



08 May 2025

Minutes of the Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) Meeting

Project Title: *Bangladesh's Advancement for Credible, Inclusive and Transparent Elections (BALLOT): 2025–2027*

Venue: Bangladesh Election Commission (BEC), Room 520, 5th Floor, Nirbachon Bhaban, Dhaka

1. Decision

The LPAC endorsed the BALLOT Project, effective from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2027, under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM), in alignment with UNDP's global standards for electoral assistance. The project will be implemented in close collaboration with the Bangladesh Election Commission (BEC) and the Government of Bangladesh.

2. Attendance

The list of participants is available in Annex I.

3. Major Discussion Points

The meeting was co-chaired by **Mr. Akhtar Ahmed**, Senior Secretary, Bangladesh Election Commission (BEC) and **Ms. Sonali Dayaratne**, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh. **Mr. Tanvir Mahmud**, Senior Governance Specialist, UNDP Bangladesh, moderated the session.

Mr. Ahmed welcomed representatives from UNDP, the Economic Relations Division (ERD), and partner UN agencies (UN Women, UNESCO), reaffirming BEC's commitment to credible and inclusive electoral processes.

Ms. Dayaratne highlighted BEC's pivotal role in developing the BALLOT Project and reiterated UNDP's commitment to implementing it through DIM, adhering to global best practices. She emphasized that the LPAC serves as a collaborative platform to ensure project alignment with national priorities.

Mr. Andrés del Castillo Sánchez, Chief Technical Advisor and Project Manager, UNDP, provided an overview of the BALLOT Project, covering its background, rationale, theory of change, strategic interventions, and budget framework. He referenced BEC's official request for support and the findings of the Needs Assessment Mission (see Annex II).

Members emphasized the importance of commencing project implementation on 1 January 2025, ensuring:

- Alignment with BEC's electoral timeline.
- Immediate initiation of recruitment, procurement, and capacity-building activities.
- Accurate financial and asset reporting under the project framework.
- Consistent financial and programmatic reporting from the electoral cycle's start.

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The LPAC reaffirmed the use of DIM to leverage UNDP's procurement and delivery capacities to meet BEC's needs promptly.

The ERD representative **Ms Jesmin Parvin**, Joint Secretary (UN-1 section) highlighted the project's alignment with national development priorities and expressed satisfaction with its timely launch. She also confirmed the Government of Bangladesh's commitment to smooth implementation, conveying no objections.

Mr. Md. Moin Uddin Khan, Joint Secretary, BEC, inquired about the possibility of extending the project timeline for sustainability. The Chair indicated that the adaptive nature of the project allows for future adjustments if needed.

Mr. Mohammad Mustafa Hassan, Deputy Secretary, BEC, sought clarity on implementation and accountability measures, including the appointment of a National Project Director (NPD). UNDP clarified that under DIM, UNDP retains full management responsibility, including financial management, procurement, and the delivery of outputs, while maintaining close coordination with the national counterpart. The role of a government focal person was emphasized for effective coordination.

UNECO Head of Office and Country Representative **Ms Susan Vize** and UN Women representative **Ms Tapati Saha** appreciated BEC and UNDP for their partnership with UNESCO and UN Women. The Committee recognized the contributions of UN Women and UNESCO, highlighting their roles in gender mainstreaming, civic education, youth engagement, and media and information integrity.

UNDP confirmed the finalization of the BALLOT Project Document, incorporating feedback from BEC and participating agencies, with all arrangements in place for immediate launch. It was also suggested that UNDP's ongoing electoral assistance initiative 'Democratic Reforms through Inclusive Participation in Bangladesh (DRIP)' with SDC funding of approximately \$1.8 million be included under the broader BALLOT framework for better synergy.

UNDP appreciated BEC's provision of office space for the BALLOT Project team, enhancing joint planning and coordination. UNDP further emphasized adaptive programmatic approach and management to align the project with evolving contexts, allowing for revisions based on needs and available funding.

4. Closing

The Co-Chairs, **Mr. Akhtar Ahmed** and **Ms. Sonali Dayaratne**, expressed appreciation to all stakeholders for their active participation, reaffirming a collective commitment to advancing credible, inclusive, and transparent elections in Bangladesh. **Mr. Anowarul Haq**, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh, delivered a vote of thanks.

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Sonali Dayaratne
 Deputy Resident Representative
 UNDP Bangladesh



Akhtar Ahmed
 Senior Secretary
 Bangladesh Election Commission

Annexes

- Annex I: List of Participants
- Annex II: Project Presentation Summary