination.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring follows UNDP’s Results-Based Management (RBM) framework and the Annual Work Plan (AWP), with quarterly progress tracking, joint review meetings, and post-training evaluations. Progress is validated through LPAC review and annual reporting to ensure transparency and accountability.

Summary

Overall, the project continues to serve as a strategic platform for advancing inclusive, transparent, and gender-responsive electoral governance in Turkmenistan. Through adaptive management and close collaboration with national stakeholders, it contributes to sustainable institutional development and the modernization of the country's electoral system.

III. Progress Review: Key Activities and Results 2024-2025

Overview & Methodology

During 2024–2025, the project “Assistance in Capacity Building of the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan” advanced from planning into implementation of its core outputs. Despite initial delays, the project delivered workshops, trainings, and analytical deliverables that strengthened institutional capacity, advanced legal reforms, and promoted gender inclusion in electoral governance. The progress reported here is evidence-based, anchored on workshop evaluations, consultant reports, and public press releases.

For each, key activities, results, before/after comparisons, challenges, and lessons learned are discussed. Visual placeholders (to be replaced with actual charts, photos) are included to guide layout.

Output 1: Strategy for a Unified Voter Register with Gender-Disaggregated Data

Activity 1.1: Regional Exchange and Peer Learning

📍 Study Visit to Armenia: Peer Learning on Electoral Management and Digital Voter Registries (13–17 November 2025)

The project originally planned regional study visits to Georgia and Kyrgyzstan to provide Turkmen Central Election Commission (CEC) staff with exposure to best practices in electoral management and digital voter registry systems. However, these visits could not proceed due to political instability and scheduling conflicts associated with national elections in both countries.

Following careful coordination, a study visit to Armenia was organized from 13 to 17 November 2025, hosted by the Armenian CEC. This visit offered Turkmen stakeholders a unique opportunity to observe operational practices in voter registration, including the integration of gender-disaggregated data, the use of digital tools, and the design of citizen-centric registry systems. Delegates engaged with Armenian counterparts to understand data validation workflows, interoperable systems, and mechanisms for ensuring accuracy and inclusivity in the registry.

The visit substantially enhanced the Turkmen CEC staff's understanding of the technical and process architecture required to establish a unified, gender-aware voter registry. Participants were able to translate practical lessons from Armenia into actionable recommendations for Turkmenistan's electoral reform roadmap, including improved procedures for integrating gender-disaggregated data and strengthening inclusivity.



Photo 1: Turkmenistan delegation in the training for using VADs at the Central Election Commission of Armenia

<https://turkmenportal.com/ru/news/96548-turkmenskaya-delegatsiya-izuchila-opyt-armenii-v-sozdanii-edinogo-tsifrovogo-reestra-izbirateley>

<https://www.newscentralasia.net/2025/11/19/undp-facilitates-turkmenistan-cec-delegation-visit-to-armenia-to-study-digital-single-voter-registry/>

<https://terra-news.ru/news/6176/turkmenskaya-delegaciya-izuchila-opyt-armenii-v-cifrovizacii-vyborov>

<https://orient.tm/ru/post/92807/tsik-turkmenistan-tsifrovoy-reestr-vyborov?noTranslation=tm>

<https://ashgabatimes.com/index.php/2025/11/proon-sodejstvet-vizitu-delegaczii-czik-turkmenistana-v-armeniyu-dlya-izucheniya-edinogo-czifrovogo-reestra-izbiratelej/>

<https://www.undp.org/turkmenistan/press-releases/undp-facilitates-turkmenistan-cec-delegation-visit-armenia-study-digital-single-voter-registry>

Activity 1.2: National Workshop on Unified Voter Registry with Gender Data

On December 9-10, 2024, a workshop was successfully conducted as part of the project aimed at assisting the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Turkmenistan in exploring options for creating a unified voter registry with gender-disaggregated data.

Originally, the plan was to conduct separate workshops across the five velayats. However, to streamline resources and enhance interaction, representatives from local election commissions across all four regions and Ashgabat city were invited to participate in a centralized workshop at the CEC headquarters. This approach ensured comprehensive regional representation and facilitated a more cohesive training environment.



Photo 2: Opening of the event by Mrs. Narine Sahakyan, Resident Representative, UNDP Turkmenistan, and Mr. Gulmyrat Myradov, Chairperson of the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan

The workshop was facilitated by an international consultant specializing in electoral systems, who shared expertise on legislative and administrative frameworks essential for developing a single voter registry. The event highlighted regional best practices and strategic steps adapted to Turkmenistan's context, emphasizing the role of gender-disaggregated data in promoting transparency and inclusivity within the voter registration process.

Participants engaged in discussions on inclusivity, accuracy, and integrity of voter registration, referencing best practices from Central Asia and global examples. This workshop aligned with the 2022 Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) recommendations, underscoring the importance of such a registry to strengthen electoral processes and ensure equal representation, particularly for women.

The consultant provided detailed materials, presentations, and legislative recommendations. Attendees' feedback indicated increased awareness and readiness for future phases involving policy and technical preparations. This centralized workshop served as a significant milestone in advancing Turkmenistan's electoral reform efforts, laying the groundwork for further development of an inclusive voter registry.

This initiative also measured the number of stakeholders engaged in such workshops, with an aim for at least 40 percent female participation.

Initially, the project anticipated engaging 500 participants, supported by a substantial budget. However, the government of Turkmenistan subsequently reduced the budget allocated for this activity, necessitating a strategic adjustment by the project team. To address this challenge, the approach was modified to focus on quality over quantity. A targeted group of 40 senior-level and specialist participants from local election commissions, representing all four regions and Ashgabat city, were invited to participate in a centralized workshop at the CEC headquarters.

This workshop was conducted in a training-of-trainers (TOT) format, enabling these senior and specialist-level participants to serve as future trainers. Equipped with comprehensive training materials provided by an international expert, these 40 participants will cascade the knowledge gained to their colleagues at local commissions, thereby ensuring broader dissemination and capacity-building across the electoral framework.

The workshop emphasized international and regional best practices, legislative analysis, and the critical role of gender-disaggregated data for transparent and inclusive voter registration. Feedback from participants highlighted their increased understanding and readiness to implement these practices locally. This adaptive approach not only achieved effective engagement despite the budgetary constraints but also laid a foundation for ongoing, localized training efforts led by the participants themselves. More than 50% of participants were women. <https://www.undp.org/turkmenistan/press-releases/undp-supports-development-unified-voter-register-gender-disaggregation>

Activity 1.3: Options Paper on Developing Single Voter Registry

The “Options Paper on Developing a Single Voter Registry” was successfully developed with legal analysis and recommendations provided by international electoral systems expert Gulnara Iskakova. The paper offered a comprehensive review with the recommendations to the draft Law of Turkmenistan on the Single Voter Registry, identifying key legislative principles to strengthen the legal framework and support the integration of gender-disaggregated data for transparency and equality in the single voter registry system.

Ms. Iskakova conducted an in-depth analysis of Turkmenistan’s existing legislation and administrative structures, aligning her evaluation with the strategic objectives of the Central Election Commission (CEC). Drawing on regional and international best practices, she provided detailed recommendations to enhance the inclusivity, accuracy, and integrity of the voter registration process.

The Legal Analysis and recommendations was submitted to the national partner in March 2025, and its recommendations were considered by CEC in the proposal submitted to the Parliament of Turkmenistan related to the Draft of the Law of Turkmenistan on Single Voter Registry. As a result, on 28 June 2025, the country officially adopted its first Law on the Single Voter Registry, marking a significant milestone in the development of a robust and inclusive voter registry system. The Law will come into effect on January 1, 2026.

Output 2: Capacity Improvement of Electoral Officials

Activity 2.1: BRIDGE Training (Central + Local Commissions)



Photo 3: Opening of the 4-day BRIDGE trainings.

To meet Indicator 2.1.1, the project team successfully delivered a comprehensive BRIDGE training for members of the Central Election Commission (CEC) and lower-level election commissions from all five regions of Turkmenistan. The training was conducted as scheduled from 18 to 21 February 2025, and aimed to strengthen institutional capacities in electoral administration.

The sessions provided participants with practical knowledge and tools to enhance transparency, inclusivity, and effectiveness in electoral processes. The activity contributed to building a more professional and responsive electoral management body, in line with the project's broader objective of supporting democratic governance and electoral reform.

This training adhered to the specialized BRIDGE methodology, which mandates a full four-day program to ensure an immersive and effective learning experience. Participants received official BRIDGE certificates, signifying their enhanced competencies in electoral management and processes.

The training was facilitated by BRIDGE-accredited experts, Natia Kashakashvili and Shalva Tskhakaia, renowned for their expertise in conducting such sessions.

The workshop hosted 30 participants, including representatives from local election commissions across the five velayats and staff from the CEC, political parties, and media, ensuring a well-rounded and inclusive training environment. This training aimed to strengthen the operational capacity and knowledge base of electoral staff,

promoting uniformity and best practices in election administration throughout Turkmenistan.
<https://www.undp.org/turkmenistan/press-releases/undp-and-cec-conduct-bridge-training-turkmenistan>



Photo 4: Group work of participants at the BRIDGE trainings.



Photo 5: Participants of the workshop after the Certificate Awarding Ceremony

Activity 2.2: Establishment of Electoral Training Center / E-Library

Originally, the project envisioned establishing a physical training centre and library for the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan (CEC) and local election commissions. However, following a thorough review of project timelines and available resources, and in light of budget cuts by the Government of Turkmenistan, this concept was revised. Instead, the project facilitated the development of a digital e-library, embedded within the CEC's newly redesigned website, providing a comprehensive repository of legal, procedural, and comparative electoral materials in Turkmen, Russian, and English. This digital approach ensures sustainable, cost-effective, and continuous access to essential training resources while allowing the CEC to regularly update content in line with evolving national and international electoral practices. The e-library, launched in December 2025, aligns with regional trends and supports the project's broader strategic objectives of enhancing institutional capacity, reinforcing gender-responsive and inclusive electoral processes, and promoting legislative advancements. The official launch of the updated website and e-library will be in January, 2026.

Result: A centralized, digitally accessible, and regularly updated repository supports institutional memory, capacity retention, and continuous learning.

Output 3: Increased Political Participation of Women

Activities 3.1 & 3.2: Analysis of Trends, TSMs, and Draft Amendments

In line with Indicator 3.2.1, the project successfully supported legislative reform efforts aimed at enhancing women's representation in electoral processes through the introduction of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs).

To streamline implementation, two separate analyses—on women's political participation and the legal framework for TSMs—were consolidated under a unified Terms of Reference for an international expert. Following the completion of preparatory work, including data collection and stakeholder mapping, the expert commenced the assignment in November 2025.

A multi-stakeholder workshop was convened, engaging representatives from Parliament, political parties, the Central Election Commission (CEC), and civil society organizations (CSOs). The workshop facilitated dialogue on draft legislative reforms, with a focus on inclusive voting rights of women, and the design of TSMs tailored to Turkmenistan's legal and administrative context.

As a result of these consultations, the expert produced a comprehensive legal analysis and draft legislative proposals, emphasizing:

- Integration of gender-disaggregated data into electoral systems
- Legal provisions to support inclusive and equitable voter participation
- Design of TSMs to strengthen women's political representation

These deliverables were submitted via Note Verbale to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in December 2025 for further government consideration and shared with Parliament through the national partner. To further raise visibility and national awareness, the expert also contributed to the International Forum on Women, Peace and Security held in Awaza on 10 December 2025, marking Turkmenistan's 30th anniversary of permanent neutrality and the International Year of Peace and Trust.



Photo 6: Introductory notes of Mr. Paovic, DRR of UNDP and Mr. Gandymov, Deputy Chairperson of CEC Turkmenistan (December 8-10, 2025)



Photo 7: Representatives of public associations in Turkmenistan discussing the introduction of temporary special measures to strengthen women's participation in social and political life in Turkmenistan (December 26, 2025)

<https://www.newscentralasia.net/2025/12/09/undp-and-turkmenistan-expand-womens-participation-in-political-and-public-life-in-turkmenistan/>

<https://caspiantpost.com/turkmenistan/turkmenistan-weighs-steps-to-expand-women-s-political-voice>

<https://saylav.gov.tm/en/news/651>

<https://www.orient.tm/en/post/93582/undp-and-turkmenistan-expand-womens-participation-political-and-public-life-turkmenistan>

<https://ashgabatimes.com/index.php/2025/12/proon-i-turkmenistan-rasshiryayut-uchastie-zhenshin-v-politicheskoy-i-obshchestvennoj-zhizni/>

<https://asmannews.ru/news/11922/turkmenistan-i-proon-podderzhivayut-rost-rol-i-zhenshchin-v-politike>

<https://www.undp.org/turkmenistan/press-releases/undp-and-turkmenistan-expand-womens-participation-political-and-public-life-turkmenistan#:~:text=UNDP%20will%20continue%20to%20support%20Turkmenistan%20in%20promoting%20Temporary%20Special,and%20development%20partners%20to%20ensure>

Before & After

- Before: No formal baseline analyses or internal consensus existed on legislative pathways to promote women's representation.
- After: An evidence-based legal and policy package is now available for legislative negotiation, backed by stakeholder dialogue, technical analysis, and practical recommendations to enhance gender inclusivity in electoral processes.

Gender Inclusivity & Participation

Across workshops and trainings, the project consistently achieved over 50% women participation, reinforcing gender parity in capacity-building efforts and supporting SDG 5 inclusion goals. Workshop on Introduction of TSM was conducted successfully for political parties, including Women's Union and other organizations and CSOs working on GEWEE and disability rights.

Budget & Timing Constraints

- Delays in fund release and budget reductions by national partners compressed the implementation window, forcing prioritization of high-impact, cost-efficient modalities (e.g., centralized workshops, e-library).
- The project's ability to re-sequence activities and secure a no-cost extension was essential to maintain deliverables.

Sustainability & Scaling

- The TOT model ensures that knowledge cascades locally, extending impact beyond central workshops.
- The digital e-library ensures long-term access to evolving materials, reinforcing institutional memory.
- The options paper and legislative proposals provide a structural foundation for reforms that can persist beyond project lifespan.

Summary & Forward Look

By the end of 2025, the project will have delivered tangible institutional tools—regulatory proposals, training outcomes, and digital infrastructure—that position Turkmenistan's electoral institutions on a more inclusive and modern trajectory. The next phase will focus on operationalizing the reforms, piloting registry systems, refining TSM approaches, and ensuring that the capacity gains cascade to local levels. Collectively, these results mark significant advances in governance, democratic integrity, and gender equality in Turkmenistan's electoral system.

Section 1: Analysis of Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) underpinning the UNDP electoral support project in Turkmenistan remains valid and strategically relevant. The central premise—that enhancing the institutional capacity of the Central Election Commission (CEC) and subordinate election commissions, improving knowledge and operational practices, and integrating gender-responsive measures will lead to more transparent, inclusive, and credible electoral processes—continues to hold true.

Empirical evidence from project implementation supports these assumptions:

- **Institutional Capacity Building:** BRIDGE training delivered in February 2025 enhanced the technical and operational capacity of CEC and regional election commission staff, supporting improved electoral administration (Indicator 2.1.1).
- **Digital Knowledge Management:** The launch of the CEC e-library in December 2025 ensured ongoing access to legal and procedural resources, promoting institutional learning and reducing operational barriers.
- **Gender Inclusion:** Legislative analysis and draft proposals on Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) were submitted via Note Verbal to the MFA to national partners in December 2025 for further proposal to the Parliament. Stakeholder consultations and participation in the International Forum on Women's Rights raised visibility and advanced women's political participation in inclusive electoral reform (Indicator 3.2.1).
- **Peer Learning:** The November 2025 study visit to Armenia provided CEC representatives with practical insights into regional voter registry models and gender data integration, reinforcing reform efforts.
- **Legislative Reform:** The "Options Paper on Developing a Single Voter Registry with Legal Analysis and Recommendations," submitted in March 2025 to the national partners, contributed to the recommendations to the draft Law on the Single Voter Registry adopted on 28 June 2025, establishing Turkmenistan's first legal framework for a unified voter registry.

The underlying assumptions of the project's Theory of Change remain largely valid and continue to guide the strategic approach to improving electoral processes in Turkmenistan. The project assumes that strengthening institutional capacity, promoting gender-responsive reforms, and facilitating knowledge exchange will lead to more inclusive, transparent, and effective electoral administration. Evidence from ongoing implementation confirms that these assumptions hold: national stakeholders, including the Central Election Commission (CEC), Parliament, political parties, and civil society organizations, remain committed to modernizing electoral practices and increasing public trust in elections.

The project strategy continues to be relevant in the context of Turkmenistan's ongoing democratic transformations and constitutional reforms. Citizens possess constitutionally guaranteed electoral rights (Articles 45–46 of the Constitution; Article 7 of the Electoral Code), and the legal framework establishes a comprehensive system of commissions responsible for administering elections at national, regional, and local levels. However, gaps remain in areas such as centralized voter registration, gender-disaggregated data, and temporary special measures (TSMs) to increase women's political participation. The project has strategically addressed these gaps through interventions that combine capacity building, digital innovations, legislative analysis, and exposure to international best practices.

Recent activities, including the study visit to Armenia in November 2025, demonstrate the continued relevance of the Theory of Change. By observing operational voter registries, interoperable systems, and gender-disaggregated data management, Turkmen CEC staff gained practical insights that directly support the establishment of a unified voter registry. Similarly, the development recommendations to the draft legislative proposals on TSMs, complemented by stakeholder workshops and international forums, reflect the assumption that evidence-based advocacy combined with capacity building can influence reforms and increase inclusivity in political participation.

While the Theory of Change remains relevant, minor adjustments could strengthen its alignment with evolving needs. Specifically, the integration of digital knowledge platforms, such as the newly launched e-library, reinforces sustainable capacity building and allows the project to scale its impact cost-effectively. Additionally, the adaptive approach of consolidating workshops and applying a Training-of-Trainers (TOT) methodology ensures the sustainability of knowledge transfer across 3,401 election commissions and more than 23,000 election officials nationwide. These adjustments highlight the importance of flexibility in addressing logistical, budgetary, and political challenges, without compromising the project's strategic objectives.

In conclusion, the project's Theory of Change continues to provide a robust framework for achieving the desired outcomes of strengthened electoral institutions, improved transparency and inclusivity, and enhanced women's political participation. The ongoing evidence-based interventions validate the assumptions, while adaptive approaches in implementation—particularly through digital tools and targeted stakeholder engagement—ensure that the strategy remains fit for purpose and responsive to Turkmenistan's evolving electoral landscape.

Section 2: Overall progress against outcomes

The project has made substantial progress toward strengthening the capacity of the Central Election Commission (CEC) and subordinate election commissions, enhancing the inclusivity and transparency of electoral processes, and promoting gender-responsive reforms in Turkmenistan. Through a combination of training, peer learning, legislative analysis, and digital knowledge management, the project has directly contributed to institutional modernization and improved governance of elections.

A key achievement has been the delivery of targeted capacity-building initiatives, including the BRIDGE training conducted in February 2025. This training enhanced the technical knowledge of CEC members and staff of lower-level commissions, equipping them with skills to manage electoral operations effectively and in alignment with international best practices. Complementing this, the launch of the CEC e-library with a modernized website in December 2025 has provided sustainable, cost-effective access to legal, procedural, and comparative electoral

resources in Turkmen, Russian, and English. This digital platform strengthens institutional memory, supports continuous professional development, and ensures that commission members can access up-to-date knowledge without the limitations of a physical library.

In parallel, the project has advanced gender-responsive reforms. The preparation and submission of analyses and draft legislative proposals on Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) in December 2025 has established a strong evidence-based foundation for increasing women's participation in political processes. Stakeholder engagement, including dedicated workshops and contributions to the International Forum on women, peace, and security on December 10, dedicated to the International Year of Peace and trust, and the 30th anniversary of Turkmenistan's permanent neutrality, ensured that these initiatives gained visibility and buy-in from Parliament, political parties, civil society, and the CEC. The study visit to Armenia in November 2025 further reinforced this progress by exposing Turkmen stakeholders to regional best practices on voter registries, data integration, and gender-disaggregated reporting, translating international lessons into actionable insights for national reforms.

The impact of these interventions is observable in both institutional and societal dimensions. Prior to project support, electoral administration faced fragmented practices, limited exposure to comparative models, and minimal formal mechanisms to promote gender inclusivity. Today, the project has established a comprehensive framework for training, knowledge sharing, and legislative reform. Evidence-based recommendations on TSMs, combined with enhanced technical capacities across the 3,401 commissions and 23,189 members nationwide, provide a solid foundation for more transparent, participatory, and inclusive elections. Notably, women now represent 25.6% of the Mejlis, 28–29% of regional and local councils, and 28% of Gengeshes, while a woman has been elected Speaker of Parliament and chairs a parliamentary committee, demonstrating tangible progress in gender representation.

Overall, the project has demonstrated that targeted technical assistance, combined with legislative support, gender-sensitive reforms, and digital solutions, can significantly enhance the capacity of electoral institutions and foster greater inclusivity in Turkmenistan's electoral processes.

Section 3: Monitoring and Evaluation¹ of activities.

During 2025, the project implemented a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework in line with UNDP standards, ensuring that all activities were evidence-based, results-oriented, and aligned with the project's objectives of strengthening electoral administration, promoting gender equality, and enhancing transparency. M&E activities encompassed workshops, training sessions, legislative analysis, and digital knowledge management initiatives, covering the period from September 2024 to December 2025.

The project organized a study visit to Armenia from 13 to 17 November 2025, engaging a delegation of 50 national stakeholders, including representatives from the Central Election Commission (CEC), Parliament, and political parties. This visit allowed participants to observe best practices in the operation of single voter registries, integration of gender-disaggregated data, and inclusive digital tools. Capacity building activities included BRIDGE trainings delivered to the CEC and lower-level election commissions, with 20 election officials trained in gender-responsive electoral administration, voter registration procedures, and the application of digital tools. Post-training assessments and participant feedback confirmed an increase in technical knowledge and readiness to apply new approaches within their respective commissions.

In parallel, the project carried out an analysis of women's political participation and developed draft amendments introducing Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) in electoral legislation. Preparatory work, including stakeholder mapping, data collection, and consultations, preceded the analysis. A dedicated stakeholder workshop engaged Parliament members, political parties, CEC officials, and civil society representatives to review draft reforms. The consultant's final report and legislative proposals, submitted via Note Verbale in December 2025, emphasized

¹ The later if applicable.

gender-disaggregated data and actionable recommendations to enhance women's political representation. The findings were also shared at the International Forum on Women's Rights in Awaza on 10 December 2025, increasing visibility for the initiative.

The project also supported the launch of a digital e-library and modernization of the website of the CEC in December 2025, providing a sustainable repository of legal, procedural, and comparative electoral resources in Turkmen, Russian, and English. Continuous monitoring of usage and feedback from CEC staff ensured that the e-library effectively enhanced access to knowledge and supported long-term capacity development at reduced operational costs. Across all activities, progress against output indicators was closely monitored through CEC and UNDP records, including the number of stakeholders trained, workshops conducted, reports drafted, and outputs delivered. Quarterly reviews, lessons learned, and annual project quality assessments informed course corrections and reinforced adaptive management.

Section 4: Progress against each output

Project Output 1: Strategy for establishing a unified voter register with gender disaggregated data developed		
Output indicators	Targets	Progress against targets
Indicator 1.1.1 Number of national stakeholders supported to study and learn from relevant regional examples and international best practices	Baseline: N\A AWP target: 4	Reporting period: 4 representatives of CEC visited Armenia for study visit.
Indicator 1.2.1 Number of seminars and workshops organized to consider and discuss various options for creating single voter registry with gender data	Baseline: N\A AWP target: 5	Reporting period: During the reporting period instead of 5 workshops one was conducted for two days with involvement of members of LEC from 5 velayats due to the budget cut.
Indicator 1.2.2 Number of stakeholders engaged from the seminars and workshops organized to consider and discuss various options for creating single voter registry (at least 40 percent women)	Baseline: N\A AWP target: 500	Reporting period: During the reporting period 40 people were engaged for this indicator as the budget was cut by the government after the initial draft of these indicators in the project document.
Indicator 1.3.1 Drafting of an "options paper" for developing single voter registry	Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes	Reporting period: Yes, the indicator was achieved.
Indicator 2.1.2 Number of CEC election commissions officials trained via BRIDGE trainings with gender responsive (at least 40 percent women)	Baseline: N\A AWP target: 20 people	Reporting period: 30 people

Indicator 2.2.1 Establishment of a training centre including a training library (e-library) at the Central Election Commission	Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes	Reporting period: The e-library was developed on the website of CEC. The website of CEC was modernized.
Indicator 3.1.1 Development of analysis of trends and relevant examples on improving political participation of women, including introduction of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs)	Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes	Reporting period: Yes
Indicator 3.2.1 Development of analysis of the electoral legislation of Turkmenistan and development of draft amendments for introduction of TSMs	Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes	Reporting period: Yes

Key Activities:

Annual Reporting (September 2024–December 2025)

By the end of the reporting year, the project had effectively delivered on all major planned activities under its three outputs - — (1) development of a unified voter register with gender-disaggregated data, (2) strengthening institutional and human capacities of electoral officials, and (3) promoting women’s political participation in electoral processes, demonstrating tangible linkages between capacity-building interventions, legislative reform, and institutional modernization within the CEC.



Under Output 1, the project advanced both the technical and policy foundations for establishing a unified voter register. Building upon the successful national workshop held in December 2024, an international electoral systems expert conducted a comprehensive review of the *draft Law on Single Voter Registration* and produced an Options Paper recommending legislative and procedural improvements. These recommendations incorporated best practices from Central Asia and Europe, emphasizing the integration of gender-disaggregated data, interoperability, and inclusivity mechanisms.

To complement these policy efforts, a regional study visit to Armenia was organized on 13–17 November 2025, hosted by the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Armenia. The visit provided Turkmen electoral officials with practical exposure to digital voter registration systems and the use of gender data for transparent and citizen-centered election management. Participants observed Armenia’s digital registry infrastructure and data validation workflows, drawing lessons that directly informed Turkmenistan’s roadmap for establishing a gender-sensitive unified voter register to implement the new Law of Turkmenistan on Single Voter Registry that will come into effect on January 1, 2026. This activity successfully replaced earlier plans for visits to Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, which were postponed due to national election schedules.

Together, these activities fully achieved Indicators of Output 1 and provided the CEC with a concrete foundation for the next phase of implementation.



Under Output 2, the BRIDGE training (18–21 February 2025) significantly strengthened institutional capacity. All 30 participants completed the training and were certified, representing all five regions, political parties, and the media. Over 50% of participants were women, exceeding the gender balance target. Additionally, the project successfully launched the Digital Electoral E-Library in December 2025, integrated into the CEC’s redesigned website. This online repository—available in Turkmen, Russian, and English—ensures sustained, equitable access to training materials, legislative resources, and comparative practices. The shift from a physical training center to a digital format ensured cost efficiency and long-term sustainability. The official launch of the modernized website and e-library will take place in January 2026.



Under Output 3, significant progress was made in promoting women’s political participation through evidence-based policy support. In November 2025, an international gender and electoral expert was engaged to conduct an Analysis of Women’s Political Participation and TSMs. The study reviewed national legislation and international standards to propose feasible mechanisms for improving gender balance in elected bodies. A stakeholder workshop, held in late 2025, brought together representatives from Parliament, political parties, the CEC, and civil society to discuss draft legislative amendments introducing TSMs and inclusive voting provisions. Following these consultations, the expert received feedback from the target and finalized the Analysis with comprehensive recommendations under this output. A comprehensive Analysis of Women’s Political Participation and TSMs was submitted via Note Verbale in December 2025. The expert also presented findings at the International Forum on Women’s Rights in Awaza (10 December 2025), further raising awareness and visibility of the initiative at the national level.

Collectively, these activities reinforced the project’s strategic outcomes by deepening institutional knowledge, introducing gender-responsive policy options, and creating sustainable learning platforms. The integrated approach between policy reform, capacity development, and regional peer learning contributed directly to achieving the project’s output targets.

Cumulatively, the project achieved full completion of its planned activities for the period September 2024 – December 2025, directly contributing to measurable progress under all three outputs and indicators, as evidenced by published UNDP press releases and stakeholder feedback.

Key Results:

By the end of 2025, the project achieved measurable progress across all three outputs, with clear evidence of capacity gains, legislative advancements, and gender-responsive institutional practices.

Under Output 1, the project achieved all Indicators marked by the completion of an Options Paper on the Development of a Single Voter Registry, prepared in consultation with the CEC and informed by the findings of the Armenia study visit. The paper outlines concrete steps for legislative alignment, institutional coordination, and the integration of gender-disaggregated data into voter registration systems. The Armenia visit significantly enhanced national stakeholders' technical understanding of registry management and citizen-centered design. Together, these interventions positioned Turkmenistan's CEC to advance toward full establishment of a unified, gender-aware voter registry.

Under Output 2, the project successfully achieved all Indicators marked by the BRIDGE training in February 2025 successfully built the capacity of 30 electoral officials, bringing the cumulative total to 70 trained officials since the project's inception. Women accounted for over 50 percent of participants, demonstrating consistent achievement of gender balance targets in all capacity-building activities.

The objective of this Output was complemented by the launch of the Digital Electoral E-Library, a sustainable, cost-efficient solution ensuring continuous access to learning resources and reference materials. The E-Library now houses over 30 main documents and new functions on comparative electoral practices and is maintained directly by the CEC, strengthening institutional ownership and long-term capacity retention. The core objective was the development and integration of an electronic library on the CEC's official website, providing structured access to legal documents, training materials, multimedia resources, and interactive tools. This initiative has enhanced transparency, expanded digital capabilities, and improved the quality of information services available to citizens and election commission members, including analysis of the existing website, review of regional best practices, and creation of a detailed prototype. New modules were integrated such as cataloging systems for legislation, articles, news, and video materials, along with a "Library" module, an advanced "Elections" module, and a "Polling Station Search" tool. Pilot testing, staff training, and preparation of an administrator's manual ensured smooth adoption. Beyond the TOR, additional features were developed, including a comprehensive elections management system, staff directories, interactive maps, quick-access information blocks, statistics and banner modules, structured databases, and a countdown timer for upcoming elections.

The electronic library now serves as a core, fully responsive module of the CEC website, offering unified design and capacity for future expansion. Together with the additional tools, it significantly strengthens the CEC's operational capacity, supports transparency, and lays the foundation for continued digital transformation of the electoral system. To ensure sustainability, a six-month consultation and technical support period has been planned following project handover, enabling effective onboarding and long-term use by CEC staff.

Under Output 3, the project achieved all results, with legal analysis and recommendations for the draft legislative amendments proposing Temporary Special Measures (TSMs) to enhance women's representation in elected bodies. The analysis also included recommendations for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in electoral processes, promoting broader inclusivity. The draft proposals will be submitted to national authorities for further consideration in January 2026.

Overall, the reporting year marked a transition from preparatory and piloting phases to tangible institutional strengthening and policy reform. The project's integrated approach—linking gender equality, governance, and digital transformation—has positioned the CEC of Turkmenistan to lead inclusive electoral modernization efforts in line with international commitments under the ICCPR and OSCE standards.

Section 5: Cross-Cutting Integration

The project has actively integrated UNDP's cross-cutting priorities across its design, implementation, and monitoring phases, ensuring that all interventions are inclusive, rights-based, and contribute to sustainable institutional transformation.

Human and Social Context:

- Leave No One Behind** - The project is guided by the principle of leaving no one behind, with particular emphasis on ensuring equitable participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups within national human rights and governance systems. Training sessions and consultations were designed to include representatives from different regions and sectors, creating equal opportunities for engagement. This inclusive approach has enabled broader ownership of human rights and gender equality principles among duty-bearers and rights-holders alike.
- Human Rights** - Human rights principles form the foundation of the project's activities. All interventions have been aligned with Turkmenistan's commitments under international human rights instruments, including the ICCPR, CEDAW, and CRC, as well as other international human rights conventions and treaties. Through technical consultations and capacity-building initiatives, the project has strengthened the institutional capacity of national partners—such as the Ombudsperson's Office, the Boards of Lawyers, and the Central Election Commission—to apply a human rights-based approach (HRBA) in their operations. The development of a unified human rights and gender equality curriculum further supports systemic change by embedding human rights education into professional and academic settings.
- Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment** - Gender equality remains at the core of the project. All project activities are designed and implemented in line with UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy and the National Action Plan of Turkmenistan on Gender Equality for 2021-2025. During the reporting period, 62% of participants in capacity-building and consultative activities were women, reflecting a strong commitment to women's participation and leadership in governance and legal sectors.
- Disability Inclusion** - Within Output 3, the project collaborated with civil society organizations (CSOs) focused on disability rights to strengthen inclusive practices. Although the project does not specifically target persons with disabilities, inclusion principles are embedded across all training and consultation activities. Accessibility of venues, materials, and communication tools is prioritized to accommodate participants with diverse needs. Building on this foundation, the project is working with CSOs protecting rights of people with disabilities to integrate disability inclusion modules in future phases.
- Cultural Heritage** - The project acknowledges the importance of respecting and reflecting local cultural and social contexts, especially through translating the training materials into the local language and acknowledging other cultural sensitivities during the planning and implementation stages. Activities and educational materials were adapted to align with the cultural and legal traditions of Turkmenistan, ensuring relevance and acceptance while upholding universal rights standards.

- **Interactions between Social and Environmental Factors:** The project promotes institutional sustainability through capacity development and ownership by national stakeholders. By embedding HRBA and gender equality principles into official training curricula and governance processes, the project ensures that results are long-term and resilient beyond the project cycle. Furthermore, the integration of digital tools for knowledge management and reporting supports environmental sustainability by reducing reliance on paper-based processes and fostering more efficient communication systems among institutions.
- **Sustainability and Resilience** - The project promotes institutional sustainability through capacity development and ownership by national stakeholders. By embedding HRBA and gender equality principles into official training curricula and governance processes, the project ensures that results are long-term and resilient beyond the project cycle. Furthermore, the integration of digital tools for knowledge management and reporting supports environmental sustainability by reducing reliance on paper-based processes and fostering more efficient communication systems among institutions.
- **Natural Environment:** While the project does not directly address biodiversity conservation or natural resource management, its emphasis on human rights and governance indirectly contributes to the broader sustainability agenda. Strengthened institutions and inclusive policies foster accountable governance systems that can, in the long term, enhance decision-making on environmental protection, climate resilience, and sustainable development.

In summary, the project has effectively mainstreamed the key cross-cutting themes of *Leave No One Behind*, *Human Rights*, *Gender Equality*, and *Sustainability*. Its institutional approach ensures that these principles are not implemented as stand-alone components but rather embedded within all operations, policies, and capacity development interventions — paving the way for sustainable, inclusive governance and strengthened human rights protection mechanisms in Turkmenistan.

IV. Partnerships and Sustainability

During the reporting period, the project continued to strengthen and expand strategic partnerships with a broad range of national and regional counterparts, building upon the foundation established through earlier UNDP–Central Election Commission (CEC) collaboration during the period 2008- 2014. The reporting year marked an important step forward in revitalizing and diversifying these partnerships to promote inclusive, transparent, and gender-responsive governance processes in Turkmenistan.

Strengthened Institutional Partnerships

At the core of the project’s implementation lies a renewed and dynamic collaboration with the Central Commission for Holding Elections and Referendums in Turkmenistan, as well as its regional and local election commissions. This renewed engagement represents a milestone for UNDP, as it marks the first structured cooperation with these entities since the previous joint project with the CEC concluded in 2014. Through this partnership, the project supported dialogue, technical consultations, and capacity-strengthening activities designed to align national electoral processes with international good practices and human rights principles.

In parallel, the project established new partnerships with the Parliament (Mejlis) and political parties, contributing to more inclusive and representative discussions on governance and citizen participation. Engagement with civil society organizations (CSOs) further expanded the scope of collaboration, facilitating participatory consultations and

awareness-raising initiatives that promote gender equality, civic engagement, and respect for human rights at both the national and local levels.

These partnerships have significantly enhanced the project's ability to achieve its outputs by promoting ownership, strengthening institutional capacity, and creating cross-sectoral linkages between state institutions and civil society actors. As a result, national partners have demonstrated increased readiness to integrate gender and human rights perspectives into their planning and decision-making processes.

UN System Cooperation and Evaluation Linkages

The project also continued its close cooperation with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), reinforcing the joint UN approach to governance and electoral support in Turkmenistan. The Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) conducted in 2022 was a collaborative effort between UNDP and UNRCO, serving as a cornerstone for defining national priorities and identifying institutional capacity gaps in the electoral process. Building on this foundation, a desk review will be conducted in January 2026, jointly with EAD, UNRCO, UNDP, MFA, and CEC as part of the evaluation of project implementation results. Importantly, this desk review has been endorsed at the highest institutional level — approved by the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations — and will be implemented in coordination with the EAD. This collaboration demonstrates the strong inter-agency alignment and accountability mechanisms underpinning the project's governance and evaluation framework. It also ensures that lessons learned from Turkmenistan's experience contribute to UNDP's global knowledge base on democratic governance and electoral assistance.

Engagement of Stakeholders and Local Communities

Stakeholders and counterparts have been actively engaged throughout all phases of the project cycle — from planning and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. Consultations with the election commissions, political parties, and the Parliament informed the design of capacity-building programmes and knowledge products to ensure their contextual relevance and sustainability. Meanwhile, collaboration with local CSOs, academia, and professional associations fostered community-level awareness and knowledge sharing on gender equality, human rights, and inclusive governance.

To promote long-term sustainability, the project emphasized institutional learning and ownership, ensuring that all training curricula, policy tools, and capacity-development materials remain embedded within national systems beyond the project's duration.

Visibility, Knowledge Sharing, and Lessons Learned

Visibility and communication have been integral components of project implementation. Project achievements and lessons learned were disseminated through targeted outreach campaigns, media coverage, and public events highlighting UNDP's support for institutional capacity development and gender-responsive governance. The inclusion of gender-disaggregated results and success stories in national reports and online platforms further enhanced the project's transparency and public engagement. These experiences will inform future programming in governance and human rights, both in Turkmenistan and across the region.

In summary, the project's strengthened partnerships — spanning electoral institutions, government bodies, civil society, academia, and the UN system — have significantly enhanced its effectiveness, ownership, and visibility. The revival of collaboration with the CEC and political actors since the previous project finished in 2014, together with the upcoming UNDP–UNRCO joint evaluation, underscores the project's commitment to integrated, evidence-based, and sustainable support for inclusive governance and democratic development in Turkmenistan.

Sustainability

Ensuring the sustainability of project results has remained a central focus throughout implementation. The project was designed to foster institutional ownership, strengthen national capacities, and create enabling mechanisms that

allow for the continuity of interventions beyond the project's duration. These efforts have yielded tangible progress, as evidenced by the proactive steps taken by national counterparts to institutionalize and scale up results.

A key sign of progress toward the project's sustainability is the formal request submitted by the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Turkmenistan through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) for the next phase of cooperation with UNDP. The request outlines priority areas for future collaboration that build directly on the achievements of the current one-year project. This demonstrates not only the strong institutional commitment of the CEC but also the Government's recognition of UNDP's technical support as a valuable and trusted contribution to strengthening electoral governance, digital transformation, and gender equality in Turkmenistan.

This official communication from the CEC through the MFA signifies the project's successful transition from pilot-level interventions to a more strategic, programmatic approach that aims to sustain and deepen the achieved results. The proposed areas of continued collaboration—such as advancing the unified voter registry with gender-disaggregated data, strengthening capacity-building mechanisms through the e-library, and enhancing inclusivity in political participation—reflect both national ownership and a clear pathway for scaling up outcomes achieved under the current phase.

Another major step toward sustainability is the endorsement of the project's desk review process by the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, to be conducted jointly with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) and the UNDP Electoral Assistance Division (EAD). This high-level approval underscores the strategic importance of the project and positions Turkmenistan's experience as a reference point within the broader electoral assistance framework of UNDP.

The desk review, scheduled for January 2026, will evaluate the institutional progress of the CEC, assess the effectiveness of the project interventions, and generate forward-looking recommendations for the next phase. This process not only ensures accountability and evidence-based programming but also contributes to institutional learning and long-term capacity retention within the CEC and its regional branches.

In addition, sustainability has been reinforced through the project's focus on capacity-building, digital infrastructure, and knowledge transfer. The establishment of the CEC's digital e-library and the training-of-trainers (TOT) approach for election officials have created sustainable tools and mechanisms for continuous learning and skill dissemination within the electoral system. These efforts ensure that the knowledge and competencies developed under the project will continue to benefit local election commissions, political parties, and civil society organizations in the coming years.

Overall, the formal request for a new phase of cooperation, the high-level endorsement of the evaluation process, and the integration of sustainable digital and capacity-building tools collectively demonstrate that the project has successfully transitioned from implementation to institutionalization.

Update on risks and mitigation measures

During the reporting period, the overall risk landscape of the project remained stable, with no significant new risks emerging. The project continued to operate within a supportive institutional environment, reinforced by the ongoing commitment of the Central Election Commission (CEC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to project objectives. The main risks identified in the original project design—namely the level of government commitment,

the political will to strengthen the legislative framework, and the short project implementation period—were closely monitored through quarterly risk assessments and reviewed during Project Board meetings. The commitment of the CEC and the MFA was further confirmed through the official request submitted to UNDP for a continuation of the project into its next phase. This proactive engagement significantly mitigated concerns related to institutional ownership and sustainability. Likewise, consistent coordination and high-level dialogue helped to maintain political will for incremental improvements within the legislative and procedural frameworks, ensuring that planned technical support and capacity development activities were fully implemented. However, there are financial risks for the next phase of UNDP electoral assistance in Turkmenistan, including potential funding shortfalls by the Government of Turkmenistan, uneven funds, and unforeseen logistical costs. These could impact the timely delivery of voter education, capacity-building, and support to election commissions. To mitigate these risks, the project will apply strong financial oversight, build partner capacity, and prioritize high-impact activities.

The short project duration remained a moderate risk; however, mitigation measures—including accelerated implementation schedules, continuous communication between project teams and CEC counterparts, and targeted field-level monitoring—ensured that all planned outputs were achieved within the reporting cycle. The Deputy Secretary-General's approval of the desk review process to assess the CEC's institutional status and formulate recommendations for the next phase represents a major achievement toward sustaining results and reducing risks associated with project discontinuity.

Risk monitoring and management were carried out in accordance with UNDP's monitoring and evaluation plan. The risk log was actively maintained, with risks reviewed quarterly and appropriate mitigation measures applied. Lessons learned from implementation were captured and fed back into project decision-making processes to strengthen responsiveness and adaptability. As a result, all identified risks remained within manageable thresholds, and the project continued to progress smoothly toward its intended outcomes.

V. Key Challenges, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

1. Short Project Duration and Compressed Implementation Timeline

During the reporting period, the project demonstrated strong progress toward its planned outputs, with significant engagement from national counterparts and visible achievements in institutional capacity development of the Central Election Commission (CEC). Nevertheless, several implementation challenges were encountered, providing valuable lessons and informing recommendations for the next phase of collaboration.

Challenge:

The one-year implementation period presented a challenge in sequencing project activities, particularly those requiring multi-stakeholder coordination and validation. The limited timeframe also affected the ability to conduct comprehensive follow-up assessments on capacity-building activities and to capture medium-term behavioral or institutional change.

Mitigation and Lessons Learned:

To address this challenge, project management adopted an accelerated implementation approach—front-loading technical activities and ensuring early engagement with CEC leadership and focal points to secure timely inputs and approvals. Close coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders enabled the project to complete all planned outputs within the schedule.

Recommendation:

For the next project phase, it is recommended to extend the implementation period to ensure that technical assistance, institutional development, and evaluation activities are distributed more evenly. This would allow sufficient time for consolidation of results and deeper follow-up on capacity outcomes. Adjustments to performance indicators may also be required to reflect longer-term institutional change rather than output delivery only.

2. Coordination and Administrative Clearance Processes

Challenge:

The coordination and clearance procedures required for joint activities occasionally led to delays in activity roll-out, particularly in cases requiring multiple institutional endorsements or formal notifications. This impacted the pace of implementation in the initial months of the project.

Mitigation and Lessons Learned:

Strong collaboration with the MFA, as the coordinating authority, was instrumental in resolving delays and maintaining implementation momentum. Early submission of detailed work plans and proactive follow-up proved to be effective strategies in mitigating administrative bottlenecks.

Recommendation:

Future project phases should build on this positive experience by establishing a clear coordination mechanism or working group between UNDP, CEC, and MFA to streamline decision-making, accelerate communication, and clarify approval procedures for planned activities.

3. Sustaining Institutional Capacity and Knowledge

Challenge:

Ensuring the sustainability of knowledge and practices developed under the project remained a key concern, particularly given the evolving institutional mandates and potential staff turnover within the CEC.

Recommendation:

Future programming should prioritize the institutionalization of training modules, digital learning materials, and procedural manuals within the CEC to ensure continuity and scalability. Establishing a permanent capacity development unit or focal point within the CEC could further anchor sustainability.

Overall Lessons Learned and Way Forward

The project reaffirmed that strong national ownership, early engagement with key partners, and alignment of activities with institutional priorities are critical to ensuring sustainability and impact. Building flexibility into project design—particularly regarding timelines, data collection, and monitoring systems—emerges as a key lesson for ensuring adaptive management. The continuation request from national counterparts confirms the project's relevance and success, underscoring the need to expand support in areas of institutional modernization, digital transformation, and gender-responsive electoral governance in the next phase.

Lessons learned during this phase have already informed implementation adjustments. The shift to centralized workshops, the development of digital knowledge repositories, and proactive stakeholder engagement are direct outcomes of reflective learning. These approaches will be further expanded in the next phase to enhance efficiency, ensure continuous improvement, and remain responsive to evolving needs.

1: Financial Summary²

Data contained in this financial report section is an extract of UNDP financial records for the date December 24, 2025. All financial provided above is provisional. Certified financial statements will be provided on March 30, 2026

Table 1: Overview of available resources for the project duration

Donor	Opening Balance	Contribution Received	Available Resources
Government of Turkmenistan	0.00	166,384.96	8,410.03
UNDP	0.00	10,000.00	345.14
Total	0.00	176,384.96	8,755.17

Table 2: Overview of allocation and utilization³ per output

Budget Item	Government of Turkmenistan		UNDP		Total Budget	Total Utilization	Budget Utilization in %
	Total Approved Budget	Utilization	Total Approved Budget	Utilization			
Output 1: Strategy for establishing a unified voter register with gender disaggregated data developed	41,071.00	33,888.82	6,500.00	7,999.92	47,571.00	41,888.74	88.06%
Output 2: Capacity of electoral officials improved	36,315.00	68,416.86			36,315.00	68,416.86	188.40%
Output 3: Political participation of women increased	28,227.00	24,310.54	3,500.00	1,414.59	31,727.00	25,725.13	81.08%
Project Management	60,801.00	29,581.95			60,801.00	29,581.95	48.65%
Total:	166,414.00	156,198.17	10,000.00	9,414.51	176,414.00	165,612.68	93.88%

Of the USD 166,384.96 presented above, USD 155,087.47 corresponds to eligible expenses (as per IPSAS terminology), and USD 9,414.51 corresponds to legal commitments in force between UNDP and third parties for the reporting period December 24, 2025.

Annexes

Annex I: Progress Review: detailed matrix of activities and results

Expected Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Annual progress 2024	Annual target 2025	Final progress
Output 1 <i>Strategy for establishing a unified voter register with gender disaggregated data</i>	Activity 1.1 <i>Support national stakeholders in exploring relevant regional examples and international best practices</i>				
	Indicator 1.1.1 <i>Number of national stakeholders supported in learning from relevant regional examples and international best practices</i>	<i>Baseline: N\A AWP target: 4</i>	0	4	<i>4 representatives of CEC visited Armenia for study visit.</i>
	Indicator 1.2.1 <i>Number of seminars and workshops organized to consider and discuss various options for creating single voter registry with gender data</i>	<i>Baseline: N\A AWP target: 5</i>	0	5	<i>During the reporting period instead of 5 workshops one was conducted for two days with involvement of members of LEC from 5 velayats due to the budget cut.</i>
	Indicator 1.2.2 <i>Number of stakeholders engaged from the seminars and workshops organized to consider and discuss various options for creating single voter registry (at least 40 percent women)</i>	<i>Baseline: N\A AWP target: 500</i>	0	40	<i>During the reporting period 40 people were engaged for this indicator as the budget was cut by the government after the initial draft of these indicators in the project document.</i>
	Indicator 1.3.1 <i>Drafting of an "options paper" for developing single voter registry</i>	<i>Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes</i>	No	Yes	<i>Yes, the indicator was achieved.</i>

Output 2 Capacity of electoral officials improved	Indicator 2.1.2 Number of CEC election commissions officials trained via BRIDGE trainings with gender responsive (at least 40 percent women)	Baseline: N\A AWP target: 20 people	0	30	30 people
	Indicator 2.2.1 Establishment of a training centre including a training library (e-library) at the Central Election Commission	Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes	No	Yes	The e-library was developed on the website of CEC. The website of CEC was modernized.
Output 3 Political participation of women increased	Indicator 3.1.1 Development of analysis of trends and relevant examples on improving political participation of women, including introduction of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs)	Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	Indicator 3.2.1 Development of analysis of the electoral legislation of Turkmenistan and development of draft amendments for introduction of TSMs	Baseline: N\A AWP target: Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Annex II: Updated Risk Log

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Mngt response	Owner	Submitted, updated by	Status
1	Short term for project implementation	01.03.2024	Operational	=2	Speeded up receiving GOVT cost sharing funding	Artykova Lachyn, Project Manager, UNDP	28.02.2025	Completed
	Political will to further improve legislative framework	01.03.2024	Strategic	=2	The Technical Working Group (TWG) was established within the project and was the forum to discuss the practical and technical components of the electoral support to the CEC. This involved CEC Secretariat Staff and other CEC officials, UNDP technical advisor. They involved in analysis of electoral legislation and preparation of proposals for its improvement in accordance with international best practices within the project.	Artykova Lachyn, Project Manager, UNDP	30.04.2025	Completed
	Commitment of the Government and the CEC of Turkmenistan to the implementation of the Project.	01.03.2024	Strategic	= 3	Close cooperation with national counterparts was maintained on all levels, and continuous communication with the relevant focal point from CEC was ensured. Coordination was strengthened through their engagement in Project Board meetings	Artykova Lachyn, Project Manager, UNDP	30.12.2025	Completed

Annex III: Annual Work Plan

N/A

Annex IV: Assets List.

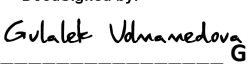
List 1.

Details on the software transferred

Srl.	Description of Item	Model No. / Serial No.	Qty.	Unit Cost (USD)	Total Cost (USD)
1	Source code of CEC website	Source code was given as electronic archive in USB drive	1	7,000.00 USD	7,000.00 USD

Annex V: Knowledge Generation

During the reporting period, the project generated substantial institutional knowledge to support evidence-based electoral reforms and sustainable capacity development. Key knowledge products included the Options Paper on Developing a Single Voter Registry with Gender-Disaggregated Data, informed by international best practices and legal analysis, which directly contributed to the adoption of Turkmenistan's first Law on the Single Voter Registry. Knowledge exchange was further strengthened through a regional study visit to Armenia and expert-facilitated national workshops applying a training-of-trainers approach, enabling replication at subnational levels. The project also produced analytical work on women's political participation and the introduction of Temporary Special Measures (TSMs), including a review of electoral legislation with recommendations to enhance inclusivity, particularly for women and persons with disabilities. To ensure long-term access and sustainability, these materials were consolidated through the establishment of an e-library and the reformed CEC website, creating a permanent digital repository of electoral knowledge and learning resources for election officials, academia, and other stakeholders.

DocuSigned by:

Approved by: _____ Gulalek Volmamedova Programme Analyst
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Date: 31.12.2025