

PROJECT DOCUMENT**Armenia**

Project Title: Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)

Project Number: 01004727

Implementing Partner: UNDP

Start Date: 01/10/2025 **End Date:** 31/12/2026

PAC Meeting date: 07/10/2025

Brief Description

The **overall objective (impact)** of the Project is to contribute towards achieving enhanced credibility, inclusiveness, and sustainability of the electoral process in Armenia, leading to increased public trust in democratic governance (Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for 2021-2026)¹.

Outcome: Strengthened capacity and independence of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) of Armenia to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes by 2026 parliamentary elections.

The outcome will be consolidated through seven key outputs of the Project:

Output 1. Enhanced institutional capacity of CEC and lower-level commissions for robust electoral preparations and management. (UNDP)

Output 2. Enhanced digital transformation and cybersecurity of the electoral process. (UNDP)

Output 3. Enhanced protocols and capacities for stakeholder engagement, gender-responsive voter outreach, and countering hate speech for improved electoral transparency, inclusivity, and integrity. (UNDP)

Output 4. Gender equality and social inclusion in elections strengthened through increased participation of women and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities. (UNDP)

Output 5. Information campaigns (online and physical) for more informed and engaged electorate through inclusive and innovative civic and voter education. (UNDP and International IDEA)

Output 6. Enhanced expertise and capacity for oversight of campaign finance and digital campaigning. (International IDEA)

Output 7. Enhanced expertise and capacity for electoral risk management and crisis preparedness. (International IDEA)

Contributing Outcome (UNSDCF, CPD, RPD):

UNSDCF Outcome 6 / CPD 3: People benefit from effective and accountable governance systems and institutions that safeguard human rights, uphold the rule of law, and public administration that ensures effective and human-centered service delivery for all. Output 3.1: Constitution-making, electoral, parliamentary, and other processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability.

Related Strategic Plan Outcome: Outcome 2:

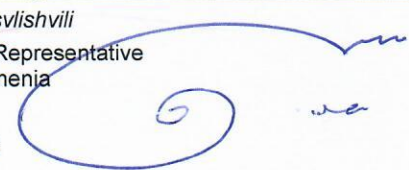
Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development.

SDGs supported by the Project: SDG 16.6-16.7, SDG 16.10, SDG 5.5, SDG 5.1, SDG 10.2, SDG 10.7, SDG 9.1, SDG 9.C, SDG 17.16-17.17.

Indicative Output(s) with gender marker²: **Marker 2**

Total resources required:	USD 6,634,142	
Total resources allocated for UNDP activities:	USD 5,475,542	
	Donors:	
	European Union	USD 1,737,900
	Government of Germany/GIZ	USD 1,158,749
	Central Electoral Commission of the RA	USD 2,436,100
	Government of Norway/Norad	USD 750,000
Resources allocated to International IDEA:	Government of Sweden/Sida	USD 529,393
	UN DPPA/EAD	USD 22,000
Resources allocated to International IDEA:	USD 1,158,600	

Agreed by (signatures):

The Central Elections Committee of the Republic of Armenia	Implementing Partner
Vahagn Hovakimyan Chairman Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Armenia	Natia Natsvlshvili Resident Representative UNDP Armenia
Signature: 	Signature: 
Date: 25.02.2026	Date: 25.02.2026

¹ The Government of Armenia's 2021-2026 Programme emphasises strengthening institutional democracy by advancing electoral reforms to enhance the effective exercise of electoral rights and address issues identified during the 2021 parliamentary elections and earlier. Legislative reforms will focus on ensuring free and fair elections, fostering dialogue on potential constitutional changes, and introducing advanced tools for managing voter lists, identification systems, and databases through legislative and technical upgrades (Section 5.1. Electoral Right: Institutional Democracy). Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for 2021-2026. Annex to Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 1363-N of 18 August. <https://www.gov.am/files/docs/4737.pdf>.

² The Gender Marker measures how much a project invests in gender equality and women's empowerment. Select one for each output: GEN3 (Gender equality as a principal objective); GEN2 (Gender equality as a significant objective); GEN1 (Limited contribution to gender equality); GEN0 (No contribution to gender equality).

I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

I.1. PRE-PROJECT SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY AND THE SECTOR

Armenia has made significant strides in reforming its electoral processes over the past decade, particularly in enhancing transparency, inclusivity, and the use of technology. However, Armenia's democratic progress continues in a challenging environment, marked by polarization, information manipulation, and efforts to undermine trust in elections. Challenges remain in ensuring that the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and lower-level electoral commissions operate as fully independent, professional, and citizen-oriented institutions. The 2021 OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission (EOM) final report highlighted several areas requiring improvement, including the need for timely legal reforms, uniform application of electoral procedures, and more robust measures to prevent the misuse of state resources and to address traditional risks such as vote buying, misuse of administrative resources, and logistical challenges. The report also emphasized the importance of enhancing transparency in oversight of political advertising, while online campaign finance remains limited, as well as in publication of election results. In addition, it emphasized the significance of addressing digital threats that have grown more complex, while over 60% of Armenians rely on social media for news consumption.¹ The report highlighted the need for improving voter education efforts to ensure that all citizens, including underrepresented groups, are well-informed and engaged in the electoral process.² Low voter turnout, especially among youth and marginalized groups, further underscores the need for targeted civic education and outreach. Tailored interventions can help foster engagement, counter apathy, and build public confidence in democratic processes. Overall, a proactive, evidence-based approach, coupled with closer coordination between central and lower-level electoral commissions, as well as other electoral stakeholders, is essential for strengthening resilience of both the voters and the whole election system.

The CEC has been actively working to modernize its operations, particularly through the digitalization of electoral processes. Since 2016, Armenia has implemented technologies such as Voter Authentication Devices (VADs) and automated election management systems, which have improved the efficiency and transparency of elections. However, the digital transformation has also exposed vulnerabilities, particularly in cybersecurity. The 2021 snap parliamentary elections were marred by cyberattacks that threatened the credibility of the results. In response, the UNDP, under the ESPA-3 project, conducted an ICT and cybersecurity assessment, revealing outdated infrastructure, fragmented systems, and insufficient human capacity within the CEC. A comprehensive ICT and cybersecurity strategy has since been proposed to address these issues, focusing on modernizing systems, enhancing cybersecurity protocols, and building interagency cooperation.

Despite these advancements, the CEC faces challenges in maintaining a professional and independent electoral administration. The CEC's Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028 outline plans to establish a training unit to institutionalize the training of election commission members and other stakeholders. However, the existing e-learning platform, launched in 2020 with UNDP support, has several shortcomings that need to be addressed to improve its effectiveness.

Inclusivity remains a critical issue in Armenia's electoral process. The 2021 Shadow Report by the Bridge of Hope NGO highlighted that the CEC's official website³ is not fully accessible to individuals with visual impairments,⁴ despite references to accessibility in government reports.⁵ This lack of accessibility undermines the participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process. Additionally, while Armenia has made progress in gender-balanced representation through quota regulations, challenges persist at the local level, where female elected representatives often resign their seats, leading to gender imbalances in elected bodies.

The media plays a crucial role in ensuring free and fair elections by providing voters with accurate information about candidates and the electoral process. However, Armenia's electoral history has seen instances of hate speech, defamation, and the spread of online disinformation, which can deepen societal divisions and undermine the integrity of elections. Strengthening media coverage and equipping young people with the skills to detect and counter fake news are essential steps toward fostering a more informed and engaged electorate.

In summary, while Armenia has made considerable progress in electoral reform, significant challenges remain in ensuring the independence, professionalism, and inclusivity of the electoral administration. The upcoming parliamentary elections in 2026 present an opportunity to address these challenges and further align Armenia's electoral processes with international standards for democratic elections.

The ARTEMIS project aims to support these efforts by strengthening the capacity of the CEC, enhancing digital transformation and cybersecurity, and promoting gender equality and social inclusion in the electoral process.

I.2. NEEDS AND CONSTRAINTS OF TARGET GROUPS AND FINAL BENEFICIARIES

The Project will aim at supporting the institutional and professional capacities of Electoral Management Bodies and other stakeholders.

CEC and lower-level electoral commissions

The CEC and lower-level commissions play a pivotal role in managing electoral processes. However, they face challenges related to institutional capacity, digital transformation, cybersecurity risks, and stakeholder engagement. The Project addresses these by:

- Strengthening the CEC's capacity through training, a newly established dedicated training unit, and an e-learning platform, while deploying comparative expertise and guidance in building staff skills in risk assessment, scenario planning, and crisis communication to anticipate and respond effectively to digital threats, disinformation, and operational risks.
- Supporting the digital transformation of electoral processes, including the deployment of Voter Authentication Devices (VADs) and cybersecurity measures to protect electoral data.
- Building institutional and technical capacity for oversight of campaign finance and digital campaigning through tailored training, methodological support, and the deployment of a GDPR-compliant digital monitoring tool.
- Strengthening engagement with political parties, civil society, and media to promote transparency and public trust in electoral administration.
- Supporting the development of gender-responsive and inclusive policies to ensure equal participation in elections.

Political parties

Political parties serve as key actors in the democratic process, yet they often struggle with internal governance, adherence to fair electoral practices, and ensuring gender-balanced candidate lists. The Project supports them by:

- Enhancing political parties' capacity in electoral procedures, campaign finance, and internal democracy, while strengthening their understanding of principles and procedures for digital campaigning to ensure compliance and transparency in online campaign advertisements and expenditures.
- Encouraging gender balance and inclusive participation through policy reforms, training, and incentives for women's political participation.
- Strengthening political parties' engagement with voters, particularly in addressing hate speech and misinformation.

CSOs, and Organizations of persons with disabilities

CSOs and OPDs play a crucial role in electoral observation, advocacy, and voter education. However, they often lack resources and formal engagement with electoral bodies. The project ensures their meaningful participation by:

- Supporting CSOs in implementing inclusive and accessible civic education campaigns, particularly targeting women, youth, persons with disabilities and refugees.
- Providing small grants and partnerships for CSOs and OPDs to monitor and enhance electoral integrity.
- Promoting disability-inclusive electoral practices, including accessible polling stations and voter assistance tools.
- Enhancing CSO capacities in the design and delivery of inclusive, values-based civic education campaigns that go beyond procedural messaging to engage citizens on electoral norms, democratic integrity, and resilience. Additionally, the project will provide partnership opportunities enabling CSOs and OPDs to play a more active role in monitoring electoral integrity, including tracking campaign finance and promoting transparency and accountability.

Media and Social Media Influencers

Media outlets and digital platforms shape public discourse around elections, but they also face challenges in addressing misinformation, hate speech, and in ensuring ethical election coverage. The project enhances media engagement by:

- Offering training on responsible electoral reporting, gender-sensitive journalism, and fact-checking mechanisms.
- Establishing digital tools such as iVerify to counter misinformation and disinformation.
- Engaging social media influencers to reach young voters with accurate electoral information.

Voters

Declining voter turnout in Armenia⁶ poses a threat to the resilience and trust in democratic institutions, particularly in the context of growing disinformation campaigns designed to demobilize voters. Public trust in elections remains fragile, especially among youth and politically disengaged groups. Targeted disinformation often promotes cynicism and apathy, undermining citizens' belief that their vote matters.

Voters, particularly in rural areas, often lack access to accurate electoral information and face barriers in participation due to misinformation, administrative inefficiencies, or social exclusion. The project responds to these needs by:

- Implementing voter education campaigns in multiple formats, including digital platforms, community outreach, and accessible materials (Braille, sign language, etc.).
- Developing the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA) to ensure timely voter registration updates and reminders.
- Addressing barriers to voter registration and participation, including legal frameworks for absentee voting and support mechanisms for displaced persons.
- Delivery of an inclusive, nationwide civic-education campaign that empowers citizens with knowledge about electoral principles, their voting rights, and the importance of electoral integrity.
- Promoting awareness of common threats such as disinformation, vote-buying, and manipulation, and equipping citizens with the tools to recognise and counter these practices.

Women and Youth

Despite legal frameworks for gender equality, women and youth remain underrepresented in electoral processes. Their engagement is often hindered by socio-cultural norms, lack of leadership opportunities, and limited outreach.

Thus, women's participation in Armenia's lower-level electoral commissions reveals both progress and persistent gender disparities. In the Territorial Electoral Commissions, women hold 45.1% of all positions, nearing parity. However, they are significantly underrepresented in leadership roles, comprising only 10.5% of TEC Chairs and 26.3% of Deputy Chairs. Conversely, women dominate the administrative Secretary role at 84.2%, reflecting a clear trend of gendered role segregation. Membership roles are nearly balanced, with women making up 48.7%, but overall, the data underscores a pattern where women are more likely to serve in supportive or mid-level roles than in decision-making capacities. In Precinct Electoral Commissions, women's overall representation is higher at 63%, driven largely by their dominance in Secretary (77%) and membership (64%) roles. Leadership remains an area of concern, with women accounting for 42% of PEC Chairs, a notable improvement compared to TECs but still falling short of parity. This data highlights a structural trend where women's participation decreases as the level of authority increases. To address these gaps, efforts should focus on promoting women into leadership roles through targeted capacity-building programs, awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes, and potential policy measures, such as quotas, to ensure more equitable representation in decision-making positions across Armenia's electoral commissions. In CEC, women hold four out of seven positions, representing a majority; however, key leadership roles are divided, with the Chair being a man, the Deputy Chair a woman, and the Secretary a man, reflecting both progress in gender representation and the need for continued efforts to achieve greater equity in top decision-making positions.

The provisions in the Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia emphasise a clear commitment to gender equality in the composition of electoral commissions at both the central and constituency levels, although there are mechanisms that allow flexibility in certain circumstances. Article 42 mandates gender representation in CEC by requiring that at least two members of each gender are represented, ensuring that gender balance is a foundational principle in the formation of CEC. This policy reflects Armenia's recognition of the need to integrate diverse perspectives in electoral decision-making. However, while the gender balance is maintained, the flexibility in selecting members does not guarantee equal gender representation in leadership roles, as demonstrated by the male-dominated positions of Chair and Secretary. Similarly, Article 43 enforces gender equality in constituency electoral commissions, ensuring that at least two members from each gender are included. This provision aims to foster gender inclusivity at a local level, although the flexibility granted to CEC in appointing or partially appointing members – provided it respects gender equality criteria – could potentially reduce the impact of this requirement if CEC exercises its discretion to minimise gender parity for operational or practical reasons. Moreover, if there is a shortage of qualified candidates while maintaining gender balance, CEC is empowered to appoint individuals with professional qualifications, further shifting the focus from purely gender-based representation to competency-based recruitment. This approach raises questions about the balance between maintaining gender equity and prioritising specialised skills in election management, which may sometimes limit the scope for equal gender representation in commissions. In summary, while the Electoral Code's provisions on gender equality set important parameters for inclusive participation in electoral commissions, there remains a tension between ensuring gender parity and addressing practical or procedural challenges. The flexibility provided to the CEC suggests a need for ongoing monitoring to ensure that gender balance is not compromised in favour of operational convenience or technical qualifications.⁷

The provisions of the Electoral Code related to women's participation in elections focus on promoting gender equality through mechanisms such as quotas, gender-balanced candidate lists, and the protection of gender representation during the electoral process. These measures are designed to address historical gender imbalances in political representation and enhance the inclusivity of the electoral system.

Gender Quotas in Candidate Lists: Articles 83 and 130 provide a structural framework to ensure gender balance in party and electoral lists. Specifically, these provisions require that each gender should not exceed 70% representation in any part of the electoral list, which is designed to encourage gender diversity. The quota system is structured in blocks (e.g., every 3rd, 6th, 9th candidate must be from the opposite gender) to ensure equal representation throughout the list, which helps prevent gender homogeneity in electoral lists. However, while the quota system ensures gender diversity, it also includes flexibility that could be utilised in the event of an insufficient number of candidates from one gender. For instance, in cases where a gender is underrepresented in a party's list, provisions allow for the inclusion of additional candidates from the underrepresented gender, thus safeguarding minimum representation for both genders. These measures aim to prevent gender imbalances but also highlight a potential challenge: if a party's pool of candidates is not diverse enough, achieving gender parity becomes more difficult, and parties may be forced to make compromises based on available candidates rather than strict adherence to gender quotas.

Mandates and Gender Representation: Article 100 and Article 141 further reinforce gender equality by establishing mechanisms to ensure gender representation in the allocation of mandates. These provisions stipulate that when mandates are allocated to a party's electoral list, gender equality must be maintained. If a party's electoral list results in a gender imbalance (e.g., all mandates are allocated to one gender), then the last candidate from the opposite gender must be given the mandate, ensuring that the gender ratio does not exceed 70% for one gender. Additionally, Article 100 provides for the replacement of deputies in cases of mandate refusal or premature cessation of mandate. If a mandate is vacated and the remaining gender representation falls below 25%, the party must select a candidate from the underrepresented gender. This clause ensures that gender balance is maintained throughout the term of office, even in cases of changes in the elected body. While these provisions are an important step towards gender equality, they also underscore the complexity of ensuring gender balance after the initial election process. There is an inherent tension between the fluid nature of mandates (with deputies vacating their seats) and the need for consistent gender representation. The flexibility in the selection process, where parties may appoint candidates based on qualifications rather than strict gender quotas, could undermine the broader goal of ensuring continuous gender balance.

Preference Voting and Gender Equality: Article 143 introduces preference voting, which allows voters to rank candidates on the ballot. This voting system is designed to provide more transparency and voter choice in determining their preferred candidates. However, the system includes gender equality safeguards: if the election results show a violation of gender balance (i.e., one gender is overrepresented), candidates from the overrepresented gender will be removed, and their votes redistributed. This system ensures that gender quotas are respected even in preference-based voting scenarios. This system of vote redistribution may be seen as a mechanism to preserve gender equality, but it could lead to practical challenges. For example, if many votes for one gender candidate are redistributed, it could distort the results of the election, as voters may have preferred certain candidates from the overrepresented gender. The provision may also lead to the exclusion of strong candidates based on gender rather than merit, potentially reducing the overall quality of representation. The provisions laid out in these articles collectively represent a significant effort by the Armenian Electoral Code to ensure gender equality in the election process. The requirement for gender-balanced lists and the protection of gender representation in the allocation of mandates reflect a commitment to advancing women's participation in politics. However, challenges remain, especially regarding the flexibility built into the system. The provisions that allow gender balance to be adjusted in response to practical considerations – such as the availability of qualified candidates – may undermine the integrity of gender quotas. Additionally, the use of preference voting and the mandate replacement system introduces complexity into maintaining gender balance, as the redistribution of votes and the appointment of replacements may sometimes be influenced more by party strategy or candidate availability than by a commitment to gender parity. In conclusion, while the Electoral Code provides robust mechanisms for enhancing women's participation in the political process, ongoing monitoring and adaptation will be necessary to ensure that these gender equality provisions are effectively implemented and not diluted by operational or strategic considerations.⁸

The Project promotes active participation of women and youth in electoral processes by:

- Strengthening gender quotas and enforcement mechanisms for women's representation in elections.
- Implementing youth-focused electoral engagement programs such as mock elections, interactive games, and digital platforms.
- Supporting women candidates through leadership training, mentorship, and public awareness campaigns to reduce gender-based electoral violence.

Persons with disabilities

PWDs often face structural and attitudinal barriers that limit their electoral participation. The Combined second and third periodic reports submitted by Armenia under article 35 of the CRPD to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2020, indicated that Armenia has implemented a range of measures to ensure the full inclusion of PWDs in elections, targeting their suffrage rights, access to election-related information, and broader participation in electoral processes. The government stated that CEC had prioritised accessibility in its Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for 2020-2022, emphasising collaboration with NGOs to make electoral processes more inclusive. Since 2019, CEC has revised its decision on providing additional opportunities for voters facing participation challenges, incorporating input from OPDs accredited for election observation. It also referred to CEC efforts to enhance accessibility, including publishing voter guides in Braille, distributing special magnifying glasses, and providing cardboard templates for independent voting by individuals with visual impairments. According to the report, the CEC website features accessible resources, such as tools for users with visual impairments and colour blindness, as well as a manual for visually impaired voters, while video materials on voting procedures and anti-bribery messages incorporate sign language and inclusive elements to reach diverse audiences. The report indicated that polling station accessibility was a key focus. Since 2018, CEC has included specialists in working with PWDs in its training programs for electoral commission members⁹.

In the meantime, UNPRPD's, 2021 Country Report on Situational Analysis of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Armenia¹⁰, the Shadow Report on the Government's Combined second and third periodic reports submitted by the Bridge of Hope NGO on behalf of 12 Armenian OPDs¹¹, as well as the Submission of the Human Rights Defender of Armenia to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the Implementation of the UN CRPD¹² point at substantial gaps in the regulations, policies and practices for equal participation of persons with disabilities in elections. Specifically, the Human Rights Defender highlights that the full participation of PWDs in political and public life remains a significant challenge in Armenia. Despite being a fundamental democratic right, elections are not yet sufficiently accessible to PWDs. Accessible polling stations are largely absent, key barriers being inadequate ramps, narrow doorways, lack of handrails, non-adaptive voting booths, and insufficient assistive technologies, including Braille ballots. These shortcomings hinder the full realisation of PWDs' political rights. Inaccessibility of political campaigning is another critical issue, particularly for individuals with visual, hearing, and intellectual disabilities. Campaign materials often lack Braille formats, subtitles, captions, audio versions, or sign language interpreters. Additionally, the physical inaccessibility of campaign rallies and the crowded environments further marginalise people with physical disabilities. These issues undermine the ability of PWDs to independently form political opinions and actively participate in the electoral process. To address these concerns, the HRD recommends improving accessibility of polling stations, ensuring smooth mobility within the stations, and making electoral information more accessible. Legal mechanisms should also be introduced to enable the active engagement of persons with disabilities in electoral committees, ensuring their full involvement in the electoral process and public life. To enhance the inclusion of PWDs CEC proposed several amendments to the Electoral Code that have been adopted in December 2024. The amendments aim to create an inclusive electoral process, ensuring that PWDs can participate in elections without barriers according to CEC as discussed below. Voters with mobility difficulties who cannot vote at their designated polling station may apply to vote at an accessible polling station of their choice. Applications must be submitted to the authorised body no later than 12 days before election day by 14:00 and should specify the number of the preferred accessible polling station. The application can be submitted either electronically or in paper form. Electronic submissions by persons with disabilities may use any acceptable signature method, and those without a digital signature must include proof of disability. Applications submitted on behalf of a voter require a notarised power of attorney. The authorised body will process applications within three days, update the voter lists accordingly, and notify applicants of the accessible polling station's number and address. Additionally, the Central Election Commission will publish a list of accessible polling stations 40 days and 20 days before election day. Polling stations must be located near residential areas and ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities, mobility difficulties, and vision impairments. The voting rooms should support seamless voting and facilitate the efficient operation of election commissions. The head of the community will bear personal responsibility for selecting polling station locations and ensuring that voting rooms comply with Article 57 of the Electoral Code. Voting booths must be designed to accommodate voters with disabilities and mobility difficulties, enabling them to cast their votes independently while maintaining the secrecy of the ballot. Amendments to Article 39 and Article 57 of the Code are also considered to ensure inclusive language and practices. Specifically, the term "persons with disabilities, as well as those with mobility difficulties and vision problems" will replace the existing wording in relevant sections. Furthermore, provisions will clarify that precinct election commission members, specialists, and authorised individuals present in voting rooms are included under the term "persons".¹³ The project promotes full inclusion of persons with disabilities in electoral processes by:

- Improving polling station accessibility and providing assistive technologies for voting.
- Training electoral officials on disability rights and inclusive electoral practices.
- Supporting OPDs in advocating for legal and procedural reforms to protect the electoral rights of persons with disabilities.

Refugees and displaced population

Armenia is experiencing one of the most significant refugee influxes in its modern history. Following the events of September 2023, over 100,000 ethnic Armenian refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh entered the country in a matter of weeks, adding to the already vulnerable refugee and asylum-seeking population hosted by the country. This sudden demographic shift increased Armenia's population by more than 3% in just days, placing unprecedented pressure on Armenia's social services, governance institutions, and host communities, many of which were already facing socio-economic challenges.

While humanitarian and livelihood assistance remain urgent, the crisis also underscores the importance of **political and civic inclusion**. Refugees and displaced persons are not only recipients of aid but also rights-holders whose integration into Armenia's civic life is essential for long-term stability and resilience. Exclusion from political processes risks perpetuating marginalization, weakening trust in state institutions, and fuelling social tensions with host communities. Conversely, inclusion can promote shared ownership of democratic development, strengthen social cohesion, and help mitigate misinformation and polarization.

The refugee population faces specific barriers to participation:

- **Legal and institutional gaps:** Limited clarity in electoral legislation on the rights of refugees, displaced persons, and naturalized citizens restricts their ability to participate fully in elections.
- **Information asymmetry:** Refugees often lack access to voter education, civic literacy resources, and timely information on procedures – issues exacerbated by language, digital divides, and limited outreach.
- **Vulnerability to misinformation and manipulation:** Displaced populations are disproportionately exposed to disinformation and divisive narratives, which can erode trust and reduce participation.
- **Socio-economic fragility:** Economic insecurity, housing instability, and trauma can deprioritize civic engagement, unless deliberate support mechanisms are in place.

Host communities, meanwhile, face their own **integration and cohesion challenges**. The sudden arrival of large populations strains local services, risks fostering resentment, and can reinforce perceptions of competition over scarce resources. Ensuring that electoral participation initiatives engage both refugees and host communities together – through shared voter education, outreach, and inclusive leadership initiatives – creates opportunities for trust-building and mutual understanding.

Overall, Armenia's refugee crisis is not only a humanitarian and socio-economic challenge but also a civic challenge. Ensuring refugees' and host communities' equal access to political participation is critical for resilience, cohesion, and democratic renewal.

By embedding refugees and displaced persons into electoral processes, NORAD and UNDP help strengthen democratic legitimacy and long-term stability through inclusive participation, ensuring that all residents with voting or participation rights can engage meaningfully. This approach enhances social cohesion by fostering joint civic engagement between refugees and host communities, while upholding the dignity and agency of displaced populations. It also builds resilience against disinformation and divisive narratives, reinforces trust in institutions, and supports the long-term integration of displaced persons as active members of Armenian society beyond humanitarian assistance.

II. STRATEGY

The Project's strategy is structured around five key pillars that consolidate and streamline the implementation of activities to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. These pillars – Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening, Digital Transformation and Cybersecurity, Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Reform, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, and Data-Driven Decision Making – form the foundation for delivering impactful and sustainable electoral reforms in Armenia.

Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening

Training and Knowledge Transfer: The Project employs a blended learning approach, combining in-person training sessions, online learning modules, and study visits to facilitate learning and knowledge sharing, enabling CEC officials and lower-level commissions to build and internalize new competencies.

Development of Strategic Frameworks: The Project supports the CEC in operationalizing its Development Strategy and Roadmap, ensuring long-term institutional reform and resilience.

Human Resource Management (HRM) Enhancement: The assessment and reform of HRM policies within the CEC are designed to strengthen recruitment, retention, and professional development frameworks.

Establishment of Training Units: A dedicated CEC training unit will be established, providing structured and sustainable capacity-building programs with standardized curricula and certification mechanisms.

Digital Transformation and Cybersecurity

Implementation of Secure Digital Tools: The Project supports the deployment of the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA), VADs, and other digital solutions to modernize electoral processes.

Cybersecurity Enhancement: A cybersecurity risk assessment will be conducted, leading to the development and implementation of policies, protocols, and infrastructure upgrades aligned with ISO 27001 standards.

Capacity Development in Digital Security: Training programs will be delivered to CEC personnel on digital risk management, cybersecurity protocols, and resilience-building strategies against cyber threats.

Feasibility Studies and Piloting of E-Governance Solutions: The Project will assess and test emerging electoral technologies, such as online voter registration and secure vote transmission systems, ensuring adaptability and long-term efficiency.

Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Reform

Regulatory Reforms: The Project facilitates the development and adoption of new electoral regulations and policies to enhance transparency, inclusivity, and electoral integrity.

Multi-Stakeholder Coordination: Structured dialogue forums will be established among government agencies, political parties, CSOs, and international development partners to align efforts and avoid duplication.

Strengthening Electoral Dispute Resolution Mechanisms: The Project will support improvements in complaint-handling processes and the development of legal frameworks to ensure effective electoral dispute resolution.

Voter Outreach and Media Collaboration: CEC's communication channels, including its website and social media platforms, will be modernized to enhance public engagement and combat misinformation.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

The Project is fully aligned with UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025. This strategy emphasizes the importance of integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of development programming to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.¹⁴

Electoral Gender and Social Inclusion Mapping (EGSIM): A comprehensive assessment will be conducted to analyse barriers to political participation for women, youth, and marginalized communities, informing future reforms.

Capacity Building for Inclusive Elections: Training programs will be developed for electoral officials, political parties, and CSOs on gender-responsive electoral management and disability inclusion.

Enhancing Women's Political Participation: Policy dialogue sessions will be conducted to develop and enforce gender quotas and mandate placement rules, increasing women's representation in electoral management and candidacy.

Accessibility Improvements: The Project will conduct barrier audits of polling stations and support the development of accessible electoral policies, ensuring compliance with international standards on disability inclusion.

Positive Effects for Refugees: The Project will promote the early and meaningful civic inclusion of refugees and displaced persons, safeguarding their political rights, preventing disenfranchisement, and providing digital voter services to overcome documentation and mobility barriers. By embedding refugees into Armenia's civic and political systems, it anchors displaced populations in society, prevents marginalization, and builds resilience and dignity by recognizing them as active agents rather than aid recipients. Participation in electoral processes will foster a sense of belonging, strengthen trust in institutions, create shared spaces for engagement with host communities, and empower refugee youth and women with leadership, advocacy, and digital skills that support long-term social and economic integration.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Electoral Data Collection and Analysis: The Project will introduce systems for tracking and analysing voter participation trends, disaggregated by gender, age, disability status, and displacement-related vulnerabilities to safeguard inclusivity, justice, and equal rights in electoral processes.

Rights Protection: Safeguard inclusivity, justice, and equal rights in electoral processes, with attention to gender, disability, and displacement-related vulnerabilities.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: A results-based M&E framework will be developed to measure Project progress, inform adaptive management, and ensure accountability.

Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices: Lessons learned from the Project will be documented and disseminated to support replication and scalability in future electoral cycles.

Impact Assessments and Reporting: Regular assessments will evaluate the effectiveness of electoral interventions, guiding continuous improvement and sustainability planning.

II.1. THEORY OF CHANGE

The Project will build on the mandate of UNDP in the area of electoral assistance provided by the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) in late 2021, under Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) Report. The proposed Project is designed utilizing extensively the lessons learned through these efforts and building on the results achieved and strategic partnerships developed throughout the past decade.

The Project is developed in close consultation with the Central Electoral Commission (CEC). The design of the Project has been informed by the most recent studies and analysis in sector implemented by UN DPPA/EAD, UNDP, International IDEA, IFES, and other key actors.

The project framework is based on the recommendations of the NAM Report for UN electoral assistance in Armenia, targeting the 2026 parliamentary elections. The framework aligns with UNDP's mandate and focuses on institutional capacity building, gender equality, inclusivity, sustainability, and credibility of the electoral process leading up to the 2026 parliamentary elections. The project objectives and deliverables in the areas of protecting the electoral integrity and civic literacy on democratic elections build on International IDEA's strategy of promoting sustainable democracy through upholding the principles of free and fair elections and strengthening the public trust in the electoral processes. The project will enable Armenian electoral administrators and stakeholders to access comparative knowledge and good practices in protecting the integrity of elections and democratic governance, ensuring coherence with globally recognized principles. The project framework is fully coherent with UN Electoral Policy Directives and Guidelines, including the Policy Directive on Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance¹⁵.

The **overall objective** of the Project is to contribute towards achieving enhanced credibility, inclusiveness, and sustainability of the electoral process in Armenia, leading to increased public trust in democratic governance.

The **specific objective** of the Project is to strengthen capacity and independence of the CEC to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes by 2026 parliamentary elections.

The Project aims to achieve the following results at outcome and output levels:

Outcome: Strengthened capacity and independence of the Central Electoral Commission of Armenia to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes by 2026 parliamentary elections.

The achievement of this outcome will be measured vis-a-vis the six targets. Thus, by 2027, the Project will result in: (a) Progress in compliance with international standards for credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes¹⁶; (b) At least 10% of training costs of the electoral management bodies covered by domestic resources vs. international donor support following the final year of the project; (c) Zero impact of cybersecurity incidents on electoral systems and enhanced cybersecurity measures in place; (d) At least 5% increase in voter turnout among women and youth; (e) At least 5% increase of women candidates running for office in local elections; and, (f) At least 5% increase in the level of satisfaction of the stakeholders with CEC's outreach efforts¹⁷.

The target for the Project outcome indicators (a) and (f) are the explicit contributors to the two targets under the Global Europe Performance Monitoring System, specifically, level 2 indicator of the Revised GERP¹⁸.

In a nutshell, UNDP and the CEC assume that continued political stability and commitment from the Government of Armenia towards electoral reforms, cooperation from CEC and alignment with UNDP's strategic support, and availability of donor funding and contributions from international partners. The partners recognize that political instability, conflict, delays or changes in the electoral calendar, escalation of political polarisation and potential for electoral violence negatively affecting the electoral environment. We are also aware that resistance from key political actors towards gender equality and inclusivity reforms persists.

The above-mentioned outcome will be consolidated through delivering eight core **outputs** as follows:

Output 1. Enhanced institutional capacity of CEC and lower-level commissions for robust electoral preparations and management. (UNDP)

This output focuses on strengthening the CEC and lower-level commissions to effectively manage electoral processes in line with the regular electoral calendar, including local elections. The support will facilitate international donor coordination to optimise assistance and streamline efforts across the electoral support landscape.

Key areas of support under this pillar are explicitly operationalising the related NAM recommendations requesting to support CEC capacity and training, enhance electoral preparations and strengthen donor coordination. The key interventions include enhancing the knowledge and skills of CEC and lower-level commission staff through comprehensive training programs on electoral best practices, digital literacy, and cybersecurity, including practical simulations before elections. The Project interventions also address the NAM recommendations to strengthen mechanisms for coordination among international development partners, enhancing CEC's capacity to manage donor relations and align external support effectively.

The achievement of the output will be informed by six targets: (1a) CEC's Development Strategy and Roadmap to guide the institutional reform of the electoral management bodies fully operationalised; (1b) A set of comprehensive recommendations for improving the human resource management (HRM) system validated by CEC; (1c) A functional training unit within the CEC Secretariat is established, guided by a comprehensive training strategy; (1d) A CEC e-learning and certification system is operational, offering at least 5 new online courses for electoral stakeholders, with active annual user engagement, certified participants, and a functionality to measure an average user satisfaction score through feedback mechanisms; (1e) At least 98% of CEC officials¹⁹ and lower-level commission (TEC and PEC) members trained; and, (f) At least 2 coordination meetings among international assistance providers conducted annually.

The implementing partners and the CEC assume that international development partners will actively participate in coordination mechanisms. We are aware that resistance to change from lower-level commissions and stakeholders may delay implementation.

Output 2. Enhanced digital transformation and cybersecurity of the electoral process. (UNDP)

This output focuses on building CEC's capacity to uphold the integrity of the voter register, enhance the use of Voter Authentication Devices (VADs), and improve the overall digital infrastructure and cybersecurity measures of the electoral system. Key areas of support under this pillar are explicitly operationalising the related NAM Report recommendations requesting to maintain voter register integrity, implement and optimise VADs and improve cybersecurity. The key interventions, thus, include optimisation of VADs through ensuring full deployment and effective use of VADs across all polling stations, coupled with training and technical support to address operational challenges during elections. The interventions also address NAM recommendation on digitalisation and cybersecurity of electoral process through conducting feasibility studies and pilot projects aimed at exploring advanced digital solutions (e.g., online voter registration, secure vote transmission technologies) and strengthening cybersecurity across all electoral data handling and transmission processes.

The achievement of the output will be validated by the following four targets: (2a) All polling stations utilising voter authentication devices (VADs) in full compliance with the requirements of the national legislation and CEC regulations²⁰; (2b) A new CEC' Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA), a multifunctional digital tool, developed and piloted; (2c) At least 5 recommendations on electronic counting and/or tabulation, maintenance and replacement of VADs, and electronic notification system delivered by the feasibility study for further digital transformation of the electoral processes are validated by CEC; (2d) At least 5 new internal cybersecurity policies, protocols and relevant infrastructure²¹ for CEC are in place²² enabling the CEC ISO 27001 standard certification.

The indicator (2d) will be used if the mandate of the UNDP electoral assistance is extended beyond 2026, also pending on availability of resources.

We assume that CEC will remain committed to integrating digital solutions into electoral processes and necessary technology and infrastructure for voter authentication and cybersecurity measures are available. We

also recognize that increased cybersecurity threats targeting electoral systems during the election period could disrupt the integrity of the electronic systems.

Output 3. Enhanced protocols and capacities for stakeholder engagement, gender-responsive voter outreach, and countering hate speech for improved electoral transparency, inclusivity, and integrity. **(UNDP)**

The output focuses on support to CEC in broadening its outreach to key electoral stakeholders, including CSOs, political parties, media, and other relevant groups. Improve the regulatory framework and procedures related to electoral observation, party registration, financial reporting, and dispute resolution mechanisms. This output also focuses on and fostering a transparent and inclusive electoral environment.

Key areas of support under this output are explicitly operationalising the relevant NAM Report recommendations requesting to support CEC outreach to stakeholders, improve regulations and procedures for observation, party registration, financial reporting and dispute resolution.

The achievement of the third output will be flagged by five targets: (3a) At least 2 new and/or revised electoral regulations and procedures aimed at enhanced transparency, inclusivity, and integrity of electoral processes addressing observation, party registration and financial reporting challenges, as well as discrimination and information pollution adopted by CEC; and, (3b) Modernised CEC website offers up-to-date, gender-responsive and fully accessible voter outreach material; (3c) CEC Helpline is established and operational in collaboration with OPDs; (3d) At least 100 media, CSO and social media representatives reported increased knowledge of international standards and best practices of electoral process coverage; and, (3e) 300 young people trained on countering information pollution and hate speech reported increased ability of recognising fake news and preventing hate speech.

The implementing partners and the CEC assume that political parties, CSOs, media outlets and social media platforms cooperate in addressing misinformation and hate speech. The partners are aware that hate speech could escalate despite mitigation efforts, impacting electoral credibility and high levels of misinformation could overwhelm mitigation efforts. We also recognise of the risks related to the lack of engagement from media outlets in responsible reporting practices.

Output 4. Gender equality and social inclusion in elections strengthened through increased participation of women and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities. **(UNDP)**

The output focuses on supporting CEC's efforts to advance gender equality and inclusivity by increasing political participation of women, youth, minorities and persons with disabilities as voters, candidates, and electoral managers, while strengthening gender equality and social inclusion policies and promoting an inclusive electoral process that ensures accessibility for Persons with Disabilities.

Key areas of support under this output are explicitly operationalising the relevant NAM Report recommendations envisaging to promote gender equality and inclusivity, support women's political participation, protect the rights of women and other marginalised groups in elections and improve accessibility for PWDs.

The fourth Output will be achieved through the following eight targets: (4a) At least 5% increase in women's participation as electoral managers focusing on the TECs; (4b) CEC policy and strategic planning frameworks explicitly include measurable objectives and actions aimed at promoting gender equality and enhancing the inclusion and accessibility of electoral processes for vulnerable and disadvantaged populations²³ based on Electoral Gender and Social Inclusion Mapping (EGSIM); (4c) At least 70% of trained CEC officials, members of lower-level electoral commissions, representatives of other key electoral stakeholders, including political parties and CSOs, reported increased understanding and readiness to implement gender-responsive, inclusive and non-discriminatory policies and practices; (4d) Improved gender quota for candidates and mandate placement at both national and local levels with clear, well-drafted rules and enforcement mechanisms that facilitate greater representation of women effectively are developed and submitted to CEC; (4e) Electoral gender and social inclusion data collection and analysis on participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged populations in electoral processes improved; (4f) At least 100 electoral officials of CEC, members of lower-level electoral commissions, representatives of other electoral stakeholders reported increased sensitivity and knowledge of disability inclusion, relevant principles, regulations and policies; (4g) At least 4 new inclusive electoral policies, practices, and accessibility measures developed with OPDs and adopted by CEC (guidelines of accessible polling locations, inclusivity and barrier audit report, availability and use of new technologies including ICT and AT to reach out to PWDs, fully accessible CEC website); and, (4h) At least 10% increase in the number of polling stations that meet accessibility standards for PWDs.

The implementing partners and the CEC assume that women's rights groups and OPDs will actively support CEC's initiatives. We also rely on continued government commitment to gender equality policies. The partners also assume that political parties will prioritise gender equality and inclusiveness in candidate selection. We are also aware that cultural and societal barriers may limit women's political participation. We also recognise that

logistical and financial challenges in retrofitting polling stations to meet accessibility standards may hinder progress on planned accessibility improvements.

Output 5. More informed and engaged electorate through inclusive and innovative civic and voter education. (UNDP, International IDEA)

The output focuses on support to CEC in delivering comprehensive civic and voter education initiatives aimed at increasing awareness and participation, especially among minorities, youth, and PWDs. It further focuses on enhancing the type and quality of information provided on CEC's website. This output focuses on fostering a more informed, motivated, and resilient electorate, one that can recognize manipulative narratives and remains engaged in Armenia's democratic future.

Key areas of support under this pillar are explicitly operationalising the relevant NAM Report recommendations to enhance civic and voter education and increase the availability of voter information.

The achievement of the fifth output will be flagged by four targets: (5a) Approximately 20,000 voters (including 3,000 refugees and residents of host communities) reached through gender-sensitive and inclusive voter education initiatives implemented by CEC in partnership with CSOs and media in line with the CEC Civic and Voter Education Plan; (5b) At least 5 innovative instruments fostering participation of the first-time and young voters in the electoral processes developed and piloted by CEC in collaboration with CSOs; (5c) Around 100,000 young people (at least 50% girls) engaged by pilot interventions and instruments fostering participation of youth in electoral processes; (5d) At least 50% of target first-time voters reached reported increased awareness of their rights and responsibilities, the process of elections.

The implementing partners and the CEC rely on active involvement of civil society and media partners in voter education. The partners are also aware that misinformation and disinformation campaigns may undermine voter education efforts. We further recognise that limited reach of voter education campaigns in rural or marginalised communities may persist despite targeted campaigns.

Output 6. Enhanced expertise and capacity for oversight of campaign finance and digital campaigning. (International IDEA)

The output focuses on support to CEC in its ongoing modernization efforts by facilitating the introduction of advanced digital monitoring tools, targeted capacity-building, and enhanced inter-institutional collaboration. This includes the use of online digital ads libraries and a deployment of a GDPR-compliant digital monitoring tool to support real-time evidence gathering, actionable insights, and informed policy planning related to the integrity of the electoral campaign advertisements, and the integrity of information space.

A key area of support under this pillar is developing Armenia's ability to detect, interpret, and respond to emerging trends in online campaigning and political advertising, particularly in the pre-election period. Strengthened expertise within the CEC and partner institutions on the oversight of digital campaigning, with a focus on identifying and addressing non-transparent political finance trends, will be complemented by enhanced institutional capacity to detect and analyse patterns of digital information influence during electoral periods.

The achievement of the sixth output will be flagged by three targets: (6a) Development of a modern, unique methodology for the CEC to regularly track campaign expenditure through utilising online platform libraries and a GDPR-compliant²⁴ digital monitoring tool for tracking online campaigning and expenditure; (6b) At least 30 CEC and stakeholder staff trained in detecting and analysing digital campaigning and political finance irregularities; and (6c) At least one analytical report on online political advertising and disinformation trends produced and shared publicly.

The implementing partners and the CEC assume that political parties and social media platforms will cooperate with CEC's monitoring mechanisms, while they are also aware that the escalation of online disinformation campaigns may overwhelm CEC's monitoring capacity.

Output 7. Enhanced expertise and capacity for electoral risk management and crisis preparedness. (International IDEA)

This output focuses on supporting CEC to institutionalise a structured and forward-looking electoral risk management framework, enabling proactive identification, mitigation, and response to electoral risks, including digital threats, cyber incidents, and operational disruptions. This will include strengthened expertise and capacity within the CEC to proactively identify, assess, and mitigate electoral risks through structured planning and inter-agency coordination, as well as the institutionalization of the approaches presented in the Electoral Risk Management Tool (ERMTTool) to support ongoing risk tracking, early warning, and crisis response.

Key areas of support under this output are introduction of analytical instruments, scenario-based planning, and staff expertise development, which will contribute to enhancing the CEC's readiness to safeguard electoral integrity and maintain public confidence, even in the face of complex or unforeseen challenges. Enhanced skills and operational readiness for scenario planning, public communication during electoral disruptions, and

ensuring that efforts focus on the continuity of electoral operations will further strengthen the CEC's ability to respond effectively to evolving risks.

The achievement of the seventh output will be flagged by three targets: Key results under this output will include: **(7a)** A tailored electoral risk management framework developed using ERMTool methodologies and stakeholder input and integrated into the CEC's work stream; **(7b)** At least 25 CEC staff and other electoral stakeholders trained in electoral risk management and communications, including scenario-based simulations on electoral risks; **(7c)** Crisis communication and continuity plans tested and integrated for use by the CEC.

The Project partners assume that the CEC remains committed to embedding risk management in its strategic planning. Meanwhile, they are aware that the high-impact unforeseen crises, for instance, cyberattacks or political instability, might exceed the mitigation capacity of the Project.

These results will be delivered through interlinked key activities implemented by UNDP and International IDEA as indicated in Section **Error! Reference source not found.. (Error! Reference source not found.)** and Section 7. (Indicative Workplan) and briefly described below:

(A.1.1) Support CEC to Operationalise its Development Strategy and Roadmap. (A.1.2) Assess and Support CEC to Improve the HRM System. (A.1.3) Support CEC to Establish a Functional Training Unit within the CEC Secretariat. (A.1.4) Develop and Roll out a CEC e-Learning and Certification System. (A.1.5) Deliver Comprehensive Training and Support Certification of CEC, TEC, and PEC Members. (A.1.6) Support the Coordination Mechanisms with International Development Partners.

(A.2.1) Optimise and Support Full Deployment of VADs. (A.2.2) Conduct Feasibility Study and Deliver Recommendations for Further Digital Transformation of Electoral Processes. (A.2.3) Develop and Introduce Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA). (A.2.4) Strengthen the Cybersecurity of Electoral Processes. (A.2.5) Build Capacities for Digital Transformation and Cybersecurity. (A.2.6) Support CEC Efforts of Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement on Digital Transformation.

(A.3.1) Development and Adoption of Electoral Regulations and Procedures. (A.3.2) Modernisation of the Outreach Instruments Focusing on the CEC Website. (A.3.3) Establishment of the CEC Helpline in Collaboration with OPDs. (A.3.4) Capacity-Building for Media, CSOs, and Social Media Representatives. (A.3.5) Train Youth to Counter Hate Speech.

(A.4.1) Increase Women's Participation as Electoral Managers. (A.4.2) Develop and Operationalise CEC Policy Frameworks for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion. (A.4.3) Train Electoral Officials and other Stakeholders on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Policies and Practices. (A.4.4) Develop Gender Quota and Mandate Placement Rules for Greater Female Representation. (A.4.5) Improve Data Collection and Analysis on Participation of Vulnerable Populations. (A.4.6) Improve Accessibility Standards and Measures.

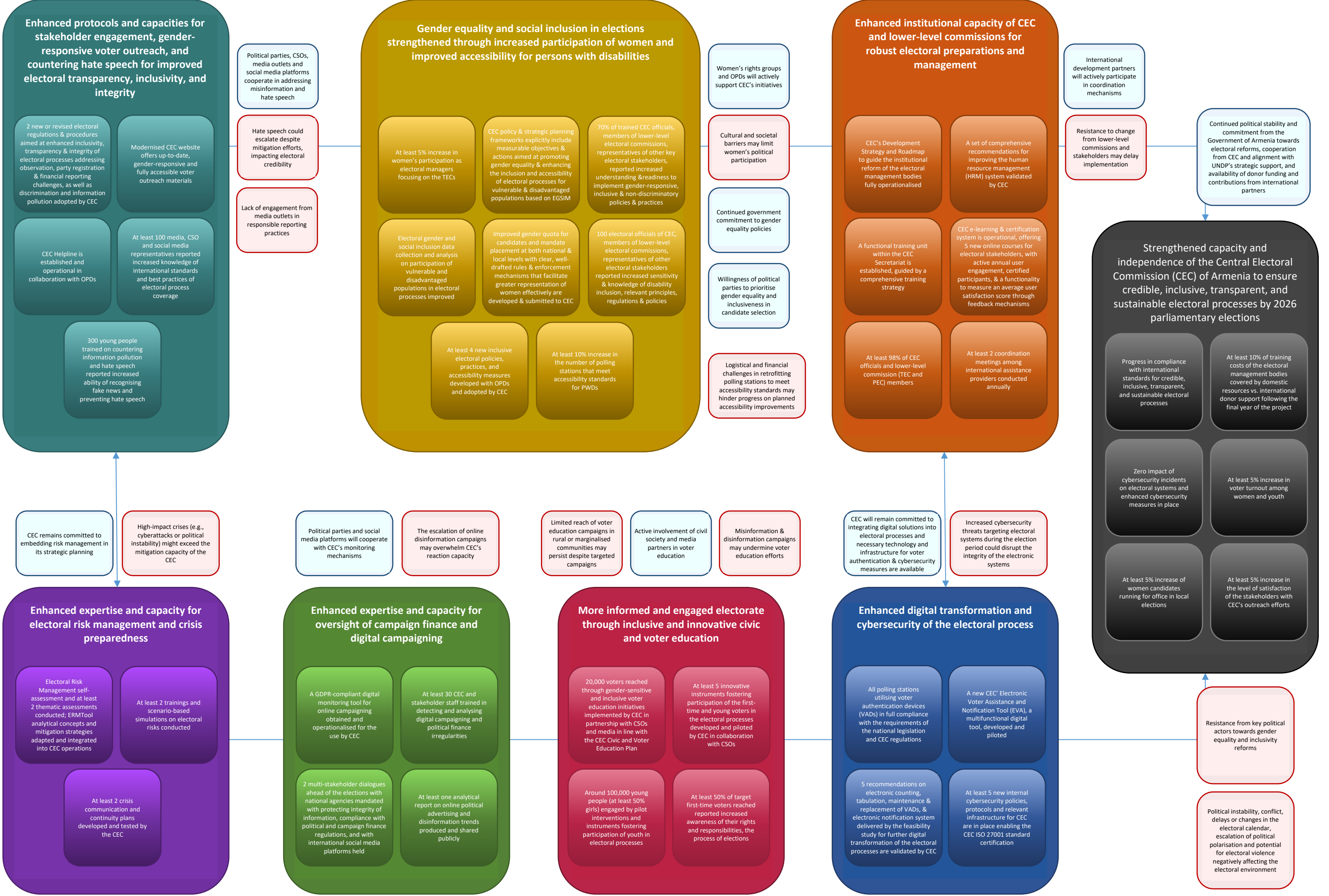
(A.5.1) Development and Implementation of a Gender-Sensitive and Inclusive Civic and Voter Education Plan. (A.5.2) Design and Pilot Innovative Instruments to Foster Participation of First-Time and Young Voters. (A.5.3) Support a select-number of CSOs to design and nation-wide civic education campaign, including a set of accessible digital and print materials, develop and validate distribution and outreach plans, train local outreach teams; implement a post-election lessons and forward-looking review and dialogue with CSOs and other electoral stakeholders.

(A.6.1) Design and deploy a GDPR-compliant methodology and additional expertise and capacity for the CEC to conduct real-time monitoring of online political advertising, campaign finance, and disinformation trends. (A.6.2) Capacity-building for CEC and Stakeholders; (A.6.3) Support public outreach to improve transparency of campaign expenditure and the relevant standards of compliance.

(A.7.1) Facilitate a CEC-led self-assessment and adapt International IDEA's ERMTool to develop a tailored risk management framework. (A.7.2) Provide training on risk mapping, early warning, and mitigation using simulation exercises to test responses to electoral risks including disinformation, cyber threats, and disruptions. (A.7.3) Development and application of crisis communication protocols. Support the CEC in developing and testing public communication strategies to maintain trust during electoral disruptions.

The consolidated illustration of the results chain and the theory of change presented above is provided below in **Figure 2 (Theory of Change)**.

Figure 2 (Theory of Change)



II.2. NATIONAL OWNERSHIP

The Project is fully aligned with the national policies and strategies and relevant institutional reforms, including the *Government Programme for 2021-2026*,²⁵ and the *Strategic Pillars of the Electoral System Development in Armenia*.

*Government Programme 2021-2026*²⁶

The *Government Programme for 2021-2026* emphasises strengthening institutional democracy by advancing electoral reforms to enhance the effective exercise of electoral rights and address issues identified during the 2021 parliamentary elections and earlier. Legislative reforms will focus on ensuring free and fair elections, fostering dialogue on potential constitutional changes, and introducing advanced tools for managing voter lists, identification systems, and databases through legislative and technical upgrades (Section 5.1. Electoral Right: Institutional Democracy).

Strategic Pillars of the Electoral System Development in Armenia for 2024-2028

The Project interventions are fully in line with the Strategic Pillars of the Electoral System Development in Armenia for 2024-2028.

Output 1 is aligned with the CEC Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028, aimed at ensuring the constitutional independence of the CEC, increasing its ability to respond to dynamic challenges in a timely and coherent manner, and to effectively manage human resources. Further, the work of the precinct election commission, the level of knowledge, capabilities, and quality of service of the territorial and precinct election commission members are important from the perspective of election evaluation. The CEC aims to make trainings for territorial election commissions regular and continue to develop and enrich the training materials, as well as organise a process for assessing the knowledge of TEC members. The CEC further aims to have a separate qualification for appointment to the positions of PEC chairperson and secretary, during which, in addition to knowledge of the legislation, their leadership skills, management experience, and abilities will also be tested. Finally, the CEC Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028 emphasise the importance of international cooperation in increasing the efficiency of electoral processes and promoting democratic values. The areas of promotion of international relations and cooperation by the CEC include the exchange of experience and knowledge, capacity building, and election observation missions. All these priorities are addressed under the project *Output 1*.

Output 2 is further aligned with the CEC Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028, aimed at digital transformation of the electoral systems in Armenia, as well as at improving material and technical security, capacity development, addressing logistical needs of the CEC.

Output 3 is also fully aligned with the CEC Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028. Emphasising the role of CSOs in electoral processes, CEC recognises that their cooperation with CSOs has been continuous, but not always regulated or planned for long-term. Cooperation with CSOs was particularly intense during the pre-election period and during the review stages of the electoral legislation. CEC prioritises collaboration CSOs in shaping and implementing electoral reforms and innovative programs. Further, CEC priorities include digital transformation of the electoral processes, focusing on the modernisation of the CEC official website as a key instrument for delivering digitalised services, as well as introduction of an electronic notification system through a special application. CEC is committed to enhancing its outreach efforts, expanding engagement to regions and making it more targeted, while countering information pollution.

Output 4 is aligned with another two major pillars, namely addressing gender equality and the needs of persons with disabilities, reinstating the CEC commitment to promoting gender equality and ensuring equal participation of women and men in electoral processes. People with disabilities make up about 6% of Armenian voters. CEC emphasises that their active participation significantly increases the inclusiveness of elections and the level of representativeness of elected officials. The project explicitly addresses these dimensions.

Output 5 is aligned with the CEC Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028, reinstating the CEC commitment to increasing voter turnout, recognizing that high participation levels strengthen and sustain democratic traditions. To this end, the CEC plans to develop and implement a new "Democracy and Elections" educational program, utilizing its regional training centres and engaging partner organizations and trained, licensed individuals as trainers. Special emphasis will be placed on youth engagement, acknowledging the critical role young people play in electoral processes. Furthermore, the CEC highlights the importance of national minorities as integral to Armenia's cultural and social fabric, emphasizing that their active and full participation in elections is essential for exercising their constitutional rights.

Output 6 is aligned with both the CEC's Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028 and the Electoral Code of Armenia, which mandates effective oversight of campaign finance, including the monitoring of compliance with legislated expenditure limits and transparency norms. It also responds to Armenia's political finance

regulations requiring robust auditing and control mechanisms to safeguard the integrity of electoral processes. Output 6 contributes to these objectives by building the CEC's internal capacity to monitor digital campaigning and political advertising – areas that are increasingly exploited for non-transparent financing and disinformation.

Finally, *Output 7* is aligned with the CEC's Pillars of Strategic Development for 2024-2028, which stress the importance of strengthening institutional resilience and crisis response capacity. In an increasingly complex electoral environment, it is essential for the CEC to have a robust and structured electoral risk management system as a safeguard for conducting elections in an orderly manner and in a way that promotes public confidence and trust in the results.

UN DPPA Needs Assessment Mission Report

Following a request from the Government of Armenia for continuing United Nations electoral assistance, an electoral needs assessment was conducted virtually by the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) of the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) from 6 to 20 December 2021, with participation from the representatives of Europe and Central Asia Division (ECAD/DPPA/DPO) and UNDP.

The Electoral Needs Assessment Mission report, approved on 11 January 2022 (NAM 2022), recommended continuing UN electoral assistance until 31 December 2026 (the next parliamentary election is due in 2026, and major local elections in the capital Yerevan were in 2023), to consolidate the progress made in democratic reforms and to ultimately help achieving institutional sustainability and self-sufficiency of the Central Electoral Commission.

The proposed project is fully aligned with the recommendations of the NAM Report, reinforcing the strategic priorities for continued UN electoral assistance in Armenia until 2026. By addressing the key challenges and opportunities outlined in the NAM Report, the Project ensures the consolidation of democratic reforms, institutional sustainability, and self-sufficiency of the CEC. Below are the core areas of alignment.

Institutional Development and Capacity Building of the CEC. The NAM Report emphasizes the need for CEC's strategic institutional development, including structured capacity-building measures and the establishment of strategic plans with measurable indicators for progress. The Project directly supports this recommendation by developing and operationalizing the CEC Development Strategy and Roadmap, enhancing human resource management (HRM) systems, and institutionalizing training programs through an e-learning and certification platform. Study visits, mentorship programs, and training units within the CEC Secretariat further ensure long-term institutional sustainability.

Voter Register Maintenance and Digital Transformation. The NAM Report highlights the need for targeted support for the CEC's role in maintaining the voter register, ensuring its accuracy and accessibility. The Project enhances the use of Voter Authentication Devices (VADs), strengthens digital infrastructure, and introduces the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA) to facilitate voter registration verification, notifications, and issue resolution. The Project also supports feasibility studies on advanced digital solutions, such as secure vote transmission technologies, ensuring the integrity and efficiency of Armenia's voter registration system.

Cybersecurity Enhancement and IT Support. The NAM Report stresses the importance of enhancing cybersecurity across electoral processes to prevent cyber threats and ensure the integrity of electronic transmissions. The Project conducts a cybersecurity risk assessment, leading to the development of new cybersecurity policies and protocols in line with international standards. The introduction of secure storage and logistical infrastructure for digital election management further aligns with NAM recommendations. Capacity-building activities, including training for CEC IT personnel and the implementation of best cybersecurity practices, ensure long-term resilience against cyber threats.

Gender Equality and Inclusivity in Electoral Processes. The NAM Report identifies gender equality and inclusivity as essential for electoral reform, calling for increased political participation of women, minorities, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs). The Project actively supports women's participation as electoral managers and candidates through quota enforcement, leadership training, and mentorship programs. Accessibility audits and inclusive electoral policies ensure that PWDs can fully participate in electoral processes. The Project also promotes youth engagement through innovative voter education tools, including mock elections, social media campaigns, and digital civic education.

Civic and Voter Education, Countering Hate Speech, and Social Media Engagement. The NAM Report recommends robust civic and voter education initiatives targeting underrepresented groups while mitigating hate speech and misinformation. The project implements targeted voter education campaigns focused on minorities, youth, PWDs, and refugees, ensuring inclusive democratic participation. Training programs for media representatives, CSOs, and electoral stakeholders strengthen responsible election reporting and counter misinformation. The Project also explores the iVerify platform for disinformation monitoring and fact-checking, aligning with NAM recommendations on managing electoral misinformation.

Strengthening CEC's Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement. The NAM Report calls for improved CEC outreach to key stakeholders, including CSOs, political parties, and the media. The Project facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogue forums, enhances public engagement through a modernized CEC website and digital tools, and establishes the CEC Helpline for voter inquiries. It also supports electoral observation mechanisms, improving regulations and procedures for party registration, financial transparency, and dispute resolution.

Coordination of International Assistance Providers. The NAM Report underscores the importance of coordinated donor engagement and international assistance mechanisms to ensure synergy and avoid duplication. The Project facilitates biannual coordination meetings among electoral assistance providers, ensuring strategic alignment and optimizing resource allocation. Through structured partnerships, the Project enhances international cooperation, ensuring that CEC benefits from best practices and sustained technical support.

II.3. SYNERGY WITH OTHER INTERVENTIONS

The Project builds on the consolidated achievements from past and ongoing initiatives aimed at strengthening the electoral systems funded by the EU, and other international development partners.

The proposed Project will build on the results and experience of the UNDP electoral assistance in 2016-2024, as well as the relevant experience and best practices of the International IDEA in electoral assistance.

Since 2016, UNDP was a key contributor towards substantial progress in improving the quality of the organization of elections and building trust in the electoral process in Armenia by introducing the electronic voter authentication process to ensure the fundamental electoral principle "one voter – one vote".

Thus, under the [Support to Electoral Project in Armenia \(SEPA\)](#) in 2016-2017, implemented with substantial financial support provided by the EU and the Government of Armenia, as well as the governments of the United States, Germany and the UK, UNDP achieved provided electoral assistance under the following main pillars:

- **Introduction of Voter Authentication Devices (VADs):** procurement of hardware (4,000 full kits); procurement of other electoral IT equipment (servers, PCs, data replication devices, printers, scanners and WIFI routers for polling stations); development of VAD software VIU client; update of the soft for municipal elections; development of CVIS.
- **Training of VAD operators:** level 0 (training for master trainers); level 1 (3-day comprehensive ToT for 132 core trainers) level 2 (country-wide trainings for 4,962 VAD operators); development of trainings materials that are being used by CEC for all elections ever since.
- **Voter Education campaign:** development of audio-visual and printed materials for voter awareness campaign; development of public outreach and communication strategy for the CEC.

Under the [Electoral Support Project in Armenia \(ESPA-1\)](#) in 2018-2019, funded by the EU, the Government of Armenia, the governments of Germany and the UK, UNDP's electoral assistance further expanded along three key directions:

- **ICT component:** support to VADs (troubleshooting of damaged and procurement of missing units); training of VAD operators; support to CVIS; enhancement of the CEC server room; CEC ICT business process optimization (VAD inventory software, PEC members registration software, E-learning platform).
- **Camera installation:** installation / deinstallation of cameras in all 2000 polling stations; livestreaming; website for live watching in real time; training of election officials.
- **Capacity building of election officials:** comprehensive lessons learned exercise for CEC/TECs and report development; targeted trainings for election officials (legal, campaign finance, negotiation, conflict management skills); establishment of CEC trainings center and library.

Under [ESPA-2](#) project funded by the Government of Japan in 2019-2021, UNDP further supported digital transformation of electoral systems as follows:

- **ICT modernization and capacity building:** support to VADs (regular inventory, manufacturer visit); lessons learned for VAD trainers; hardware modernization (data center equipment, blade server complex); CEC ICT business process optimization (upgrade of VAD automation, backend update of E-learning platform); post electoral survey.
- **Feasibility study:** Feasibility study on electronic voting technologies and the development of the report.

UNDP's support to snap parliamentary elections in 2021, organized in the midst of political turmoil following the devastating wave of the "44-day war" over Nagorno Karabakh in September-November 2020, contributed towards ensuring credible elections, electing legitimate government, restoring political stability and securing the course and pace of democratic reforms in Armenia. Specifically, under [ESPA-3](#) project in 2021-2022, with

financial support of the EU, Switzerland, Germany, UK and Sweden, UNDP provided electoral assistance to the critical 2021 June elections along with the following pillars:

- **Inclusion, integrity and transparency:** VAD maintenance (training materials, preparation of VADs, CVIS); upgrade of CEC IT infrastructure (online modules for candidates' and observers' registration, election dispute resolution and case management system, interactive map of accessible polling stations, small scale procurement of equipment); lessons learned exercise (thematic lessons learned events, qualitative research, gender statistics, high level final lessons learned event and recommendations); Online courses (for election commissioners, proxies, observers, VAD operators).
- **Voter education:** materials (leaflets, posters, public service announcements); voter awareness through local and regional CSOs (local elections); 10 electoral schools in 5 marzes for underrepresented groups (local elections); BRIDGE training.
- **COVID-19 response:** training on COVID-19 compliance; provision of PPE (2.5mln masks, 2.8 mln alcopads, 7k alcopays, 25k alcogels).

Further, NORAD-funded UNDP programme "[Armenia's Refugee Crisis: Resilience for All](#)" programme anchors refugee inclusion in humanitarian and socio-economic terms, as well as in civic and political rights through a multi-pillar response. Thus, under the Strategic Objectives 2 (Sustaining Core Government Functions and Services) and 4 (Social Cohesion), NORAD and UNDP advance **inclusive, transparent, and resilient electoral processes** that recognize refugees and displaced populations as rights-holders and active contributors to Armenia's democratic life.

NORAD and UNDP contribute to this vision in the framework of the ARTEMIS Project by anchoring refugees into Armenian society through **civic and political rights**, while reinforcing electoral integrity, countering disinformation, and promoting inclusive participation. The synergies between the Resilience for All and the ARTEMIS initiatives will ensure that Armenia's democratic institutions evolve in ways that are transparent, inclusive, and resilient to new pressures. By embedding refugees and displaced persons into electoral processes, the NORAD and UNDP will contribute to:

- Strengthening democratic legitimacy and long-term democratic stability rooted in inclusive participation by ensuring that all residents with rights to vote or participate can do so meaningfully.
- Enhancing social cohesion by promoting joint civic engagement between refugees and host populations, and strengthening dignity and agency for displaced populations.
- Building resilience against disinformation and divisive narratives, and reinforcing trust in institutions.
- Supporting long-term integration of displaced populations as active members of Armenian society, beyond humanitarian assistance.

These areas of support are also aligned with the draft Inclusive [Livelihoods National Framework for Refugees and Host Communities](#) developed under the leadership of the Government of Armenia by UNDP and UNHCR, and other policy priority documents.

UNDP will also build on their extensive programme management experience in Armenia, as well as their global practice to ensure that the Project delivers its results at highest standards. UNDP will also engage their programmatic resources in democratic governance, as well as the portfolios supporting innovation and gender equality for development at the Country Office in Armenia, regional hubs, and headquarters to feed the Project with due in-house expertise. More specifically, UNDP will ensure that the expertise, resources, and partnerships under their ongoing programmes contribute to the achievement of the targets under the proposed Project, including projects supporting the Parliament, supporting the access to justice, human rights and rule of law reforms, policing reforms, public administration, and judicial reforms, improving social services, supporting inclusion policies for persons with disabilities and refugees, promoting financing for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and digitalization in public sector, as well as other spearheading initiatives.

In addition, UNDP will ensure the coherence of the Project with other ongoing and upcoming interventions by the Government and international development partners in the policing and rescue service sectors.

Alongside and in full complementarity with UNDP, International IDEA - an inter-governmental organization with a sole mandate to advance democracy worldwide, - is a core partner in the Project, contributing its unique expertise to ensure a truly collaborative and impactful implementation. The components of the project implemented by International IDEA are funded through the contribution of the European Union.

Governed by a Council of 35 Member States and supported by a Board of Advisors, International IDEA is recognized as a trusted partner of both the European Union and the United Nations, with permanent observer status to the UN and accreditation to EU institutions. International IDEA is an EU pillar-assessed organisation, enabling it to directly manage EU funds and deliver electoral assistance at the highest standards of accountability, compliance, and transparency.

International IDEA will contribute as a core partner in the Project, working alongside UNDP to safeguard the integrity of the 2026 parliamentary elections. Building on IDEA's comparative expertise and its global experience in electoral assistance, the Institute will ensure that Armenian institutions benefit from state-of-the-art knowledge, methodologies, and practices in line with international norms.

Proven experience in electoral assistance. Over the past two decades, International IDEA has worked across Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America to strengthen electoral institutions, build resilience against political and security risks, and promote inclusive democratic participation. In Eastern Europe and the EU Neighbourhood, IDEA has led or co-implemented major initiatives in:

- **Moldova** – IDEA supports the Central Electoral Commission and the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training with pioneering methodologies for online political finance monitoring, oversight of digital campaigning, and electoral risk management. IDEA's tools, including Gerulata Juno for social media monitoring, have been successfully applied during national and local elections, producing actionable evidence for regulators, parties, and civil society.
- **Ukraine** – IDEA supports the Central Electoral Commission and other state and civic organisations to maintain and develop capacities for organizing first post-war elections, including through digital resilience, development of the model for out-of-country voting for millions of displaced voters and through effective public communication.
- **Western Balkans** – IDEA continues to support electoral commissions and civic groups across the region through peer-learning on electoral integrity, political finance oversight, and monitoring of digital campaigning, supporting accession countries in aligning with EU norms and standards.

This track record ensures that IDEA brings to Armenia tested approaches and comparative insights that are directly relevant to the country's democratic challenges.

To maximize impact and avoid duplication, UNDP and International IDEA will closely coordinate with the [International Foundation for Electoral Systems](#) (IFES) and its [Supporting Safeguards of Democracy in Armenia](#) (SSDA) initiative, funded by UK International Development. SSDA focuses on strengthening the Central Electoral Commission's institutional resilience – including cybersecurity preparedness – enhancing oversight of political and campaign finance and abuse of state resources and advancing civic education through school-based programmes and civil society engagement. Building on these complementary efforts, UNDP and International IDEA will draw on SSDA's analytical findings and tools, share training resources, and engage in joint planning with IFES to ensure coherent support to the CEC and other stakeholders. This synergy will enable coordinated reforms in electoral law and practice, reinforce transparency and oversight mechanisms, and extend civic education outreach, thereby delivering a unified and cost-efficient international assistance framework that strengthens Armenia's electoral integrity.

II.4. ALIGNMENT WITH SDGs

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are fully integrated throughout the intervention logic of the Project. Specifically, the Project aligns with the SDGs by addressing key aspects of democratic governance, social inclusion, institutional resilience, and human rights. The Project's interventions contribute to multiple SDGs, ensuring that Armenia's electoral processes are transparent, inclusive, and sustainable. The following SDGs are particularly relevant to the project:

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

The Project directly supports **Target 16.6** by developing effective, accountable, and transparent institutions through enhanced electoral management and institutional reforms.

It contributes to **Target 16.7** by ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making, particularly through gender-responsive electoral processes and increased political participation.

By strengthening cybersecurity and electoral integrity, the Project supports **Target 16.10**, ensuring public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms in line with national and international legislation.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

The Project advances **Target 5.5** by supporting increased political participation of women as voters, candidates, and electoral managers, fostering gender balance in decision-making.

It aligns with **Target 5.1** by addressing discriminatory laws, policies, and practices that hinder women's full participation in the electoral process.

Through targeted training, quota enforcement mechanisms, and mentorship programs, the Project strengthens the role of women in electoral governance.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

By promoting accessibility measures for persons with disabilities and marginalized communities, the Project contributes to **Target 10.2**, ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals to participate in political and electoral processes. The Project's emphasis on voter outreach and education fosters inclusivity, countering discrimination and increasing the participation of historically underrepresented groups.

SDG 4: Quality Education

The Project supports **Target 4.7** by providing civic and voter education programs that promote awareness of democratic rights, responsibilities, and inclusive electoral participation.

The introduction of e-learning platforms and training programs for electoral officials strengthens lifelong learning opportunities in electoral governance.

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

Through digital transformation initiatives such as the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA) and cybersecurity enhancements, the Project aligns with **Target 9.1**, which promotes sustainable and resilient infrastructure to support national development.

By strengthening digital electoral systems, the Project also contributes to **Target 9.C**, expanding access to information and communication technologies to enhance voter engagement.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

The Project fosters multi-stakeholder collaboration, aligning with **Target 17.16**, by strengthening partnerships between the government, international organizations, civil society, and private sector actors to support electoral integrity and democratic resilience.

Through donor coordination and engagement with local and international partners, the Project ensures effective resource mobilization in line with **Target 17.17**, promoting sustainable capacity-building efforts.

Cross-cutting Contributions to the SDGs

The Project's approach to transparency, inclusivity, and institutional capacity-building reinforces broader SDG targets by fostering a resilient and democratic governance framework in Armenia. By integrating digital innovations, gender-sensitive policies, and multi-stakeholder engagement, the Project creates a strong foundation for sustainable electoral and governance reforms, ensuring alignment with global sustainable development priorities.

II.5. ANCHORING ON UNDP'S GLOBAL AND LOCAL EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Project is designed utilising the UN Electoral Policy Directives and Guidelines²⁷ developed by the United Nations in collaboration with other governmental and non-governmental partners. The Project team and UNDP Country Office will strictly follow these policy directives and guidelines during the implementation of the project including but not limited to the following:

- Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance (FP/01/2012 Policy Directive as revised, effective 3 March 2021).
- United Nations Electoral Needs Assessments (FP/02/2012 Guideline).
- UN Support to International Election Observers (FP/03/2012 Policy Directive as revised, effective 1 February 2024).
- Promoting the Electoral Rights of Persons with Disabilities through UN Electoral Assistance (FP/04/2012 Guideline).
- UN Electoral Assistance. Supervision, Observation, Panels and Certification (FP/01/2013 Policy Directive as revised, effective 1 February 2022).
- UN support to electoral system design and reform (FP/02/2013 Policy Directive).
- Promoting women's electoral and political participation through UN electoral assistance (FP/03/2013 Policy Directive).
- UN Support to the Design or Reform of Electoral Management Bodies (FP/01/2014 Policy Directive).
- UN Statements and Public Comment around Elections (FP/02/2014, Policy Directive, as revised, effective 1 February 2025).
- Conduct of UN personnel in and around electoral sites (FP/01/2015 Policy Directive, as revised, effective 1 December 2024).
- Operation and Management of the United Nations Single Electoral Roster (FP/01/2016 Policy Directive).
- Preventing and Mitigating Election-related Violence (FP/01/2016 Policy Directive).

Additionally, **UNDP** has extensive experience in supporting similar reform efforts worldwide that provide guiding principles for the Project proposal. These experience and practices that UNDP often employs in electoral assistance interventions would make UNDP a pivotal player in delivering the UN electoral assistance, ultimately contributing to consolidation of democracy in Armenia.

Over the past two decades, **International IDEA** has worked across Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America to strengthen electoral institutions, build resilience against political and security risks, and promote inclusive democratic participation. In Eastern Europe and the EU Neighbourhood, IDEA has led or co-implemented major initiatives which serve to uphold the following principles and good practices:

- **Electoral risk management:** Adapting and deploying IDEA's Electoral Risk Management Tool (ERMTTool) to assist EMBs in identifying, mapping, and mitigating risks such as disinformation, cyberattacks, and electoral violence.
- **Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Campaign and Political Finance:** Supporting the CECs in developing robust oversight methodologies for campaign expenditure, online political advertising, and digital disinformation, drawing on IDEA's global and regional practice.
- **Capacity development and training:** Delivering targeted capacity-building for election officials, political parties, and civil society actors in areas such as transparency of political finance, digital integrity, and compliance with international standards.
- **Inclusive participation:** Promoting the participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, refugees, and displaced populations in elections, with tailored interventions designed to reduce barriers and strengthen representation.
- **Peer learning and international exchanges:** Facilitating practitioner-to-practitioner dialogue between Armenian institutions and their counterparts in other European countries, and from across the globe, drawing on IDEA's convening power and comparative research.

II.6. CONFLICT SENSITIVITY / DO NO HARM APPROACH

The Project will consider potential social, cultural, or political sensitivities that may arise during the electoral processes and will ensure that interventions are conflict sensitive. The Project will seek to consciously avoid and minimize negative impacts ('do no harm'). The conflict and development analysis will be used to inform the programme design with analysing a specific context and developing strategies for reducing or eliminating the impact and consequences of the peace process between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The Project team will use the available analysis of the conflict to ensure the recognition of the interaction between the programme and the context (assessing the likely impacts of programme interventions, i.e., conflict sensitivity analysis), and will inform the Project design upon this understanding in order to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive impacts of the programme (adjust interventions, i.e., conflict sensitive adaptation). The programme will engage and consult with all stakeholders in the government to ensure that the objectives, approach, and programme activities comply with do-no-harm principles.

II.7. GENDER, AGE AND DIVERSITY

The Project is fully aligned with UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025. This strategy emphasizes the importance of integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of development programming to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.²⁸

Electoral Gender and Social Inclusion Mapping (EGSIM): A comprehensive assessment will be conducted to analyse barriers to political participation for women, youth, and marginalized communities, informing future reforms.

Capacity Building for Inclusive Elections: Training programs will be developed for electoral officials, political parties, and CSOs on gender-responsive electoral management and disability inclusion.

Enhancing Women's Political Participation: Policy dialogue sessions will be conducted to develop and enforce gender quotas and mandate placement rules, increasing women's representation in electoral management and candidacy.

Accessibility Improvements: The Project will conduct barrier audits of polling stations and support the development of accessible electoral policies, ensuring compliance with international standards on disability inclusion.

Positive Effects for Refugees: The Project will promote the early and meaningful civic inclusion of refugees and displaced persons, safeguarding their political rights, preventing disenfranchisement, and providing digital voter services to overcome documentation and mobility barriers. By embedding refugees into Armenia's civic

and political systems, it anchors displaced populations in society, prevents marginalization, and builds resilience and dignity by recognizing them as active agents rather than aid recipients. Participation in electoral processes will foster a sense of belonging, strengthen trust in institutions, create shared spaces for engagement with host communities, and empower refugee youth and women with leadership, advocacy, and digital skills that support long-term social and economic integration.

II.8. CLIMATE RESPONSIVENESS

The Project will consider the vulnerability of the country to climate. Armenia is particularly vulnerable to CC. More than a third of the population is rural, and the economy is heavily reliant on agriculture. It is estimated that 35% of Armenia's total population lives under the national poverty line. Poverty is exacerbated by unemployment rate of 28.6%, and an unequal distribution of gendered poverty. Because of their financial and social situations, the population groups living below the poverty line are vulnerable to different aspects of CC, such as extreme temperatures (high and low), bad weather and more frequent natural disasters. Between 1994 and 2014, Armenia lost well over USD 1.5 billion due to natural hazards like floods, earthquakes, drought, hail, spring frosts and mudflows. Such periodic and ever-more intense shocks result in loss and damages, compromise livelihoods and the national economy. Climate projections indicate that temperatures across the country may rise by 4.7°C by 2100, combined with an 8.3% decline in average annual precipitation and increase of frequency and intensity of other high-heat potential. Such changes will impact on all natural and managed systems, water resources, agriculture and food security, human health, settlements and infrastructure, etc.

The Government adopted the National Action Program of Adaptation to Climate Change and the List of Measures for 2021- 2025³ developed with UNDP support. The program serves as a roadmap for ensuring the mainstreaming of adaptation in the sector policy, regional and local development, and respective financial planning processes, while providing a reference point for bringing together and coordinating various adaptation planning efforts from different sectors.

The Project incorporates environmental sustainability principles in its approach.

³ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/NAP_Armenia.pdf.

III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

III.1. EXPECTED RESULTS

Output 1. Enhanced institutional capacity of CEC and lower-level commissions for robust electoral preparations and management (UNDP).

Activity 1.1. Support CEC to Operationalise its Development Strategy and Roadmap.

The Project support to the implementation of the Development Strategy and Roadmap to guide the institutional reform of the electoral management bodies will be delivered ensuring full alignment with the UN electoral policy directives and guidelines, namely with the policy directive on UN Support to the Design or Reform of Electoral Management Bodies.²⁹

The Project will organise workshops with CEC, electoral stakeholders, and international experts to prioritise the implementation actions of the CEC Development Strategy and its associated Roadmap for 2025-2028.

The Project will further organise study visits for CEC officials to expose them to the successful practices of strategic planning and EMB institutional reforms. These visits will enable CEC to gain firsthand insights into the experiences of these countries, learning from both their achievements and challenges, while building a realistic understanding of the strategic planning process. By observing the process directly, CEC will better appreciate the benefits that a robust strategic plan can bring to an electoral management body.

Finally, the Project will develop a results-based monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to track progress and guide decision-making.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will include:

- Recruitment of international and local consultants with expertise in electoral strategy and institutional development.
- Conducting stakeholder mapping and consultations.
- Desk review of relevant policy documents, previous strategies, and stakeholder feedback.
- Collaborative workshops and focus group discussions with stakeholders.
- Application of results-based management tools to finalise the roadmap.
- Developing the roadmap, incorporating an actionable implementation timeline.

Activity 1.2 Assess and Support CEC to Improve the HRM System.

The Project will conduct a capacity needs assessment of CEC, analysing human resource practices, structures, and capacity gaps.

We will further organise interviews and focus groups with CEC staff and external stakeholders to gather insights into HR challenges and opportunities.

The Project will also develop a set of actionable recommendations, including strategies for hiring, retaining, and developing staff, alongside an implementation plan. The recommendations on hiring and retaining competent staff will be based on an assessment of organisational capacity, stakeholder feedback, gaps in current practices, and an evaluation of available human, financial, and technological resources.

Finally, the Project will deliver capacity-building sessions for personnel to operationalise the new HRM system.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will include:

- Using a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data collection (survey) and qualitative feedback (interviews, focus groups) to design assessment tools.
- Validating the assessment framework with CEC.
- Conducting data collection in collaboration with CEC.
- Analysing findings to identify gaps and benchmark the HRM practices of CEC against international electoral management bodies.
- Proposing recommendations to CEC, present recommendations in a report and validate them with CEC.

Activity 1.3. Support CEC to Establish a Functional Training Unit within the CEC Secretariat.

The Project will design the operational framework for the training unit, including structure, roles, and responsibilities.

The Project will also develop a comprehensive training strategy, including a needs analysis, training curriculum, and resource allocation plan.

The Project will further equip the training unit with necessary technological tools, materials, and guidelines.

Finally, the Project will enhance the capacity of training unit staff through specialised workshops on instructional design and adult learning techniques.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Conducting a training needs assessment with input from CEC and lower-level commissions through consultation with TEC and PEC members.
- Utilising adult learning principles and incorporate international best practices in electoral management training, including BRIDGE curricula and methodology.
- Supporting CEC to recruit and train staff for the unit.
- Supporting the training unit to pilot training programs and gather feedback for continuous improvements.

Activity 1.4. Develop and Roll out a CEC e-Learning and Certification System.

The Project will design and develop an online learning management system (LMS) tailored for electoral stakeholders.

The Project will further develop and digitise at least 5 e-learning courses, focusing on key electoral topics, such as voter registration, electoral dispute resolution, and polling day operations.

The Project will also implement mechanisms for user feedback, certification, and satisfaction scoring within the LMS.

Finally, the Project will promote the e-learning platform among electoral stakeholders, ensuring wide participation and usage.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Mobilising e-learning development specialists to design and deploy the platform.
- Procuring and customising an LMS platform.
- Developing course content in collaboration with subject-matter experts and validate with CEC.
- Piloting courses with targeted users and refine them based on feedback.
- Supporting CEC to launch the platform with an outreach campaign to encourage usage.

Activity 1.5. Deliver Comprehensive Training and Support Certification of CEC, TEC, and PEC Members.

The Project will develop a training curriculum and materials for in-person and online training sessions.

The Project will also deliver training through a mix of workshops, webinars, and e-learning modules, ensuring accessibility across all regions of Armenia.

The Project will further establish assessment methods to evaluate trained individuals.

Finally, the Project will monitor training outcomes to ensure quality and effectiveness.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Utilising blended learning methods to accommodate varying levels of access and learning styles based on the training needs assessment results under Activity 1.3.
- Scheduling and delivering training sessions across Armenia.
- Applying competency-based evaluation tools to certify participants.
- Issuing certificates to participants upon successful completion of training.

Activity 1.6. Support the Coordination Mechanisms with International Development Partners.

The Project will support CEC to streamline international support through organising biannual coordination meetings among international development partners involved in electoral assistance (for example, the Ambassadorial Group on Elections).

The Project will also support CEC to establish a secretariat function within CEC to manage coordination activities, ensure follow-up on action points, and maintain transparent communication with partners.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Developing a calendar of coordination meetings.
- Preparing and disseminating meeting agendas, presentations, and summaries to facilitate knowledge-sharing and coordination, including logistics.
- Facilitating structured dialogue among partners, emphasising synergies and resource optimisation.
- Capturing and circulating key decisions and action points.

Output 2. Enhanced digital transformation and cybersecurity of the electoral process (UNDP).

Activity 2.1. Optimise and Support Full Deployment of VADs.

The Project will ensure the availability and operational readiness of VADs at all polling stations.

The Project will also support CEC to update and implement an operational guide for VAD usage, aligned with national legislation and international best practices.

The Project will further conduct comprehensive hands-on training for polling station members, focusing on the proper handling, troubleshooting, and effective use of VADs during elections.

Finally, the Project will provide technical support and establish a helpdesk system to address operational challenges on election days.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Inventorying and assessing the current status of VADs and providing recommendations for the replenishment of the VAD stock vis-à-vis the standardisation and other priority dimensions. To this ends, the Project will mobilise international consultant and/or short-term CTA as needed.
- Preparing and fulfilling the procurement for replenishing the VAD stock of CEC as per the assessment results (procurement will include hardware, software, configuration and testing of devices, as well as training components, and will ensure standardised and fully operational VAD stock, protocols and trained maintenance staff and mentors who will deliver training to the relevant PEC officials).
- Developing and distributing operational guidelines.
- Utilising a phased rollout strategy for training and testing VAD deployment across polling stations.
- Delivering comprehensive training to polling station officials and technical staff on device operation and troubleshooting in all regions.
- Establishing a feedback loop with on-site technical support teams to ensure smooth operation during the electoral process and incorporating real-time simulations and mock elections to test operational readiness.
- Setting up an election-day technical support system, including a monitoring mechanism during elections to track issues in real time, and a rapid-response team for VAD-related issues.

Activity 2.2. Conduct Feasibility Study and Deliver Recommendations for Further Digital Transformation of Electoral Processes.

The Project will conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential for introducing advanced digital solutions, such as electronic notification, secure vote transmission, online voter registration systems, and improved data analytics for voter behaviour analysis. The Project will build on the findings and recommendations of the Feasibility Study on e-Voting solutions for electoral processes in Armenia, conducted under the UNDP's ESPA-2 Project in 2020–2021. Various models for integrating ICT and emerging technologies into electoral processes, such as blockchain for secure vote transmission, will be further explored and assessed. The process will encompass an in-depth study of international best practices, the development of technical specifications informed by this research, procurement of equipment for experimental use, and the execution of a pilot program. Additionally, the Project will work to enhance the election results management system, aiming to make it faster, more efficient, and transparent.

The Project will also conduct a cost-benefit analysis, stakeholder consultations, and international benchmarking to ensure alignment with Armenian electoral needs and best practices.

The Project will further present at least five actionable recommendations to CEC for digital transformation, including options for maintenance, upgrades, and replacement of VADs.

Finally, the Project will pilot selected technologies to evaluate their functionality, usability, and compliance with data protection and transparency standards.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Designing and conducting the feasibility study, collecting quantitative and qualitative data through participatory approach, engaging stakeholders such as voters, election officials, and IT experts.
- Validating findings through workshops and consultations with CEC and stakeholders.
- Drafting and presenting recommendations to CEC, with an implementation roadmap for prioritised interventions.
- Using pilot testing and field trials to validate findings.

Activity 2.3. Develop and introduce Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA).

The Project will conduct feasibility study for introducing a multifunctional digital tool enabling personalized election reminders and notification of voters about registration status and details, polling stations, election updates, election schedules, and links to relevant resources, and provide recommendations and TOR for the new EVA tool.

The EVA tool will be designed to address several critical challenges affecting electoral participation and efficiency of the process. Many voters face the challenge of being excluded from the voter list, often discovering the issue on election day when it is too late to rectify it. Voters may lack timely information about their registration status, polling locations, or corrective actions needed. Requiring court applications to restore voter registration on election day is time-consuming, costly, and discourages participation. Missing names or incorrect precinct assignments discovered too late. Citizens must apply to courts, which is time-consuming, intimidating, and resource intensive. These obstacles lead to dissatisfaction, disputes, and reduced voter confidence. The election administrators also face related challenges. Indeed, handling last-minute issues without a streamlined system overwhelms election officials. In addition, dependency on courts delays resolutions, further complicating electoral administration.

The EVA tool would serve as a comprehensive digital solution to address these challenges. The new tool will enable features, such as personalized election reminders and notification of voters about registration status and details, polling stations, election updates, election schedules, and links to relevant resources. The EVA tool (internet and mobile applications) will aim to substantially enhance voter engagement, provide timely information, and streamline electoral processes. Thus, real-time updates will help voters stay informed about registration status and actions to be taken as needed, deadlines, polling locations, and changes. It will facilitate the CEC outreach to voters in remote areas. The notifications and reminders will serve as nudges, increasing voter participation. Solutions may enable voters to check their registration status through a mobile app or SMS by entering basic personal information. Instant feedback will ensure voters are aware of any discrepancies or missing information well before election day.

The project will help to facilitate citizens access an online portal and/or mobile app to verify their registration status in real time. The tool will also provide a step-by-step interface for submitting applications to address issues such as name missing from the voter list, incorrect precinct assignment, change of precinct due to relocation or special circumstances, etc.). The application categories will include correction requests (to fix errors in voter information), reinstatement applications (restore eligibility if removed from the list), as well as precinct change requests (facilitate reassignment to the correct polling station). EVA will enable simple documentation upload so that voters can attach required documents (e.g., ID, proof of residence) directly within the system. EVA's automated resolution mechanisms may offer centralized database integration (the system connects to the voter registration database in real time, automatically validating submitted applications), AI-powered processing (applications are reviewed using predefined rules to ensure rapid resolution), tiered resolution process (automated resolution with most issues resolved within minutes by matching voter-submitted data to the central database), human review (cases flagged as complex are escalated to election officials for expedited review). The dynamic notifications and tracking will enable citizens to receive notifications via SMS or app updates at every step (e.g., application received, application under review, issue resolved, with confirmation of updated registration details), while voters could track the status of their application in real time, reducing anxiety and frustration. Election officials equipped with tablets or mobile devices can also access the electronic system to resolve voter issues immediately at polling stations.

Thus, the new system can allow voters to submit corrections directly through the platform (examples may include uploading proof of identity and residence, request corrections to misspelled names or incorrect polling locations). These corrections can be processed by the court or election authorities and updated in the voter database in line with the acting legislation. An integrated helpdesk could connect voters to election officials for real-time problem resolution without needing to apply to the court. The tool would use encryption and secure authentication (e.g., OTP or biometric verification) to protect voter data. EVA will ensure full compliance with national laws, assuring data privacy and transparency. Thus, the new electronic voter notification tool implemented through a mobile app (and SMS service as needed), will play a transformative role in addressing key challenges in voter registration and participation. The EVA tool will enable facilitating the court interventions for electoral disputes and dissatisfaction among citizens, focusing on electronic systems and mechanisms to resolve voter registration issues efficiently and transparently. The tool will provide an alternative mechanism to the need for physical court applications to restore voting rights and provide a seamless experience for voters and election administrators. Hence, the new tool could be instrumental in eliminating the need for court interventions by offering transparent, efficient, and accessible mechanisms for resolving disputes, and enabling voters to recover their registration through electronic communication. Real-time notifications and simple application procedures would reduce voter frustration and enhance trust in the electoral process. Automation will reduce the workload on election officials and ensure quick resolutions. Finally, a digital audit trail of applications and resolutions will build confidence among voters and stakeholders.

Specific solutions for the workflow in pre-election period, election day and post-election will be elaborated with the project support and validated by the CEC. Overall, the EVA tool will contribute towards a more resilient, inclusive, and voter-friendly election systems, significantly reducing barriers to participation while strengthening democratic processes. In addition, the EVA tool will provide timely updates and facilitate participation for mobile/displaced populations.

EVA tool may also consider localising iVerify mechanism for Armenia deployed and operational, based on the assessment of the disinformation and hate speech in electoral processes in Armenia. The Brussels-based Electoral Assistance Task Force, in collaboration with the UNDP Chief Digital Office, the Crisis Bureau, and the Oslo Governance Centre, has developed iVerify – a programmatic and digital tool package designed to identify, analyse, and counter disinformation in complex governance environments. This innovative tool, which can be cost-effectively tailored to the Armenian context, positions UNDP as a uniquely capable global organisation to address misinformation and hate speech, including sources originating outside the country. Based on the findings of an initial assessment, the Project will adapt the iVerify mechanism and its IT tool to meet Armenia's specific needs. This includes training, piloting, and rolling out a national mechanism for the identification, fact-checking, and analysis of misinformation and disinformation. The support package will also encompass journalist training on additional topics, such as gender-responsive media coverage. Finally, the Project will ensure the mechanism is fully operational, sustainable, and capable of long-term impact.

The Project will also develop and pilot the new EVA tool as per the TOR validated by the CEC.

Finally, the Project will train CEC staff on managing and resolving e-complaints. Building on UNDP's successful collaboration with CEC on digitalisation, the Project will work closely with CEC's legal and IT departments, providing consultations, technical guidance, and training. Training sessions will also extend to regional operators and focus on the effective use and maintenance of the EVA tool, ensuring long-term functionality and impact.

The key methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Mobilising a consultant to conduct the feasibility analysis and develop the TOR for the EVA tool.
- Mobilising a consultant (firm) to develop the EVA tool.
- Utilising a user-centred design approach to ensure accessibility and functionality.
- Ensuring the system is accessible to diverse users, including persons with disabilities and those in rural areas.

Activity 2.4. Strengthen the Cybersecurity of Electoral Processes.

The Project will conduct a cybersecurity risk assessment to identify new vulnerabilities in CEC's digital infrastructure and data handling processes. The assessment will utilise the methodology and approaches of the UNDP's 2022 Assessment of ICT and Cybersecurity of the Electoral Process in Armenia, while considering most recent approaches and practices in this area³⁰, as well as other relevant assessments of cybersecurity in Armenia's public sector at large³¹. UNDP will mobilise a mixed team of international and national consultants to fulfil the task.

The Project will also develop and implement five core cybersecurity policies and protocols, aligned with ISO 27001 standards.³² These will include inter alia data protection, incident response, system access control, and secure data transmission protocols. Over 95% of cyber incidents stem from human error, underscoring the critical need for robust cybersecurity measures within CEC. The absence of clear rules and procedures for accessing ICT infrastructure – including the use of passwords, emails, internet, social media, and devices for official and personal purposes – poses significant risks to the cybersecurity of electoral processes. Furthermore, limited awareness and inadequate cyber-hygiene skills among personnel increase vulnerabilities. To address these challenges, the Project will support CEC to formulate and adopt comprehensive internal cybersecurity policies to ensure uniform and consistent application across all staff. This should include clear protocols for managing access and usage of ICT infrastructure.

The Project will further upgrade hardware and software systems to strengthen CEC's cybersecurity posture, including securing storage and logistical infrastructure for VAD maintenance (e.g., warehouses).

Finally, the Project will develop a strategic communication protocol for managing and mitigating cyber incidents during elections, ensuring transparency and public trust.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Conducting a cybersecurity audit of current CEC infrastructure by collaborate with international and national cybersecurity experts and institutions specialising in election technology.
- Developing cybersecurity policies and protocols based on audit findings.
- Utilising vulnerability assessments, penetration testing, and scenario-based exercises to enhance readiness.
- Upgrading digital infrastructure and implement best practices in data security.
- Providing capacity-building workshops for CEC IT staff on ISO 27001 compliance and incident response.

Activity 2.5. Build Capacities for Digital Transformation and Cybersecurity.

The Project will design a training course for CEC and lower-level commission staff on managing digital systems, including VADs and cybersecurity protocols focusing on building knowledge in areas such as data integrity, secure digital operations, and response to cyber threats.

The Project will also deliver training through a mix of in-person sessions, e-learning modules, and practical crisis simulations.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Utilising competency-based training approaches, combining theoretical knowledge with practical exercises utilising inter alia the BRIDGE curricula and methodology.
- Developing a digital transformation and cybersecurity training curriculum.
- Conducting training sessions across Armenia, targeting all relevant staff.
- Evaluating training outcomes through pre-and post-training assessments.

Activity 2.6. Support CEC Efforts of Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement on Digital Transformation.

The Project will facilitate coordination meetings and workshops with national and international stakeholders to align digital transformation and cybersecurity efforts with national priorities and international standards. While CEC collaborates with various state agencies and internet providers to protect its ICT systems, this cooperation is currently ad hoc and decided on a case-by-case basis. Institutionalising this collaboration through predefined agreements and step-by-step procedures for responding to cyber incidents is essential. Such protocols should specify how to engage relevant agencies equipped to provide timely support during cyber threats. The Project will facilitate the secondment of cybersecurity analysts to work directly with the CEC IT department. These experts will identify vulnerabilities, develop protection strategies, and establish internal cybersecurity protocols to enhance the resilience of CEC's ICT systems.

The Project will further foster partnerships with IT firms, international organisations, and development partners to leverage resources and expertise for digital innovation.

Finally, the Project will establish a technical advisory group comprising CEC representatives, IT specialists, and international advisors to oversee the digital transformation process.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Promoting a collaborative approach to decision-making, ensuring diverse input into the planning and execution phases.
- Convening biannual coordination meetings to track progress and harmonise efforts.
- Drafting and disseminating a stakeholder engagement plan.
- Leveraging technical expertise from partners for knowledge transfer and capacity building.

Output 3. Enhanced protocols and capacities for stakeholder engagement, gender-responsive voter outreach, and countering hate speech for improved electoral transparency, inclusivity, and integrity (UNDP).

Activity 3.1. Development and Adoption of Electoral Regulations and Procedures.

The Project will review and update at least 2 electoral regulations and procedures to address challenges in transparency, inclusivity, and integrity (key areas include observation, party registration and financial reporting, combating discrimination, and curbing information pollution). This target includes the CEC Outreach and Communications Policy and the Implementation Roadmap, that will specify the goal and objectives of the outreach and communications efforts of CEC, principles and strategic approaches, stakeholder groups and key target audiences (women, youth, men, persons with disabilities) and messages that will be consistently relayed and targeted these audiences, communication channels and tools (e.g., media relations, social media, CEC official website, audio-visuals, policy dialogue), as well as methods and instruments to monitor and evaluate the outreach and communication interventions.

The Project will further develop the CEC Outreach and Communications Policy and Implementation Roadmap to streamline and enhance CEC communication efforts with diverse audiences.

The Project will also conduct stakeholder consultations to ensure inclusivity, gender responsiveness, and alignment with international best practices.

Finally, the Project will encourage parties and candidates to refrain from hate speech or the denigration of women and marginalised populations in their campaign activities.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Mobilising local and international experts in electoral law and communications to conduct analysis and develop regulations and policies.
- Conducting a legal and regulatory gap analysis and benchmarking against international standards.
- Hosting multi-stakeholder workshops, including CSOs, marginalised groups, and electoral experts, to validate proposed changes.
- Providing technical assistance to CEC for the adoption and dissemination of revised regulations.

Activity 3.2. Modernisation of the Outreach Instruments Focusing on the CEC Website.

The Project will facilitate the review of voter outreach materials developed by CEC and CSOs, provide recommendations to mainstream gender equality and social inclusion considerations into the messages of the voter outreach and avoid unintended messages, as well as will facilitate sharing of common graphics and metadata in these materials. The Project will support CEC to pilot the new voter outreach materials, test and revise the language and images used in these materials. The Project will further support CEC to extend its presence in social media such as Facebook, “X”, Instagram and LinkedIn.

The Project will also redesign the CEC website to include user-friendly, accessible, and gender-responsive voter outreach materials.

The Project will further review existing voter outreach materials to mainstream gender equality and inclusivity, avoiding unintended biases in language and imagery.

The Project will develop a press pack and briefings for the media on the importance of encouraging women and youth to participate in elections.

We will support CEC to develop content to deliver messages to women and youth through a variety format of popular culture and using the ICT. Pilot test new materials, incorporating user feedback to ensure effectiveness and clarity. Finally, the Project will support CEC to expand their social media presence on platforms such as Facebook, “X”, Instagram, and LinkedIn to reach diverse audiences.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Mobilising web development consultant to modernise the CEC official website.
- Developing a content strategy that aligns with the CEC Outreach and Communications Policy.
- Developing the outreach content utilising various media and formats, such as songs, short video clips, social reels.
- Discussing the outreach materials with women's rights organisations, youth organisations and OPDs.
- Taking voter awareness into popular social media (Facebook, “X”, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.).
- Conducting usability testing and stakeholder focus groups for the website and outreach materials.
- Leveraging web accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1) to ensure the site is inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- Rolling out the updated website and conduct promotional campaigns.

Activity 3.3. Establishment of the CEC Helpline in Collaboration with OPDs.

The Project will support CEC in establishing a dedicated helpline to address queries related to electoral processes and procedures, with a particular focus on ensuring the voting rights of vulnerable groups, including women, migrants, people with disabilities, and ethnic minorities. The helpline will operate from a centralised location within the CEC premises; utilising equipment procured with Project support. This facility will serve as a comprehensive contact centre, providing both inbound and outbound voice-based phone services to enhance accessibility and responsiveness.

To this end, the Project will establish a helpline to provide accessible and reliable voter information, particularly tailored to the needs of youth, persons helpline with disabilities and elderly voters.

The Project will also develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the.

The Project will further design and deliver training to helpline staff on voter information dissemination and inclusivity principles.

Finally, the Project will pilot the helpline and refine based on user feedback.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Designing a functional helpline system, including infrastructure setup.
- Partnering with OPDs to ensure the helpline is inclusive and user centric.

Activity 3.4. Capacity-Building for Media, CSOs, and Social Media Representatives.

The Project will support CEC to design and deliver training for 100 media, CSO, and social media representatives to improve electoral coverage and reporting, emphasising gender sensitivity, inclusivity and non-discrimination and information pollution.

The training will include inter alia gender-sensitivity of the CSO activities and reporting in electoral processes and media coverage of elections, including challenges related to information pollution and hate speech. The trainings will equip journalists, CSOs and bloggers with essential skills and knowledge to enhance their reporting on electoral processes. Participants will learn to identify different media types and their roles during elections, apply international best practices in campaign reporting, and build constructive relationships with election administration. They will gain a thorough understanding of the electoral cycle, its key actors, and stages, as well as complaints procedures, polling processes, and electoral results. The sessions will also focus on the proper use of social media during elections and strategies to counteract fake news. Journalists, CSOs and bloggers will be trained to monitor and report on electoral events accurately, comply with election legislation and the Code of Ethics, and provide impartial and unbiased coverage of electoral activities. Beyond technical skills, the trainings aim to bolster professional confidence, reinforce ethical standards, promote principles of best electoral practices, and foster connections within networks of peers.

The Project will also encourage the media, such as community radio or television stations, to provide electoral information to persons with disabilities in an accessible way, for example through special programs in easy or sign language or with subtitles. The Project will particularly facilitate CEC engagement radio, which remains one of the most widely accessible media formats in Armenia, and, as such, is a key source of public information for larger groups of population, especially in capital Yerevan.

The Project will also support CEC to engage with accessible communication practices such as community radio, sign language programming, and subtitles in electoral coverage.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Mobilising trainers specialising in media and elections.
- Developing a training curriculum aligned with international standards on electoral coverage and inclusivity focusing on promoting gender awareness and non-discrimination skills of the media, helping the media to understand how gender equality is integral to citizenship, democracy and freedom of expression, identifying key gender issues in the elections and assisting the media in thinking through the gender dimensions of their election coverage.
- Using real-world case studies and interactive formats for practical learning.
- Organising workshops and follow-up mentoring for participants.

Activity 3.5. Train Youth to Counter Hate Speech.

The Project will conduct a comprehensive assessment of disinformation and hate speech in the electoral context.

The Project will also support CEC, universities and youth organisations to design and deliver training for 300 young women and men on gender, non-discrimination, social inclusion, identifying fake news and addressing hate speech based on the assessment results.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Mobilising international and local consultants to develop the TOR for the localisation of the iVerify platform and validate the TOR with CEC.
- Mobilising a consultant (firm), adapt the iVerify platform to local languages and electoral needs, and customise the iVerify tool for Armenian electoral processes.
- Conducting workshops for the key stakeholders to familiarise them with the tool.
- Launching awareness campaigns to encourage public adoption.

Output 4. Gender equality and social inclusion in elections strengthened through increased participation of women and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities (UNDP).

Activity 4.1. Increase Women's Participation as Electoral Managers.

The Project will review staffing policies and practices of CEC.

We will support CEC to design and pilot positive measures to promote women members at the electoral commissions at senior leadership positions including chairs and deputies.

The Project will conduct outreach program and offer mentorship opportunities, and leadership training for women candidates to prepare them for electoral management roles (applying a gender-focused capacity-building model, combining technical training with leadership development).

The Project will further organise workshops, training, and networking opportunities for women's political empowerment within electoral processes.

Finally, the Project will develop internship schemes to deploy young professionals in election administration and voter rights protections institutions.

Activity 4.2. Develop and Operationalise CEC Policy Frameworks for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion.

The Project will Conduct Electoral Gender and Social Inclusion Mapping (EGSIM) utilising Electoral Gender Mapping (EGM) framework developed by UN Women and UNDP³³. The mapping will examine the current situation for women as voters and candidates and within political parties, the state of gender equality and inclusiveness inside CEC and lower-level electoral commissions, looking at their composition, structures and work practices, and will identify areas for potential reform that would further facilitate electoral participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, refugees and displaced populations and other disadvantaged populations.

The Project will further incorporate gender and social inclusion goals into the Development Strategy and Roadmap for the electoral process for 2024-2028 informed by EGSIM results. The dedicated section will target women's political participation as voters, electoral managers and candidates. Will include measurable results, priorities, actions, indicators with targets and baselines will be defined. In addition to a dedicated section on gender equality, inclusiveness and accessibility, other sections on voter and civic education, training of electoral managers, strategic communication and outreach address specific needs and priorities of youth, women, persons with disabilities, IDPs, voters living in remote and bordering settlements and other disadvantaged and vulnerable populations.

The Project will facilitate workshops with stakeholders (e.g., CEC officials, political parties, CSOs, women's rights defenders, OPDs, youth organisations) to ensure policy frameworks are inclusive and actionable and finalise the policy frameworks.

We will also support CEC to develop inclusive electoral policies and practices that promote accessibility for PWDs at all stages of the electoral process, including guidelines for accessible polling locations, barrier audits, and the use of assistive technologies.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Ensuring full alignment of the policies with the UN Policy Directive on Promoting women's electoral and political participation through UN electoral assistance.³⁴
- Collaborating with OPDs, CEC, and technical experts to draft and adopt inclusive electoral policies, incorporating accessibility standards for PWDs, and ensure policies align with international accessibility policies and standards, including UN Guideline on Promoting the Electoral Rights of Persons with Disabilities through UN Electoral Assistance.³⁵
- Developing guidelines for accessibility and assistive technology use in electoral processes.
- Developing guidelines for accessible polling locations, barrier audits, and the use of assistive technologies.
- Conducting barrier audits of polling stations.
- Using participatory methods to integrate feedback from vulnerable populations, including women and PWDs.

Activity 4.3. Train Electoral Officials and other Stakeholders on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Policies and Practices.

The Project will design and deliver training and on-demand mentoring on the basic concepts of gender equality and social inclusion, gender mainstreaming and gender analysis, CEC gender policies, including anti-discrimination and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) for CEC officials, members of lower-level commissions, and representatives of electoral stakeholders (including political parties and CSOs). Training will utilise the BRIDGE curricula and methodology and will include a module for managers at CEC and TECs about the policy to ensure that it is incorporated into all decision-making, policy formulation and operational planning, as well as a module on equal employment opportunities and non-discrimination in election administration.

The Project will also design and deliver specialised sensitisation training to CEC officials, TEC and PEC members, political parties, CSOs, and the media on disability inclusion principles and practices. The sensitisation and training workshops will aim to achieve understanding of the CEC officials, TEC and PEC members, representatives of political parties, CSOs, media of the full electoral rights of persons with disabilities on the basis of Article 29 of the CRPD and the other elements of the international human rights framework that are relevant for mainstreaming the full participation of persons with disabilities. This will further include capacities required for effective facilitation of the participation of persons with different kinds of disabilities in all phases of the electoral process. The Project will also offer knowledge and skills required for assessment of the accessibility of polling locations, the existence of accessible information material, etc.

Review all mandatory training modules delivered by CEC for the electoral personnel from gender equality and social inclusion perspectives and provide recommendations for improvement to ensure electoral procedures are gender-sensitive, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Support CEC to implement public awareness campaigns in close collaboration with OPDs using inclusive media platforms to highlight the rights of persons with disabilities in elections.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Combining theoretical training on international best practices with practical exercises on inclusivity and gender mainstreaming.
- Utilising case studies and role-playing to develop hands-on skills for electoral officials.
- Developing a detailed training program on gender-responsive, inclusive, and non-discriminatory electoral policies and practices.
- Conducting workshops and seminars to sensitise stakeholders on the CRPD and "reasonable accommodation" principles.
- Ensuring that training materials cover the full spectrum of electoral rights for persons with disabilities, as outlined in Article 29 of the CRPD and other relevant human rights frameworks.
- Utilising participatory workshops, e-learning modules, and in-person training sessions to build awareness and understanding of disability inclusion using accessible materials.
- Collaborating with OPDs and electoral authorities to ensure that fundamental concerns of persons with disabilities on electoral participation inclusion are well understood and reflected, and training materials are accurate and inclusive.
- Delivering training sessions across Armenia, ensuring representation from all relevant electoral bodies.
- Conducting post-training evaluations and focus group discussions to gauge increased knowledge and readiness, as well as readiness for implementation.

Activity 4.4. Develop Gender Quota and Mandate Placement Rules for Greater Female Representation.

The Project will organise policy dialogue workshops on improving the system of gender quotas, placement rules, and enforcement mechanisms engaging women's organisations.

We will support MOJ, CEC and electoral stakeholders to develop clear, enforceable gender quota systems and rules for candidate placement at national and local level.

We will also support MOJ, CEC and electoral stakeholders to design enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with gender quotas and enhance the representation of women in elected positions.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Conducting consultations with political parties, CSOs, and women's groups on best practices for gender quotas and mandates to ensure that proposed gender quota rules are realistic and effective.
- Drafting gender quota rules and incorporating them into electoral law and CEC guidelines (targeting primarily elections in 2026 and beyond).
- Developing enforcement strategies with clear compliance indicators and accountability mechanisms.
- Advocating for and supporting the implementation of the new rules through public campaigns and political engagement.

Activity 4.5. Improve Data Collection and Analysis on Participation of Vulnerable Populations.

The Project will develop and deliver training and on-demand mentoring to the relevant staff of CEC on gender-sensitive data quality, official statistics and analytical methods.

The Project will further introduce systems for collection, analysis, and reporting of gender, disability, and social inclusion data during electoral processes, including tracking and reporting participation rates of women, minorities, and PWDs throughout the election cycle.

The Project will also provide software and training to the CEC staff on statistical data processing and visualisation.

We will also Support CEC to develop a knowledge product (analytical report) on political participation of women.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Supporting CEC to design a data collection system that is gender- and disability-sensitive in close collaboration with the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia (Armstat).
- Including disaggregated data collection practices in voter registration, election monitoring, and polling station reports.
- Designing data collection tools that incorporate gender and social inclusion markers.
- Training CEC staff and electoral officials on data collection and analysis techniques.
- Establishing a regular reporting system that includes gender and inclusion statistics.

Activity 4.6. Improve Accessibility Standards and Measures.

Considering the "reasonable accommodation" principle, the Project will encourage CEC to develop policies or take actions to enhance the full participation of PWDs at all stages of the electoral process as voters and candidates to the extent possible. The Project will further provide relevant and appropriate advice and resources to CEC on ways to facilitate the participation of persons with different kinds of disabilities in all aspects of an electoral process - from voter and candidate registration to voting, observing the electoral process and serving as a poll worker or other electoral official, considering the differential needs of women and men. The Project will support CEC in the development of guidelines for selection of accessible polling locations in consultation with OPDs, as well as on conducting inclusivity and barrier audit report. The Project will facilitate policy dialogue engaging CEC, other electoral stakeholders and OPDs on the availability and use of new technologies, including information and communication technologies, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies to reach out to persons with disabilities. The Project will assist CEC to ensure that their official website (www.elections.am) provides relevant electoral information in fully accessible format and encourage implementing partners to ensure that any websites they support are also accessible. The Project will consult the CEC on the requirements of PWDs in the procurement and management of electoral premises and materials (providing a list of accessible polling stations; privacy measures for persons in wheelchairs when voting; appropriate layout, construction or refurbishment of and adequate equipment in electoral premises; locating polling stations on the ground floor; wheelchair-accessible ingress/egress; proper lighting, availability of magnifying glasses in polling stations; appropriate and accessible voter information and voter materials, such as the use of large-print, sign language, Braille, audio, video with subtitles, easy-to-understand versions; processes to facilitate independent voting by blind voters, as well as CEC helpline with the engagement of OPDs.

The Project will specifically conduct assessments to ensure that target polling stations meet the accessibility standards required for PWDs. The Project will also provide technical assistance and resources to CEC to implement necessary accessibility upgrades at polling stations.

We will support CEC to ensure website and communications channels are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. We will also support OPDs to engage in monitoring of the implementation of accessibility measures and gather feedback.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Using a combination of field assessments and consultations with OPDs to identify barriers in polling stations and ensure the feasibility of proposed measures.
- Working with local authorities to upgrade polling stations to meet accessibility standards.
- Supporting OPDs to develop an accessibility audit checklist for polling stations, and conduct assessments of existing polling stations and identify areas for improvement.
- Developing accessible websites and voter education materials in formats such as Braille, sign language, and easy-to-read formats.

Output 5. More informed and engaged electorate through inclusive and innovative civic and voter education (UNDP/International IDEA).

Activity 5.1. Development and Implementation of a Gender-Sensitive and Inclusive Civic and Voter Education Plan. (UNDP)

The Project will ensure diverse outreach and accessibility to underrepresented groups of the initiatives. The initiatives will inter alia strengthen PWD's awareness of their rights, as well as their responsibilities. This may entail the production of materials in various accessible formats (audio, subtitled video, sign language, materials in large print, Braille). At the same time, the Project will ensure that the voter education initiatives of CEC and CSOs target the general population's awareness of the political rights of PWDs as important parts of a truly inclusive electoral process.

The Project will encourage OPDs to participate in designing and delivering voter education programs targeted at PWDs through Project funding (through third party financing via the small grants mechanism).

We will also support CEC to develop a comprehensive Civic and Voter Education Plan, with particular focus on youth engagement, in collaboration with CSOs and youth organisations, aligned with international best practices.

The Project will mobilise and support CSOs (including OPDs and youth organisations) and media outlets to design and implement at least 20 voter education initiatives targeting underrepresented groups, including PWDs, women, and minorities.

We will also support CEC to produce accessible voter education materials, such as Braille pamphlets, large print documents, sign language videos, and subtitled content in collaboration with CSOs. The partner CSOs will be offered financial support to complement the voter outreach efforts of CEC by implementing face-to-face in

person outreach sessions, especially in areas where there are low turnout rates among women voters and young voters.

The Project will also support OPDs to deliver tailored workshops and campaigns to enhance PWDs' awareness of their electoral rights and responsibilities while fostering public awareness of the political rights of PWDs.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Drafting the Civic and Voter Education Plan in collaboration with CEC and stakeholders.
- Using co-creation workshops with OPDs, women's groups, youth organisations and media professionals to ensure inclusivity.
- Identifying and partnering with relevant CSOs, youth organisations, OPDs, and media outlets.
- Organising training workshops for partner CSOs and media outlets utilising the BRIDGE methodology to strengthen their capacities to design and deliver effective voter education initiatives.
- Applying universal design principles to produce voter education materials.
- Utilising the partnership instruments such as responsible partner agreement (RPA) with CEC, small grants mechanisms for third party financing of the initiatives (for CSOs and media outlets).
- Monitoring and evaluating the reach and impact of initiatives (roll out of CEC, CSO and media initiatives through targeted campaigns, workshops, and distribution) through user feedback and participant surveys.

Activity 5.2. Design and Pilot Innovative Instruments to Foster Participation of First-Time and Young Voters.
(UNDP)

The Project will support CEC to develop and test innovative tools to engage young and first-time voters in electoral processes in collaboration with youth. The pilot instruments will be discussed and agreed with youth organisations and may include mock elections, personalised letters to the first-time voters, e-learning tools developed by the National Center of Educational Technologies (NCET) of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MESCS), competition writing essays on the electoral-related topics, PSAs targeting first-time voters, special pins "Voted for the first time", civic and voter education tabletop games, mobile application for young and first time-voters, as elaborated below.

The first example is the mock elections to familiarise youth with voting procedures. Mock Elections are an effective way to engage young people in voting and instil lifelong democratic values. High school and university students can experience their first vote through a realistic simulation, familiarising themselves with electoral processes and equipment. Designed for students aged 15-17, the activity will focus on voting for a favourite SDG, using scenarios jointly developed by the CEC, UNDP, and partners. With support from trained election commission members, UNDP volunteers, and educators, mock elections will be held in rural schools and colleges, providing hands-on exposure to democratic participation.

Another example is tabletop games for voter education. Using games to teach civics makes civic and voter education engaging and accessible for students. Games simplify abstract concepts, provide structured ways to explore challenging ideas, and simulate democratic processes – an effective method for enhancing civics education. The Project will support CEC to develop interactive tabletop games that blend engaging gameplay with key civic themes to inspire youth participation should these election stakeholders be interested in such initiatives in collaboration with youth organisations. These games will be tested through focus groups, with feedback guiding refinements in content and design. The Project will support CEC to produce effective games and distribute them to universities and youth organisations to support civic and voter education activities.

Other examples include personalised letters encouraging first-time voters to participate, e-learning tools in collaboration with NCET, mobile applications, and creative contests like essay competitions or PSAs, as well as distribution of "Voted for the first time" pins to incentivise engagement.

The Project will engage youth organisations in designing these interventions to ensure relevance and appeal.

We will support CEC and CSOs to launch a multimedia campaign targeting youth to raise awareness of electoral rights, responsibilities, and processes.

The Project will partner with refugee support CSOs to conduct voter outreach campaigns in host communities and refugee settlements (targeting refugee participation in local elections). Through this partnership, the Project will provide civic education, legal aid, and access mechanisms to around 3,000 refugees, displaced persons and residents of host communities utilising inclusive voter education tools.

The Project will also support CEC to utilise social media platforms to run challenges, quizzes, and interactive content for youth engagement. The Project will consider supporting CEC and youth organisations to launch the "Your Vote Matters" social media challenge, inviting young people to share creative video ideas and encouraging influencer participation to expand outreach. The Project will collaborate with influencers and local celebrities to promote active citizenship and voting rights. As part of the campaign, selfie video reels featuring celebrities will target youth, rural populations, women, and the general public, ensuring widespread engagement and impactful messaging.

Thus, the Project will empower refugee youth and women through leadership, advocacy, and digital literacy skills transferable to broader socio-economic integration. In this context, the Project recognizes refugee youth and women act as bridge-builders, contributing to positive narratives and becoming agents of cohesion and democratic renewal.

The Project will further support CSOs to organise Youth Debate Tournaments on Democracy to provide platforms for youth to discuss electoral participation. Debates provide a dynamic platform for constructive discussions, allowing participants to present and defend diverse viewpoints. Parliamentary-style student debates follow standard rules, including time limits, randomly assigned positions, limited preparation time, and strict adherence to the chosen debate format. These tournaments encourage dialogue on socially relevant topics, spanning political, economic, and cultural issues. By fostering critical thinking and leveraging the competitive format to boost motivation, the debates aim to empower participants. The Project may support a nationwide tournament for school students, focusing on election-related themes to promote civic engagement and democratic values should CEC, youth organisations and political parties be genuinely interested in this initiative.

The Project will rely on the expertise of International IDEA to provide further support to civil society, by providing technical support, financing and training to CSOs to co-create civic education campaigns, including the campaign messages tailored to women, youth, refugees, minorities, and PWDs.

The Project will also mobilise and collaborate with influencers and content creators to amplify outreach. The Project will finally, monitor awareness and behavioural change among young voters.

Finally, the Project will develop replication and sustainability plan for CEC to implement the most effective instruments.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Conducting focus groups and consultations with youth organisations to identify preferences.
- Using iterative prototyping and testing to refine tools.
- Combining traditional media (TV, radio) with digital media strategies for maximum reach.
- Leveraging peer-to-peer communication to ensure grassroots mobilisation.
- Designing and launching the campaign with youth-friendly messaging.
- Partnering with NCET to integrate voter education into online education resources and programs.
- Developing and testing pilot tools in select communities.
- Tracking engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments, participation numbers) and establishing benchmarks to measure the percentage of first-time voters reporting increased awareness.
- Utilising mixed methods to triangulate quantitative survey results with qualitative findings (e.g., conduct baseline and end-line surveys to assess awareness levels of first-time voters about their electoral rights and responsibilities. Using focus groups and interviews to collect qualitative insights into the effectiveness of education initiatives).
- Analysing data and producing a report with key findings and recommendations for future voter education initiatives.
- Sharing findings with the CEC and stakeholders for iterative improvement and to enable CEC to scale up successful tools based on pilot feedback as needed.

Activity 5.3. Implement Nationwide Civic Education Campaign on Values and Principles of Electoral Integrity. (International IDEA)

Building public awareness is essential to ensure that citizens, particularly young people and underrepresented groups, feel empowered to participate meaningfully in elections. This initiative will support the CSOs and grassroots groups in civic education and outreach in close partnership with CEC and UNDP, broader civil society and media actors. Through a comprehensive civic education campaign, the Project will promote inclusive participation, equip citizens to recognize manipulative behaviour and strategies to counteract it, and to reinforce public confidence in the value and impact of voting.

The methodologies and operational steps for this activity will further include:

- Identifying and selecting CSO partners through a transparent process based on outreach capacity and inclusion criteria.
- Organising a co-design workshop to develop campaign messaging, content, and delivery strategies.
- Producing accessible civic education materials in multiple languages and formats.
- Supporting CSOs in drafting outreach and distribution plans, including digital, door-to-door, and public events.
- Training CSO outreach teams, and community facilitators.
- Conducting a post-election assessment and lessons-learned review through a multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Output 6. Enhanced expertise and capacity for oversight of campaign finance and digital campaigning (*International IDEA*)

The Project will provide expertise and technical assistance to the CEC in developing a GDPR-compliant framework to track online political advertising and campaign expenditures. The activity will support CEC to advance its own in-house digital monitoring capabilities and analytical frameworks. This initiative will also promote stronger collaboration between the CEC and other public institutions to enable early detection and coordinated responses to information influence efforts, while fully safeguarding freedom of expression and association.

Activity 6.1. Development and Deployment of the Framework for Monitoring Online Campaigns and Expenditures.

This activity enables the CEC to track online political advertising, campaign finance, and disinformation trends through a GDPR-compliant monitoring tool and internal reporting system.

- Co-designing the framework and methodology for monitoring and reporting on the integrity of campaign finance with the CEC and relevant departments. The Framework will include the use of open-source intelligence (OSINT) gathering through platform libraries (e.g. Meta, Google) and the use of a GDPR-compliance OSINT tool Gerulata.
- Testing the framework functionality through use-case simulations and feedback cycles.
- Providing technical support, mentoring and troubleshooting guidance throughout implementation.

Activity 6.2. Capacity-building for CEC and Stakeholders.

This activity builds the capacity of CEC staff, auditors, and civil society to monitor digital campaigning and irregularities and to produce analytical outputs using real-world data.

- Developing training curricula and practical exercises based on recent case studies.
- Delivering blended learning workshops to CEC, oversight actors as well as for political parties/treasurers and CSO actors.
- Facilitating peer learning through simulations and expert-led sessions.

Activity 6.3. Inter-agency Coordination and Public Outreach to Improve Transparency of Campaign Expenditure.

This activity enhances the CEC's efforts in ensuing transparency and public accountability in protecting the integrity of digital campaign finance and digital campaigning:

- Supporting the CEC in convening inter-agency coordination and dialogue events with other state agencies as well as with participation of CSOs and international and national expert bodies.
- Organising public briefings and multi-stakeholder roundtables. engaging with media outlets and social media platforms to promote findings and standards.

Output 7. Enhanced expertise and capacity for electoral risk management and crisis preparedness. (*International IDEA*)

The activity will help strengthen CEC's ability to identify emerging complex digital threats, including disinformation and cyber vulnerabilities, early, plan for a range of scenarios, and ensure operational continuity across the electoral cycle. It will be able to respond to these threats by establishing electoral risk management systems that help anticipate, mitigate, and respond to such challenges in a coordinated and resilient manner. International IDEA brings global expertise in this area, having supported electoral commissions in over 20 countries, including recent collaborations with Ukraine and Moldova. These efforts have contributed to the development of integrated risk management practices tailored to each national context. Armenia is now well placed to benefit from this experience by adapting and applying relevant tools, including ERMTool, which supports both long-term planning and real-time decision-making. International IDEA will adapt the tool for Armenia, provide technical training, and support CEC to integrate it into its planning cycle.

Activity 7.1. Facilitate a self-assessment of CEC electoral risk management practices and develop a ERM framework of actions.

This activity supports the CEC in developing a tailored electoral risk management framework, based on IDEA's tested ERM methodology and national consultations.

- Facilitating a CEC self-assessment of current risk frameworks and procedures; Conduct a structured risk assessment with CEC, law enforcement agencies, cybersecurity experts, and civil society partners to

identify priority scenarios (e.g., cyberattacks on voter databases, coordinated disinformation campaigns, operational weaknesses and disruptions).

- Developing an ERM Framework of Action, including risk categories, mitigation strategies and institutional workflows.
- Providing technical assistance and planning integration into pre-election cycles.

Activity 7.2. Provide training on risk mapping, early warning, and mitigation using simulation exercises.

This activity prepares the CEC to respond to disinformation, cyber threats, and operational risks through simulation-based learning and coordinated response planning.

- Designing a training pack on the integration of the ERM Framework into the institutional workflows, including tabletop and scenario-based simulation exercises tailored to Armenia's context.
- Conducting at least two trainings for election administrators from across various levels, including table-top simulations with relevant CEC departments and stakeholders, to test institutional coordination, communication protocols, and operational readiness across different crisis scenarios.

Activity 7.3. Development and Application of Crisis Communication Protocols.

This activity supports the CEC to maintain public trust during electoral disruptions through improved crisis communication strategies and institutionalised protocols.

- Conducting a needs assessment and stakeholder consultation on communication gaps.
- Developing protocol templates and content strategies across media platforms.
- Supporting the testing and institutionalisation of protocols through practical simulations and integration into the workflows.

III.2. RESOURCES REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

European Union

The Project is aligned with the objectives and priorities of the [EU's Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 for Armenia \(MIP\)](#).³⁶ The Project will be a major player for Armenia in meeting its commitments under [EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement](#),³⁷ including support reforms to consolidate and institutionalise democracy, respect for human rights, resilient institutions and good governance. The Project will contribute towards the objectives of the EU on the global level set under EU's [Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument \(NDICI\)](#).³⁸ In line with the [EU Gender Action Plan](#), gender equality will be mainstreamed across all the key interventions of the Project.

The proposed Project is aligned with one of five priorities of the European Commission, specifically towards resilient, gender-equal, fair and inclusive societies. The Project contributes towards achieving relevant specific objectives of the MIP under Priority Area 5 (Resilient, gender-equal, fair and inclusive society). It aims to contribute to improving trust in representative democracy and inclusiveness of the democratic process (PA5/SO1). A further priority is placed to improve [electoral operational efficiency, integrity and accuracy of electoral processes](#). Another priority is to increase [public participation, including of women and underrepresented groups, in the overall democratic process](#). The Project supports electoral system reforms in consolidation of democratic transformations and is in line with EU values.

To guarantee the attainment of the results facilitated by the intervention funded through the external assistance financing instruments of the EU international cooperation, the Project's outcome directly aligns with two strategic priorities of the [Global Europe Results Framework \(GERF\)](#).³⁹ The relevant GERF Level 2 Indicators measuring number of countries supported by the EU to conduct elections and/or improve their electoral process (GERF 2.26), as well as the number of electoral processes and democratic cycles supported, observed and followed by means of Election Observation Missions (GERF 2.27) have been integrated into the architecture of the Project as outcome performance indicators. The Project is highly relevant to the [European Commission's work programme for 2025](#).⁴⁰ It aligns well with the EU's priorities of empowering citizens and building more resilient democracies by promoting free and fair elections, strengthening media freedom and countering disinformation.

The EU has a strategic interest in maintaining good relations with Armenia, which is an important partner in the region. The Project will contribute towards strengthened partnership of the EU with Armenia and will deepen their cooperation on a range of issues in modern public agenda, from security to trade. The fragile Armenian democracy is under greater pressure than ever before. Country's stability, security and prosperity rely firmly on upholding democratic values and institutions. The country needs support in promoting democratic values, such as equality and the rule of law, and to protect the foundations of a free and democratic society. The Project will prioritize equality through bringing gender equality and social inclusion, as well as rights of vulnerable groups into the hearth of the action. The Project will further contribute towards consolidating a core democratic institution – fair, credible, accountable and inclusive electoral processes.

The EU funding will be primarily used to secure the full deployment of VADs (implemented by UNDP), and to support International IDEA's interventions under the project, including a nationwide civic education campaign on electoral integrity, the development and rollout of a framework for monitoring online campaigns and expenditures, capacity-building for the CEC and stakeholders, inter-agency coordination and public outreach to improve transparency of campaign financing, as well as the facilitation of a CEC self-assessment on electoral risk management and the development of related frameworks, training, and crisis communication protocols.

Government of Sweden / Sida

The ARTEMIS project is closely aligned with [Sweden's Results Strategy for Reform Cooperation with Eastern Europe for 2021-2027](#),⁴¹ particularly Armenia, and the broader priorities of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Sweden's cooperation with Armenia focuses on strengthening democratic institutions, human rights, gender equality, and inclusive development – priorities that are clearly reflected in the core design and objectives of the ARTEMIS project.

Firstly, the project contributes to [promoting democracy, transparency, and accountability](#), which are central to Sweden's foreign policy and cooperation framework. ARTEMIS strengthens the institutional independence and operational capacities of Armenia's Central Electoral Commission, improves digital infrastructure, and supports robust stakeholder engagement mechanisms. These efforts reflect Sida's emphasis on fostering resilient and inclusive institutions that ensure rule of law and protect citizens' rights.

Secondly, the project places a strong emphasis on [gender equality and the inclusion of marginalized groups](#), aligning with Sweden's feminist foreign policy. Output 4 of the Project is dedicated entirely to enhancing the participation of women and persons with disabilities in the electoral process, through measures such as gender quota enforcement, leadership training for women, accessibility audits of polling stations, and inclusive voter

outreach. This directly supports Sida's objective to empower women and girls and ensure their full participation in public life.

Furthermore, ARTEMIS promotes [inclusive civic participation and human rights](#), areas where Sweden seeks to make a transformative impact through its cooperation with Armenia. The Project's focus on empowering youth, strengthening media capacity to combat disinformation, and fostering civic education underscores Sweden's commitment to pluralism, active citizenship, and democratic values.

Through its support for fair, credible, and inclusive electoral processes, ARTEMIS also contributes to Sweden's broader development agenda in Eastern Europe – promoting peace, democracy, and sustainable development as foundational principles for long-term stability and prosperity.

Government of Germany / GIZ

The ARTEMIS project is fully aligned with the priorities of the [Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development \(BMZ\)](#) and the [German Agency for International Cooperation \(GIZ\)](#) in Armenia, as articulated in the [Strategy for Development Cooperation with Transformation Partners in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus](#)⁴², and the [BMZ 2030 Reform Strategy: New Thinking – New Direction](#)⁴³. Armenia is one of Germany's designated *transformation partner countries*, where cooperation is focused on democratic consolidation, the rule of law, inclusive governance, and closer convergence with the European Union.

The Project directly contributes to BMZ's *core area of* [Peaceful and Inclusive Societies](#) (SDG 16) by enhancing the capacity, independence, and transparency of Armenia's CEC and ensuring credible, inclusive, and sustainable elections. In doing so, ARTEMIS strengthens citizen trust in democratic institutions and contributes to political stability – a central German objective in the Eastern Partnership region, particularly against the backdrop of regional fragility.

In line with the *BMZ 2030 reform strategy*, which emphasises measurable progress on governance, anti-corruption, and reform-minded partnerships, ARTEMIS supports concrete institutional reforms within Armenia's electoral system. Through Outputs 1-3, the Project delivers [structural improvements](#) in the CEC's strategic planning, professional development, digital transformation, and cybersecurity, advancing Germany's goal of building EU-compatible and resilient governance institutions. The Project also aligns with BMZ's initiative area on [harnessing digital technology](#), introducing innovative tools such as the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification system (EVA) and strengthening electoral cybersecurity in line with international standards.

The Project further reflects BMZ's [feminist development policy](#) and cross-cutting commitment to [inclusion](#). Through Output 4, ARTEMIS advances women's political participation, strengthens enforcement of gender quotas, supports women candidates and leaders, and ensures accessibility for persons with disabilities. These measures mirror BMZ's emphasis on embedding gender equality across all priority areas and promoting equal participation as a foundation of democratic transformation.

The Project's outcome and outputs are directly measurable against BMZ's results frameworks for cooperation with transformation partners. ARTEMIS contributes to key BMZ performance indicators, including: (i) strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law; (ii) increasing citizen participation of women, youth, and underrepresented groups; and (iii) improving transparency, accountability, and resilience of public institutions. These indicators are embedded in the Project through concrete targets on compliance with international electoral standards, enhanced cybersecurity, increased participation of women and youth, and strengthened stakeholder trust in the CEC.

By consolidating Armenia's democratic institutions, embedding gender equality and inclusion, supporting digital innovation, and advancing EU-oriented reforms, ARTEMIS reflects both BMZ's regional strategy for transformation partners and the BMZ 2030 reform principles of focused, strategic, and reform-driven cooperation. The Project therefore makes a direct contribution to Germany's overarching objectives of strengthening political stability, fostering inclusive societies, and supporting Armenia's sustainable democratic transformation within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Government of Norway / Norad

The ARTEMIS project is strongly aligned with Norway's development cooperation priorities, which place democracy, human rights, good governance, gender equality, and inclusive participation at the core of bilateral and multilateral engagement. For Norway, these are not stand-alone areas but cross-cutting principles guiding all cooperation. By strengthening the independence, transparency, and accountability of Armenia's electoral institutions, ARTEMIS contributes directly to Norway's policy objectives of consolidating democratic reforms, advancing human rights, and fostering political stability. Its focus on women's participation, enforcement of gender quotas, youth leadership, and accessibility for marginalized groups reflects Norway's feminist development policy and its global emphasis on equal participation in civic life. Moreover, ARTEMIS advances Norwegian priorities on transparency and innovation through the digitalisation of electoral systems, including

the introduction of the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification tool (EVA) and strengthened cybersecurity measures, which are consistent with Norway's emphasis on harnessing technology to improve governance.

Importantly, ARTEMIS also serves as a vehicle for operationalising Norway's commitment to [refugee protection and inclusion](#), as reflected in the NORAD-funded [Armenia's Refugee Crisis: Resilience for All](#) programme under the UNDP Refugee Support Offer. Following the unprecedented influx of refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023, Norway has prioritised not only humanitarian and socio-economic responses, but also the civic and political integration of displaced populations and host communities. Through ARTEMIS, refugees and displaced persons are recognised as rights-holders and active participants in Armenia's democratic life. The Project addresses legal and institutional gaps on voting rights, provides inclusive civic education and outreach, and strengthens resilience against misinformation targeting displaced populations. In doing so, it contributes to Norway's performance indicators on (i) safeguarding inclusive political participation for vulnerable groups, (ii) improving trust and cohesion between refugees and host communities through shared electoral participation, and (iii) reinforcing the legitimacy of institutions by embedding refugee rights into Armenia's democratic systems.

By linking electoral reform and democratic strengthening with refugee inclusion, ARTEMIS contributes to Norway's dual objectives of advancing good governance and ensuring protection and dignity for displaced populations. The Project thereby reflects Norway's strategic interest in supporting credible, transparent, and inclusive electoral processes, while simultaneously enhancing resilience, social cohesion, and democratic legitimacy in Armenia and the wider South Caucasus.

[Government of Japan](#)

The ARTEMIS project is well aligned with [Japan's Development Cooperation Charter](#)⁴⁴ and bilateral priorities with Armenia, which emphasize human security, democratic governance, inclusivity, and institutional capacity. By strengthening the independence and transparency of Armenia's electoral institutions, ARTEMIS advances Japan's objective of fostering peace, stability, and rule of law. Its focus on gender equality, youth participation, accessibility for persons with disabilities, and inclusion of displaced populations reflects Japan's cross-cutting priority on women's empowerment and human security. The Project's digital innovations, including electoral digitalisation and cybersecurity, correspond to Japan's emphasis on innovation and institutional resilience. Measurable results under ARTEMIS – such as (i) increased compliance of Armenia's elections with international standards, (ii) greater participation of women, youth, and vulnerable groups, (iii) strengthened institutional capacity of the CEC, and (iv) improved public trust in democratic processes – directly support Japan's performance expectations of self-help capacity, inclusivity, and transparent governance. In this way, ARTEMIS contributes to Japan's strategic objective of promoting stable, resilient, and rights-based democratic development in Armenia.

III.3. RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The ARTEMIS Project, an electoral assistance project, is designed to work in a very dynamic, politically charged environment. Given the additional challenges that comes with the escalation of conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic, those risks lead the Project to propose adaptive programming as part of the contingency planning which will be subsequently adopted at the Project Board Meetings. This will allow for maintaining the Project implementation at a high level of performance that ultimately will lead to the achievement of the defined targets and results. Adaptive programming also secures the planned implementation of the Project Annual Work Plans (AWPs) and a high delivery rate.

The Project risks vary with every new circumstance that may occur from new pandemic that might appear, armed conflict, and pre-term elections which maybe assumed as medium at the moment of the project start (P=4, I=3) as registered in the UNDP global system. The mitigating measures and consultations with the national partners, donors, and partners are of tremendous importance in allowing such an approach. This, therefore, lead to the reduction of the risk to medium, having the mechanism in place and focusing on activities that would involve digital transformation and online meetings primarily. Despite the internal political crisis, and border escalations, the Project is set to focus on aspects that are feasible and sustainable (see detailed Offline Risks Log in the [Annex 3: Risks Analysis](#)).

Project Title: Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)					
#	Description	Risk Category	Impact & Likelihood = Risk Level	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
1	Political instability, conflict, delays or changes in the electoral calendar, escalation of political polarisation and potential for electoral violence negatively affecting the electoral environment	Political Safety and Security	I = 4 high P = 4 high	Engage in continuous dialogue with political stakeholders, civil society, and international partners to promote electoral stability and consensus-building. Support contingency planning within the CEC for election postponement scenarios while maintaining transparency and legal integrity. Strengthen security coordination between electoral bodies and law enforcement to prevent and mitigate electoral violence. Foster public confidence through transparent communication and independent election monitoring.	GOA, CEC, UNDP, International IDEA
2	Resistance from key political actors towards gender equality and inclusivity reforms	Political Organisational	I = 4 high P = 2 low	Conduct advocacy campaigns showcasing international best practices on gender equality in elections. Facilitate high-level dialogues and awareness sessions with political parties, media, and civil society to build support for inclusivity measures. Establish gender and inclusivity champions within political parties and electoral institutions to foster internal advocacy.	GOA, CEC, UNDP
3	Resistance to change from lower-level commissions and stakeholders may delay implementation	Political Organisational	I = 3 medium P = 2 low	Implement structured change management strategies, including targeted training, incentives, and dialogue sessions to address concerns. Establish a peer-learning mechanism where successful reforms are shared among electoral management bodies. Strengthen engagement with lower-level commissions through participatory decision-making and structured feedback loops.	GOA, CEC, UNDP, International IDEA
4	Increased cybersecurity threats targeting electoral systems during the election period could disrupt the integrity of the electronic systems	Political Organisational	I = 4 high P = 3 medium	Develop and implement a comprehensive cybersecurity strategy, including real-time monitoring, incident response teams, and regular stress testing of electoral IT systems. Establish partnerships with cybersecurity experts and international organizations to share intelligence on emerging cyber threats. Provide regular cybersecurity training for election officials and develop public awareness campaigns to prevent cyber misinformation and phishing attacks.	GOA, CEC, UNDP
5	Hate speech could escalate despite mitigation efforts, impacting electoral credibility and high levels of misinformation could	Political Organisational	I = 3 medium P = 3 medium	Strengthen social media monitoring mechanisms to detect and counteract hate speech in real time. Work with tech companies, media regulators, and civil society to enforce policies against election-related hate speech. Provide training for journalists, social media	GOA, CEC, UNDP

	overwhelm mitigation efforts			influencers, and electoral stakeholders on ethical reporting and combating misinformation.	
6	Lack of engagement from media outlets in responsible reporting practices	Political Organisational	I = 3 medium P = 2 low	Establish partnerships with media organizations and incentivize responsible electoral reporting through recognition programs. Develop clear media guidelines for election coverage and promote compliance through capacity-building initiatives. Foster collaboration between CEC and media regulatory bodies to ensure fair and accurate election reporting.	GOA, CEC, UNDP, International IDEA
7	Cultural and societal barriers may limit women's political participation	Political Organisational	I = 4 high P = 3 medium	Implement targeted awareness campaigns showcasing the benefits of women's political participation through role models and success stories. Strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with gender quotas. Engage community and religious leaders to advocate for women's involvement in elections.	GOA, CEC, UNDP
8	Logistical and financial challenges in retrofitting polling stations to meet accessibility standards may hinder progress on planned accessibility improvements	Organisational	I = 4 high P = 4 high	Prioritize cost-effective accessibility solutions and leverage international donor support for infrastructure upgrades. Conduct phased implementation of accessibility improvements with a clear timeline and performance benchmarks. Encourage partnerships with OPDs to co-design and monitor accessibility initiatives.	GOA, CEC, UNDP
9	Misinformation and disinformation campaigns may undermine voter education efforts	Political Organisational	I = 3 medium P = 2 low	Develop a rapid-response misinformation debunking mechanism involving media, fact-checkers, and civil society organizations. Increase digital literacy programs targeting first-time voters and marginalized communities to enhance their ability to identify false information. Work with social media platforms to flag and remove election-related disinformation.	GOA, CEC, UNDP, International IDEA
10	Limited reach of voter education campaigns in rural or marginalised communities may persist despite targeted campaigns	Organisational	I = 3 medium P = 2 low	Deploy mobile outreach teams and digital tools, including radio and SMS campaigns, to extend voter education efforts in remote areas. Partner with local civil society organizations and community leaders to enhance grassroots voter awareness initiatives. Develop accessible and culturally relevant voter education materials tailored to diverse audiences.	GOA, CEC, UNDP, International IDEA

III.4. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Regulatory Reforms: The Project facilitates the development and adoption of new electoral regulations and policies to enhance transparency, inclusivity, and electoral integrity.

Multi-Stakeholder Coordination: Structured dialogue forums will be established among government agencies, political parties, CSOs, and international development partners to align efforts and avoid duplication.

Strengthening Electoral Dispute Resolution Mechanisms: The Project will support improvements in complaint-handling processes and the development of legal frameworks to ensure effective electoral dispute resolution.

Voter Outreach and Media Collaboration: CEC's communication channels, including its website and social media platforms, will be modernized to enhance public engagement and combat misinformation.

III.5. DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

Implementation of Secure Digital Tools: The Project supports the deployment of the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA), VADs, and other digital solutions to modernize electoral processes.

Cybersecurity Enhancement: A cybersecurity risk assessment will be conducted, leading to the development and implementation of policies, protocols, and infrastructure upgrades aligned with ISO 27001 standards.

Capacity Development in Digital Security: Training programs will be delivered to CEC personnel on digital risk management, cybersecurity protocols, and resilience-building strategies against cyber threats.

Feasibility Studies and Piloting of E-Governance Solutions: The Project will assess and test emerging electoral technologies, such as online voter registration and secure vote transmission systems, ensuring adaptability and long-term efficiency.

Electoral Data Collection and Analysis: The Project will introduce systems for tracking and analysing voter participation trends, disaggregated by gender, age, disability status, and displacement-related vulnerabilities to safeguard inclusivity, justice, and equal rights in electoral processes.

Rights Protection: Safeguard inclusivity, justice, and equal rights in electoral processes, with attention to gender, disability, and displacement-related vulnerabilities.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework: A results-based M&E framework will be developed to measure Project progress, inform adaptive management, and ensure accountability.

Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices: Lessons learned from the Project will be documented and disseminated to support replication and scalability in future electoral cycles.

Impact Assessments and Reporting: Regular assessments will evaluate the effectiveness of electoral interventions, guiding continuous improvement and sustainability planning.

III.6. KNOWLEDGE

Training and Knowledge Transfer: The Project employs a blended learning approach, combining in-person training sessions, online learning modules, and study visits to facilitate learning and knowledge sharing, enabling CEC officials and lower-level commissions to build and internalize new competencies.

Development of Strategic Frameworks: The Project supports the CEC in operationalizing its Development Strategy and Roadmap, ensuring long-term institutional reform and resilience.

Human Resource Management (HRM) Enhancement: The assessment and reform of HRM policies within the CEC are designed to strengthen recruitment, retention, and professional development frameworks.

Establishment of Training Units: A dedicated CEC training unit will be established, providing structured and sustainable capacity-building programs with standardized curricula and certification mechanisms.

III.7. SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING UP

The sustainability of the Project is ensured through a comprehensive approach that embeds institutional strengthening, financial viability, technological resilience, stakeholder engagement, and social inclusion. These elements ensure that the Project's impact extends beyond its immediate implementation period, fostering long-term democratic resilience and electoral integrity in Armenia.

Institutional Sustainability

The Project prioritizes capacity-building of the Central Electoral Commission and lower-level commissions through structured training programs, e-learning platforms, and the establishment of a functional training unit within the CEC Secretariat. These efforts will enhance institutional knowledge and self-reliance, reducing dependency on external technical assistance over time.

The operationalization of the CEC Development Strategy and Roadmap will provide a long-term framework for institutional reforms and improvements, ensuring that gains in electoral management are systematically reinforced and expanded. By establishing standard operating procedures, digital tools, and enhanced cybersecurity measures, the Project contributes to the long-term resilience of Armenia's electoral institutions.

Capacity-building also includes strengthening the ability of electoral institutions and partners to design, implement, and evaluate public engagement and media literacy initiatives. Structured methodologies, experiential learning approaches, and systematic documentation of operational procedures – supported by the ERMTTool, digital monitoring tools, and interactive e-learning platforms – ensure that these practices are embedded institutionally and can be independently sustained and adapted over time.

Financial Sustainability

A key sustainability target of the project is to increase the share of training costs covered by domestic resources, with a goal of at least 10% of electoral management training expenses being funded by the Armenian government by the end of the Project. The Project encourages donor coordination to streamline financial and technical support, preventing fragmentation of assistance and ensuring effective resource allocation for long-term impact.

The digital transformation initiatives, including the introduction of the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA) and the replenishment of Voter Authentication Devices, will reduce administrative costs over time, making election management more cost-efficient.

Financial sustainability is further supported by the integration of cost-efficient tools and products – such as digital monitoring dashboards, and e-learning modules – which reduce recurring operational expenses while maintaining high-quality standards in voter education, media literacy, and electoral risk management practices.

Technological Sustainability

The Project promotes the development and implementation of robust cybersecurity policies aligned with international standards to protect electoral infrastructure from cyber threats and ensure the integrity of digital systems beyond the project period.

The introduction of digital tools such as the CEC e-learning and certification platform, the EVA system, and enhanced voter authentication technologies will facilitate ongoing training, outreach, and voter engagement without continuous external intervention.

Through feasibility studies and pilot programs, the Project ensures that any new technological solutions adopted by the CEC are cost-effective, scalable, and adaptable to future electoral needs.

Technological sustainability also encompasses the deployment and integration of the ERMTool, digital campaign monitoring systems, and interactive civic/media literacy platforms, which strengthen institutional capacity to detect trends, analyse data, and make evidence-based decisions independently. Iterative piloting and feedback mechanisms guarantee that these solutions remain relevant, user-friendly, and adaptable to evolving electoral challenges.

Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Integration

The Project strengthens coordination mechanisms among international donors, CSOs, and national institutions to align efforts and avoid duplication, fostering an environment of sustained collaboration. The Project supports the revision and adoption of electoral regulations and procedures that enhance transparency, inclusivity, and credibility, ensuring long-term adherence to best practices in election management.

Multi-stakeholder engagement, including political parties, media representatives, and youth organizations, ensures a broader commitment to democratic processes, reinforcing the sustainability of inclusive electoral participation.

The Project also fosters partnerships with educational institutions, youth centres, civil society, and media actors to institutionalize engagement practices and strengthen public literacy through initiatives supported by civic education campaigns, and media literacy interventions. Regular reporting systems, consultation mechanisms, and coordinated public communication strategies ensure that lessons learned from these outreach and monitoring initiatives are integrated into institutional policies and practices.

Social Sustainability and Inclusivity

Gender equality and social inclusion are embedded across all Project activities to ensure long-term political participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups. By institutionalizing gender-responsive policies, strengthening the role of women as electoral managers and candidates, and enhancing accessibility standards for persons with disabilities, the Project fosters a more inclusive electoral process that will continue beyond the project timeline.

Civic and voter education initiatives targeting young and first-time voters, including digital outreach strategies and interactive engagement tools, will instil a culture of democratic participation that extends across generations.

Social sustainability is further reinforced through media literacy interventions, interactive e-learning modules, and civic campaigns, which equip citizens with critical thinking skills, the ability to identify manipulative content, and responsible information-sharing behaviours. These initiatives enhance public confidence in electoral processes and foster a lasting culture of informed civic engagement across communities and generations.

IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

IV.1. COST EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

- The project will employ the intervention schemes that have been applied and tested before (basket fund financing model).
- The new initiatives are built on the successful schemes and on available human and technical resources from the UNDP electoral assistance projects in 2016-2022, as well as UNDP Armenia's Democratic Governance Programme.
- The project will apply a number of no- or low-cost responsiveness/empathy building initiatives and offer new creative formats to tap into citizens' expertise with a "fail fast, fail cheap" approach.
- Procurement of goods and services will be conducted in compliance with UNDP Standard Operational Procedures to ensure acquisition of appropriate quality goods and services at the most competitive/lowest price in the market.
- The project will form partnerships and build synergies with other projects and stakeholders working in the fields of parliamentary support, governance and women and youth empowerment to avoid overlaps and ensure merging of financial and technical resources with partners to achieve the results in the most cost-effective way.

IV.2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The electoral assistance programmes need to be carefully developed and skilfully managed by UNDP Country Offices vis-à-vis their mandate provided by the NAM Report.

Role of UNDP Country Offices in electoral assistance programmes. Electoral assistance programme requires the clear mandate provided under the NAM Report and strongest commitment by senior management within UNDP Country Office.

Political dynamics need to be understood and monitored. Monitoring the political dimensions of transitions and being able to take calculated risks in technical assistance to address sensitive electoral administration issues or constraints can be an important factor in moving from project outputs to more substantive outcomes. Opportunities to effect significant changes in electoral practices require acknowledging political variables in programming.

Benefits of project management presence. The value of having long-term project management staff to monitor and adjust project implementation strategies has been well proven through UNDP's experiences. This is particularly the case when working with electoral assistance and electoral management bodies as these entities have limited experiences working with external development actors.

The office costs are calculated based on the number of staff/workstations, including consultants that are required to deliver services in the project facilities, and importance of the project. Thus, the project office space will accommodate at least six core staff and key consultants. Office rental cost will be charged and will include safety and security, and other shared services required.

IV.3. VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Visibility of the European Union

UNDP, International IDEA and CEC will ensure the full EU visibility of the action in line with the Financial Administrative Framework Agreement between European Commission-UN and the General Conditions to the EU Contribution Agreement, as well as with the Joint Visibility Guidelines for European Commission-UN Actions in the Field. UNDP and International IDEA will also ensure the full visibility of other donors of the action in line with relevant guiding documents as relevant.

In addition, International IDEA will use visibility methods and instruments relevant to the activities and results under their area of responsibility following the overall EU requirements and guidelines.

The Project does not include a dedicated visibility budget, however any costs necessary to ensure compliance with contractual visibility requirements are factored into the Project budget foreseen for the relevant objectives and activities of the Project.

Visibility of Sweden

UNDP will ensure the full visibility of the Government of Sweden's support to the project. The Sweden logotype for promotion will be used in the production of information materials and in information activities aimed at beneficiaries of the project. UNDP will ensure that use of the "Sida" and "Sweden" logotypes for promotion are used in accordance with the guidelines available on www.sida.se and <https://identity.sweden.se> respectively.

“Sida” logotype for promotion will not be used in any way that can be perceived as if Sida has participated in the production or supports any opinions presented. Sida and other departments of the Swedish Embassy in Armenia may copy and distribute such material if required. The project does not include a dedicated visibility budget, however any costs necessary to ensure compliance with contractual visibility requirements are factored into the project budget foreseen for the relevant objectives and activities of the project. All visibility actions and materials will comply with the guidelines mentioned above. Given the importance of this project in supporting the Sweden’s role in strengthening democratic institutions, particular attention will be paid to presenting this initiative as Sida-funded, in which the Sida delivers quickly and in response to the needs on the ground. Visibility and communication and related messaging will be tightly coordinated with the Embassy of Sweden to Armenia and Sida, and UNDP and Sida will remain in close contact on this. We will ensure that Swedish embassy and SIDA representatives have key role in all project events and the support they provided is clearly visible and duly appreciated.

Visibility of Norway

UNDP will ensure the full visibility of the Government of Norway’s support to the project, in line with [Norad’s Guidelines for Visibility and Communication in Development Cooperation](#). The official Norway/ Norad logo will be used on communication products, visibility materials, and at events financed by the project, ensuring that the contribution of Norway is clearly acknowledged. The logo will be applied in accordance with the rules set out in Norad’s communication guidelines, which specify placement, proportionality, and use of colours and fonts. Visibility measures will be designed to highlight Norway’s role as a committed partner in promoting democratic governance, human rights, and inclusive electoral processes in Armenia.

UNDP will ensure that Norway’s support is featured in press releases, human-interest stories, and social media messaging related to the project. Close coordination will be maintained with the Royal Norwegian Embassy to Armenia to ensure consistent and coherent messaging, as well as participation of Embassy representatives in relevant project activities. The project does not allocate a dedicated visibility budget; however, all costs needed to comply with visibility obligations are factored into the relevant budget lines for activities and objectives. UNDP and the Norwegian Embassy will work jointly to ensure that visibility actions convey Norway’s contribution in a way that reflects its values of transparency, solidarity, and long-term commitment to strengthening democratic institutions.

Visibility of German

UNDP will ensure full and consistent visibility of the Federal Republic of Germany’s support to the project in line with the Corporate Design and Communication Guidelines of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The BMZ logo, with the reference line “Funded by the Federal Republic of Germany”, will be featured on all communication and visibility products – such as reports, banners, press releases, and digital content –alongside the UNDP logo, in accordance with official guidance to avoid any implication of co-ownership or endorsement of UNDP publications.

Germany’s contribution will be prominently acknowledged in project events, media outreach, and social media campaigns. UNDP will closely coordinate with the German Embassy in Armenia to align visibility actions with Germany’s broader public diplomacy priorities and will invite the Embassy to key project events to ensure

Germany’s support is clearly recognized. Particular emphasis will be placed on presenting this contribution as part of Germany’s wider commitment to democratic governance, transparency, accountability, and institutional strengthening.

The visibility will strictly follow the GIZ Corporate Design Manual and the Einheitliches Logo der Zusammenarbeit (ELdZ, “German cooperation” logo) for the activities/deliverables funded by the BMZ/GIZ. All public materials, publications, online outputs, and events will:

- Include the standard funding statement: “Commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by GIZ.”
- Display the ELdZ/German cooperation logo alongside partner and co-funder logos with equal treatment and visibility.
- Acknowledge co-funding partners in line with their respective visibility requirements.
- Comply with GIZ standards on photo credits, privacy, and legal imprint.

Visibility actions will also reflect key elements of Germany’s foreign policy relevant to the project’s thematic focus, including the promotion of human rights, equality, and rule of law; crisis prevention, peacebuilding, and democratic institution-building; support for sustainable development and climate-sensitive governance in line with the 2030 Agenda; commitment to multilateralism and cooperation with the EU and international partners; and inclusive economic and social development that protects and empowers vulnerable groups.

Although the project does not have a dedicated visibility budget, all expenditures required to meet these visibility obligations are incorporated into the existing project budget under relevant objectives and activities.

V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF/Country Programme Results and Resource Framework: UNSDCF Outcome 6 / CPD 3: People benefit from effective and accountable governance systems and institutions that safeguard human rights, uphold the rule of law, and public administration that ensures effective and human-centered service delivery for all. Output 3.1: Constitution-making, electoral, parliamentary, and other processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability.								
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: Indicator: Government effectiveness, transparency, and accountability. Baseline (2018): Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGIs): Voice and Accountability: 40.39. Government effectiveness: 51.44. Control of corruption: 42.79. Target (2025): WGI: Voice and Accountability: 42; Government Effectiveness: 52.2; Control of Corruption: 43.2.								
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: 2.4 Democratic institutions and processes strengthened for an inclusive and open public sphere with expanded public engagement								
Project title: Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)								
EXPECTED OUTCOME AND OUTPUTS	OUTCOME AND OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	Baseline		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)			KEY ASSUMPTIONS & CRITICAL RISKS
			VALUE	YEAR	Year 1 2025	Year 2 2026	FINAL	
Outcome Strengthened capacity and independence of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) of Armenia to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes by 2026 parliamentary elections	a. Progress in compliance with international standards for credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes	a. Election observation mission reports	The final report of the OSCE/ODIHR EOM for 2021 elections identified key areas requiring improvement	2024	No	Yes	Yes	A: Continued political stability and commitment from the Government of Armenia towards electoral reforms, cooperation from CEC and alignment with UNDP’s strategic support, and availability of donor funding and contributions from international partners. R: Political instability, conflict, delays or changes in the electoral calendar, escalation of political polarization and potential for electoral violence negatively affecting the electoral environment. R: Resistance from key political actors towards gender equality and inclusivity reforms.
	b. Percentage of training costs of the electoral management bodies covered by domestic resources vs. international donor support following the final year of the project	b. CEC reports, UNDP reports	0%	2024	0%	10%	10%	
	c. Zero impact of cybersecurity incidents on electoral systems and enhanced cybersecurity measures in place	c. CEC cybersecurity audit report, incident logs	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	
	d. Increase in voter turnout among women and youth.	d. CEC reports, voter turnout statistics	N/A	2024	0%	5%	5%	
	e. Increase of women candidates running for office in local elections	e. CEC records, candidate registration data	0	2024	0%	5%	5%	
	f. Increase in the level of satisfaction of the stakeholders with CEC’s outreach efforts	f. Stakeholder engagement survey, feedback reports CSOs and political parties	0	2024	0%	5%	5%	

Output 1. Enhanced institutional capacity of CEC and lower-level commissions for robust electoral preparations and management	1a. CEC's Development Strategy and Roadmap to guide the institutional reform of the electoral management bodies fully operationalized	1a. CEC reports, UNDP reports	Draft strategic plan in place with pillars identified	2024	No	Yes	Yes	A: International development partners will actively participate in coordination mechanisms. R: Resistance to change from lower-level commissions and stakeholders may delay implementation.
	1b. A set of comprehensive recommendations for improving the human resource management (HRM) system validated by CEC	1b. Report on assessment of CEC organisational capacity, UNDP reports	0	2024	0	3	3	
	1c. A functional training unit within the CEC Secretariat is established, guided by a comprehensive training strategy	1c. CEC organisational structure, training strategy and reports, training needs assessment report, training unit logs	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	
	1d. A CEC e-learning and certification system is operational, offering at least 5 new online courses for electoral stakeholders, with active annual user engagement, certified participants, and a functionality to measure an average user satisfaction score through feedback mechanisms	1d. e-Learning and certification system logs, training modules	No (not active) 0	2024	No (not active) 0	Yes (active) 5 new online courses	Yes (active) 5 new online courses	
	1e. Percentage of CEC officials and lower-level commission (TEC and PEC) members trained	1e. CEC records, capacity assessment and training reports, UNDP reports	0	2024	0%	98%	98%	
	1f. Number of coordination meetings among international assistance providers conducted annually	1f. Donor coordination meeting records	0	2024	1	2	3	

Output 2. Enhanced digital transformation and cybersecurity of the electoral process	2a. All polling stations utilising voter authentication devices (VADs) in full compliance with the requirements of the national legislation and CEC regulations	2a. CEC deployment and operational reports, election observation reports, VAD implementation records	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	A: CEC will remain committed to integrating digital solutions into electoral processes and necessary technology and infrastructure for voter authentication and cybersecurity measures are available. R: Increased cybersecurity threats targeting electoral systems during the election period could disrupt the integrity of the electronic systems.
	2b. A new CEC' Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA), a multifunctional digital tool, developed and piloted	2b. EVA tool and its logs	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	
	2c. Number of recommendations on electronic counting and/or tabulation, maintenance and replacement of VADs, and electronic notification system delivered by the feasibility study for further digital transformation of the electoral processes validated by CEC	2c. Feasibility study reports, CEC IT strategy documents	0	2024	0	5	5	
	2d. Number of new internal cybersecurity policies, protocols and relevant infrastructure for CEC are in place enabling the CEC ISO 27001 standard certification	2d. Cybersecurity policies, SOPs, CEC records, UNDP monitoring reports	0	2024	0	5	5	
Output 3. Enhanced protocols and capacities for stakeholder engagement, gender-responsive voter outreach, and countering hate speech for improved electoral transparency, inclusivity, and integrity	3a. Number of new and/or revised electoral regulations and procedures aimed at enhanced transparency, inclusivity, and integrity of electoral processes addressing observation, party registration and financial reporting challenges, as well as discrimination and information pollution adopted by CEC	3a. CEC regulatory documents, records and reports, CEC Outreach and Communications Policy and the Implementation Roadmap	0	2024	0	2	2	A: Political parties, CSOs, media outlets and social media platforms cooperate in addressing misinformation and hate speech R: Hate speech could escalate despite mitigation efforts, impacting electoral credibility and high levels of misinformation could overwhelm mitigation efforts. R: Lack of engagement from media outlets in responsible reporting practices.
	3b. Modernised CEC website offers up-to-date, gender-responsive and fully accessible voter outreach materials	3b. CEC website, voter outreach materials, OPD feedback reports	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	
	3c. CEC Helpline is established and operational in collaboration with OPDs	3c. CEC reports, Helpline records, UNDP reports	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	

	3d. Number of media, CSO and social media representatives that reported increased knowledge of international standards and best practices of electoral process coverage	3d. Training reports, post-training assessments	0	2024	0	100	100	
	3e. Number of young people trained on countering information pollution and hate speech that reported increased ability of recognising fake news and preventing hate speech	3e. Training reports, post-training assessments	0	2024	0	300	300	
Output 4. Gender equality and social inclusion in elections strengthened through increased participation of women and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities	4a. Increase in women's participation as electoral managers focusing on the TECs	4a. CEC records, candidate registration data.	0	2024	0	5%	5%	A: Women's rights groups and OPDs will actively support CEC's initiatives. A: Continued government commitment to gender equality policies. A: Willingness of political parties to priorities gender equality and inclusiveness in candidate selection. R: Cultural and societal barriers may limit women's political participation. R: Logistical and financial challenges in retrofitting polling stations to meet accessibility standards may hinder progress on planned accessibility improvements.
	4b. CEC policy and strategic planning frameworks explicitly include measurable objectives and actions aimed at promoting gender equality and enhancing the inclusion and accessibility of electoral processes for vulnerable and disadvantaged populations based on Electoral Gender and Social Inclusion Mapping (EGSIM)	4b. Development Strategy, Roadmap and the implementation Action Plan for 2024-2028, EGSIM Report, CEC reports, UNDP reports	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	
	4c. Percentage of trained CEC officials, members of lower-level electoral commissions, representatives of other key electoral stakeholders, including political parties and CSOs, that reported increased understanding and readiness to implement gender-responsive, inclusive and non-discriminatory policies and practices	4c. Training reports, participant feedback, post-training assessments, UNDP reports	0	2024	0%	70%	70%	
	4d. Improved gender quota for candidates and mandate placement at both national and local levels with clear, well-	4d. CEC reports, Electoral Code, Election	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	

	drafted rules and enforcement mechanisms that facilitate greater representation of women effectively are developed and submitted to CEC	observation mission reports						
	4e. Electoral gender and social inclusion data collection and analysis on participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged populations in electoral processes improved	4e. CEC reports	N/A	2024	No	Yes	Yes	
	4f. Number of electoral officials of CEC, members of lower-level electoral commissions, representatives of other electoral stakeholders that reported increased sensitivity and knowledge of disability inclusion, relevant principles, regulations and policies	4f. Training reports, participant feedback, post-training assessments, UNDP reports	0	2024	0	100	100	
	4g. Number of new inclusive electoral policies, practices, and accessibility measures developed with OPDs and adopted by CEC (guidelines of accessible polling locations, inclusivity and barrier audit report, availability and use of new technologies including ICT and AT to reach out to PWDs, fully accessible CEC website)	4g. CEC policies, records and reports, CEC website, helpline records, voter education resources, feedback from OPDs, Inclusivity and barrier audit report, UNDP reports, Election observation mission reports	0	2024	0	4	4	
	4h. Increase in the number of new polling stations that meet accessibility standards for PWDs	4h. CEC policies, records and reports, CEC website, helpline records, voter education resources, feedback from OPDs, Inclusivity and barrier audit report, UNDP reports, Election observation mission reports	0%	2024	0%	10%	10%	

Output 5. More informed and engaged electorate through inclusive and innovative civic and voter education	5a. Number of voters reached through gender-sensitive and inclusive voter education initiatives implemented by CEC in partnership with CSOs and media in line with the CEC Civic and Voter Education Plan	5a. CEC reports, CSO reports, UNDP reports	N/A	2024	0	20,000 <i>(including 3,000 refugees and residents of host communities)</i>	20,000 <i>(including 3,000 refugees and residents of host communities)</i>	A: Active involvement of civil society and media partners in voter education. R: Misinformation and disinformation campaigns may undermine voter education efforts. R: Limited reach of voter education campaigns in rural or marginalized communities may persist despite targeted campaigns.
	5b. Number of innovative instruments fostering participation of the first-time and young voters in the electoral processes developed and piloted by CEC in collaboration with CSOs	5b. CEC reports, CSO reports, UNDP reports	N/A	2024	0	5	5	
	5c. Number of young people engaged by pilot interventions and instruments fostering participation of youth in electoral processes ⁴	5c. CEC reports, CSO reports, UNDP reports	0	2024	0	100,000 <i>(50% girls)</i>	100,000 <i>(50% girls)</i>	
	5d. Percentage of target first-time voters reached that reported increased awareness of their rights and responsibilities, the process of elections	5d. CEC reports, CSO reports, UNDP reports	0	2024	0%	50%	50%	

⁴ This will include first-time voters that participated in the mock elections, young people participated in the Youth Debate's Tournament on Democracy, users covered by the social media challenge for youth, users of mobile application for youth, young people covered by the campaign for the first-time voters, etc.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation are integral to effective and responsive implementation of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and a key tool to demonstrate UNDP's contribution to the strengthening of democratic governance. The UNDP CPD and UN SDG Monitoring and evaluation mechanism, including the dashboard and annual reports, will be key tools to monitor progress and achievements of our interventions, as well as for documenting and assessing impact and progress. In addition, the above-mentioned tools will help UNDP prioritize and focus our resources to ensure optimal impact. In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the UNDP components of the Project will be monitored through the monitoring and evaluation plans, whereas International IDEA will utilize its methodology for learning-based management (LBM).

International IDEA's LBM methodology is informed by the latest thinking and understanding of complex social and democratic change and is inspired by theory of change and outcome mapping methodologies. It is focused on mapping out or "filling in" what is often described as the "missing middle" between what a project does and how these activities contribute to desired societal goals. It does so by paying special attention to outcomes, defined as the changes in behaviours, relationships and practices by target groups. Progress towards outcomes is to be assessed by project staff through outcome observation and interviews with target groups. Internal assessments of outcomes will be supplemented by a mid-term evaluation where an evaluation team (including monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) specialists at International IDEA) will visit the project to validate the outcomes recorded by the project team and make their own, independent evaluation of project effectiveness and impact. The purpose of the evaluation is to feed unbiased conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned into project implementation.

Figure 1. Monitoring Instruments (UNDP)

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the Logical Framework will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the Project in achieving the agreed outputs.	Annually	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by Project management.
Monitor and Manage Risk	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log.	Annually	Risks are identified by Project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.
Learn	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the Project.	At least annually	Relevant lessons are captured by the Project team and used to inform management decisions.
Annual Project Quality Assurance	The quality of the Project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify Project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the Project.	Annually	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by Project management and used to inform decisions to improve Project performance.
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	Quarterly	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed and used to make course corrections.
Project Report	Progress reports and a final report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined targets at the output and outcome levels, the Project quality rating summary, an updated risk log with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.	Annually and at the end of the Project (final report)	

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action
Project Review (Project Board)	The Project's governance mechanism (i.e., Project board) will hold annual Project reviews: to ensure coherence and relevance of the Project, and realistic budgeting over the life of the Project, to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up, as well as to socialize Project 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.
Communicating with donors	To exchange information on progress, challenges, upcoming visibility events with donors	Quarterly, or as needed	Face to face and virtual meetings (e.g. via Webex, Teams or Zoom)

Figure 2. Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Title	Partners (if joint)	Related Strategic Plan Output	Key Evaluation Stakeholders
The project will undergo a midterm and/or final evaluation			EU, UNDP, CEC

VII. MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	Planned Budget by Year, USD		RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Y1	Y2		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount, USD
Output 1. Enhanced institutional capacity of CEC and lower-level commissions for robust electoral preparations and management <i>Gender marker: 2</i>	Activity 1.1. Support CEC to Operationalise its Development Strategy and Roadmap			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants International Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	28,200
	Activity 1.2. Assess and Support CEC to Improve the HRM System			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies Training, Workshops and Confer	63,500
	Activity 1.3. Support CEC to Establish a Functional Training Unit within the CEC Secretariat			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants International Consultants Contractual Services - Government	53,000
	Activity 1.4. Develop and Roll out a CEC e-Learning and Certification System			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants International Consultants Contractual Services - Companies Contractual Services - Government	76,200
	Activity 1.5. Deliver Comprehensive Training and Support Certification of CEC, TEC, and PEC Members			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants International Consultants Contractual Services - Companies Contractual Services - Government	163,200
	Activity 1.6. Support the Coordination Mechanisms with International Development Partners			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	25,500
	Sub-Total for Output 1						409,600
Output 2. Enhanced digital transformation and cybersecurity of the electoral process <i>Gender marker: 2</i>	Activity 2.1. Optimise and Support Full Deployment of VADs			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	International Consultants Contractual Services - Companies Local Consultants UNDP OPGT Cost Recovery	845,500
	Activity 2.2. Conduct Feasibility Study and Deliver Recommendations for Further Digital Transformation of Electoral Processes			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies Training, Workshops and Confer	80,000

	Activity 2.3. Develop and introduce Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA)			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies Training, Workshops and Confer Contractual Services - Government	249,000
	Activity 2.4. Strengthen the Cybersecurity of Electoral Processes			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	International Consultants Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies	81,500
	Activity 2.5. Build Capacities for Digital Transformation and Cybersecurity			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies	51,250
	Activity 2.6. Support CEC Efforts of Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement on Digital Transformation			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	17,000
Sub-Total for Output 2							1,324,250
Output 3. Enhanced protocols and capacities for stakeholder engagement, gender-responsive voter outreach, and countering hate speech for improved electoral transparency, inclusivity, and integrity <i>Gender marker: 2</i>	Activity 3.1. Development and Adoption of Electoral Regulations and Procedures			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	10,750
	Activity 3.2. Modernisation of the Outreach Instruments Focusing on the CEC Website			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies	88,750
	Activity 3.3. Establishment of the CEC Helpline in Collaboration with OPDs			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - CSOs	66,300
	Activity 3.4. Capacity-Building for Media, CSOs, and Social Media Representatives			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - CSOs	68,750
	Activity 3.5. Train Youth to Counter Hate Speech			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies	71,200
Sub-Total for Output 3							305,750
Output 4.	Activity 4.1. Increase Women's Participation as Electoral Managers			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	26,250

Gender equality and social inclusion in elections strengthened through increased participation of women and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities <i>Gender marker: 2</i>					EU UN		
	Activity 4.2. Develop and Operationalise CEC Policy Frameworks for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	29,750
	Activity 4.3. Train Electoral Officials and other Stakeholders on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Policies and Practices			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	30,750
	Activity 4.4. Develop Gender Quota and Mandate Placement Rules for Greater Female Representation			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	13,750
	Activity 4.5. Improve Data Collection and Analysis on Participation of Vulnerable Populations			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Training, Workshops and Confer	24,250
	Activity 4.6. Improve Accessibility Standards and Measures			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - Companies	92,900
	Sub-Total for Output 4						217,650
Output 5. More informed and engaged electorate through inclusive and innovative civic and voter education <i>Gender marker: 2</i>	Activity 5.1. Development and Implementation of a Gender-Sensitive and Inclusive Civic and Voter Education Plan			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - CSOs	98,750
	Activity 5.2. Design and Pilot Innovative Instruments to Foster Participation of First-Time and Young Voters			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Local Consultants Contractual Services - CSOs	216,700
	Sub-Total for Output 5						315,450
Output 6. General Management Support	Programme Analyst, DG (15% of Workload) RBM Programme Analyst (5% of Workload) Programme Associate (10% of workload) Communications Analyst (10% of workload) Procurement Analyst (5% of workload) Operations Associate (5% of workload) HR Analyst (5% of workload) Project Manager Project Associate Driver/Clerk Furniture IT Equipment			UNDP	Sida Norad GIZ EU UN	Project oversight cost Project oversight cost Project oversight cost Project oversight cost Project oversight cost Project oversight cost Project oversight cost Project oversight cost Staff and other personal costs Staff and other personal costs Staff and other personal costs Equipment and Furniture Equipment and Furniture	246,612

	Office rental costs Communication & subscription cost Translation Audio Visual Productions, Printing and Publications Transportation costs Materials & Goods					Rental & Maintenance-Premises Communication & Audio Visual Equip Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs Travel Supplies and commodities	
	Sub-Total for Output 6						246,612
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS							2,801,391
TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS (GMS)							219,077
Coordination Levi 1%							18,973
TOTAL							3,039,442

VII.1. ACTION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (WORK PLAN)

Activities	Responsible party (Partners)	20 Months						
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Activity 1.1. Support CEC to Operationalise its Development Strategy and Roadmap	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 1.2. Assess and Support CEC to Improve the HRM System	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 1.3. Support CEC to Establish a Functional Training Unit within the CEC Secretariat	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 1.4. Develop and Roll out a CEC e-Learning and Certification System	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 1.5. Deliver Comprehensive Training and Support Certification of CEC, TEC, and PEC Members	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 1.6. Support the Coordination Mechanisms with International Development Partners	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 2.1. Optimise and Support Full Deployment of VADs	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 2.2. Conduct Feasibility Study and Deliver Recommendations for Further Digital Transformation of Electoral Processes.	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 2.3. Develop and Introduce Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification Tool (EVA)	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 2.4. Strengthen the Cybersecurity of Electoral Processes	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 2.5. Build Capacities for Digital Transformation and Cybersecurity	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 2.6. Support CEC Efforts of Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement on Digital Transformation	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 3.1. Development and Adoption of Electoral Regulations and Procedures	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 3.2. Modernisation of the Outreach Instruments Focusing on the CEC Website	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 3.3. Establishment of the CEC Helpline in Collaboration with OPDs	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 3.4. Capacity-Building for Media, CSOs, and Social Media Representatives	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 3.5. Train Youth to Counter Hate Speech	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 4.1. Increase Women's Participation as Electoral Managers	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 4.2. Develop and Operationalise CEC Policy Frameworks for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 4.3. Train Electoral Officials and other Stakeholders on Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Policies and Practices	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 4.4. Develop Gender Quota and Mandate Placement Rules for Greater Female Representation	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 4.5. Improve Data Collection and Analysis on Participation of Vulnerable Populations	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 4.6. Improve Accessibility Standards and Measures	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 5.1. Development and Implementation of a Gender-Sensitive and Inclusive Civic and Voter Education Plan	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 5.2. Design and Pilot Innovative Instruments to Foster Participation of First-Time and Young Voters	UNDP, CEC							
Activity 5.3. Implement Nationwide Civic Education Campaign	International IDEA, CEC							
Activity 6.1. Development and Deployment of Methodology and technology for Monitoring of digital campaigns	International IDEA, CEC							
Activity 6.2. Capacity-Building for CEC and Stakeholders	International IDEA, CEC							
Activity 6.3. Public Outreach on the Transparency and Accountability in Campaign Finance Integrity	International IDEA, CEC							
Activity 7.1. Development of Electoral Risk Framework (ERM Framework)	International IDEA, CEC							
Activity 7.2. Provide training on risk mapping, early warning, and mitigation using simulation exercises	International IDEA, CEC							
Activity 7.3. Development and Application of Crisis Communication Protocols	International IDEA, CEC							

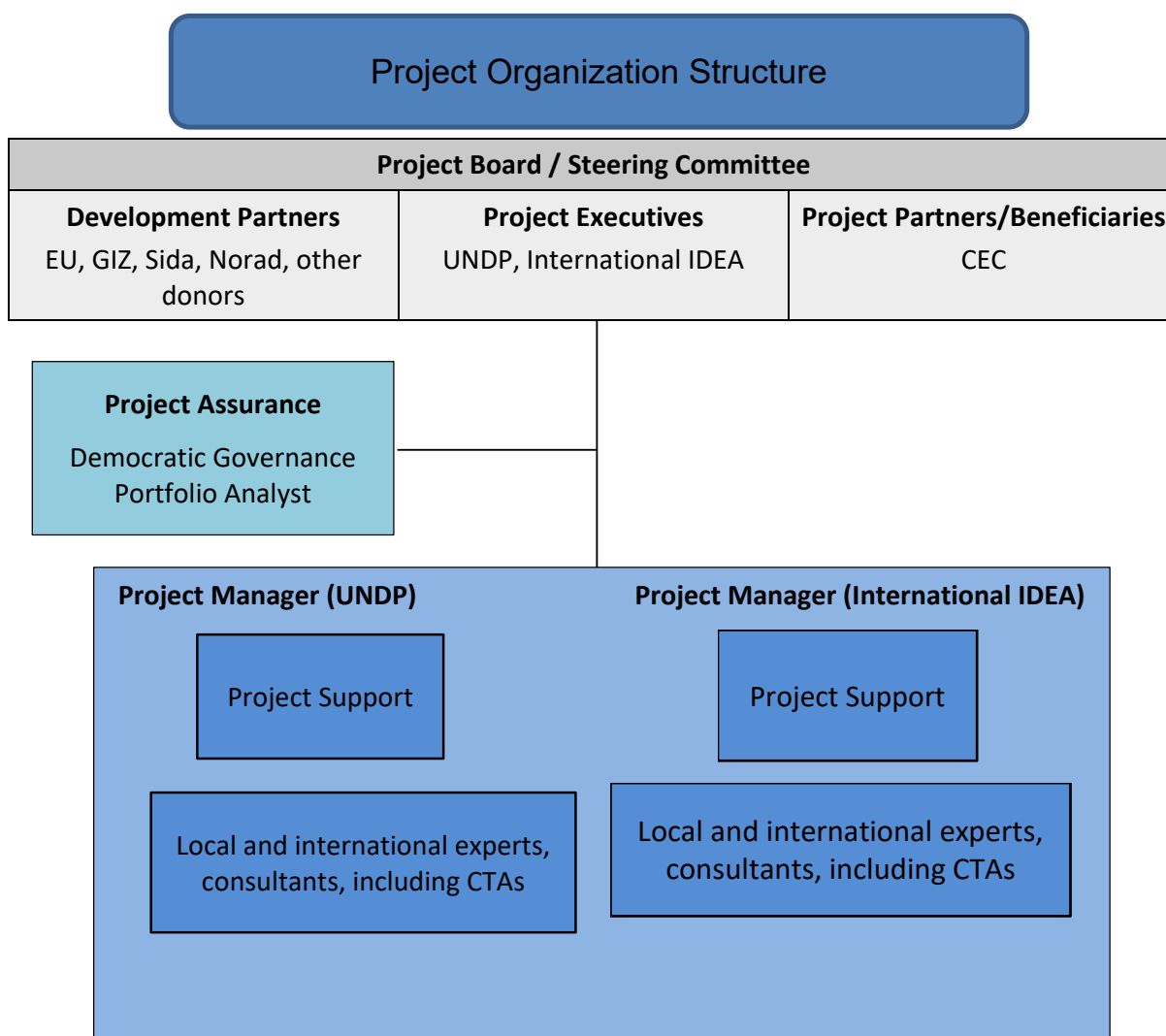
VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

VIII.1. PROJECT MANAGEMENT BOARD

The **Project Management Board** will be established to oversee the management of the Project. The Board will be represented (co-chaired) by the Government of Sweden/Sida, Government of Germany/GIZ, Government of Norway/Norad, EU, other donors, CEC, as well as UNDP and International IDEA and other key electoral assistance stakeholders^{xlv}. The Project Management Board will hold annual project reviews to ensure coherence and relevance of the Project, and realistic budgeting over the life of the Project, to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up, as well as to socialize Project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.

The Project Management Board will function as an overall management structure for the Project to oversee transparency, accountability and efficiency of the Project operations, assess opportunities, risks and political challenges. *Ad hoc* Board meetings can be called to take decisions on mid-year changes in project activities or financial allocations, if any.

The Project Board will have the possibility to invite any organization or individuals to have discussion and debates on any matter related to the programme and support the Project Board.



VIII.2. ACTION LOCATION AND PROJECT TEAM

The Project will be implemented through the UNDP office located in the UN House in Yerevan. The UNDP Project coordination and implementation team will be located in a commercial building or in the premises of UNDP Armenia (office costs will be covered by the Project) or in the premises of the CEC.

To ensure the effective delivery of the Project's results, UNDP will establish a dedicated Project unit^{xlvi}. The main responsibilities of this unit will include the effective implementation of Project activities, maintaining communication and collaboration with the target institutions, ensuring timely reporting and coordination with the donors, and the CEC, keeping the Project visibility during the activities, managing the procurement of works and services, and maintaining project accounting.

The Project will cover the operational costs of the project team, including direct costs such as transportation and staff-related communication expenses.

To ensure quality assurance and regular monitoring and evaluation of the Project's delivery and action plan, the senior management of UNDP will oversee these processes. They will provide oversight, guidance, and support to ensure that the Project is progressing according to the set objectives and standards. Monitoring and evaluation activities will be conducted periodically to assess the Project's performance, identify any areas for improvement, and ensure the desired results are being achieved.

The UNDP Project team, including national and international contractors, will strictly follow the Policy Directive on Conduct of UN personnel in and around electoral sites^{xlvii}.

The Project staff will comprise of personnel described below as per the "Budget for the Action/Annex 3".

- **Programme Manager (UNDP)** will have 100% involvement in the Project and be responsible for all Project operations. S/he will ensure the appropriate allocation and utilization of funds, adherence to project activities and work plans and fostering synergy among the project activities. Daily planning, quality implementation, visibility, timely reporting and the delivery fall under the Project Manager's purview. The Project Manager will also be responsible for all communication with the EUD and other donors.
- **Project Associate (UNDP)** will have 100% involvement in the Project and provide logistical, financial and administrative support to the Project team across all activities of the Project. S/he will be also responsible for efficient organisation of the events and visibility.
- **Programme Analyst, Democratic Governance (UNDP)** will be responsible for the Project oversight and quality assurance. This Country Office staff member will dedicate nearly 15% of his/her workload to the Project, that will be reported vis-à-vis the timesheet subject to verification and approval by the Country Office (CO).
- **RBM Programme Analyst (UNDP)** will be responsible for ensuring the compliance of the Project vis-à-vis the UNDP results-based management (RBM), monitoring and evaluation SOPs. The relevant CO staff member will dedicate approximately 5% of their workload to the Project that will be reported vis-à-vis the timesheet subject to verification and approval by the Country Office.
- **Programme Associate, Democratic Governance (UNDP)** will provide support to the financial management, monitoring and oversight of project, including preparation of project budgets, monitoring of budget execution versus approved workplan monthly, monitoring of financial risks, preparation of project financial reports (regular and final upon project closure). This CO staff member will dedicate nearly 10% of his/her workload to the project.
- **Communications Analyst (UNDP)** will be responsible for supporting the development and implementation of the project's communications and visibility strategy in compliance with UNDP guidelines and donor's guidelines which are agreed at corporate level with the donor and UNDP. This will include the preparation of project visibility materials, ensure proper branding, and supporting communication campaigns to highlight the project's achievements. This CO staff member will dedicate nearly 10% of their workload to the project, which will be reported vis-à-vis the timesheet subject to verification and approval by the CO.
- **Procurement Analyst (UNDP)** will ensure the effective and efficient procurement processes for the project, in line with UNDP procurement policies and procedures. Tasks will include preparation of procurement plans, oversight of procurement activities, and ensuring compliance with the approved procurement strategy. This CO staff member will dedicate approximately 5% of their workload to the project, which will be reported vis-à-vis the timesheet subject to verification and approval by the CO.
- **Operations Associate (UNDP)** will support operational functions of the project, including administrative coordination, contractual arrangements, and operational oversight to ensure smooth implementation of project activities. This will also involve maintaining operational documentation and supporting project

compliance with operational standards. This CO staff member will dedicate approximately 5% of their workload to the project, which will be reported vis-à-vis the timesheet subject to verification and approval by the CO.

- **HR Analyst (UNDP)** will provide support in managing project-related human resources needs, including recruitment processes, contract management, and ensuring compliance with UNDP HR policies and procedures. This CO staff member will dedicate approximately 5% of their workload to the project, which will be reported vis-à-vis the timesheet subject to verification and approval by the CO.
- **Driver/Clerk (UNDP)** will have 100% involvement in the Project and be responsible for providing transportation, logistical, and administrative support to the project team. They will ensure the timely and safe provision of transportation services and maintaining vehicles used by the Project. The Driver/Clerk will also assist with office supplies, support services, and help obtain quotations from vendors for goods and services needed for project activities. Additionally, they will manage the delivery and collection of mail and documents. The Driver/Clerk will be responsible for driving vehicles assigned from the UNDP fleet, maintaining accurate vehicle logs, ensuring compliance with UNDP security and safety protocols, and performing day-to-day vehicle maintenance, such as minor repairs. They will also ensure the availability of required documents, including vehicle insurance, logs, first aid kits, and necessary spare parts.
- **Project Manager (International IDEA, Yerevan-based, 100%)** will be responsible for the overall management and coordination of the Project components implemented by the International IDEA, ensuring effective delivery of outputs in accordance with the agreed work plan, budget, and timeline. S/he will oversee day-to-day planning, implementation, and monitoring of activities, and ensure the quality and coherence of all project components. The Project Manager will lead convening, delivery and facilitation, along with other thematic expert staff and consultants, of the project workshops, trainings and other activities as outlined in the project document. The Project Manager will supervise project staff and consultants, manage partnerships with national stakeholders, and ensure timely reporting, effective communication, and full compliance with donor requirements. S/he will serve as the main point of contact for the EU Delegation and other project partners, ensuring visibility, coordination, and the alignment of project objectives with broader strategic priorities.
- **Project Officer (International IDEA, Yerevan-based, 100%)** will support the design and delivery of the project's thematic activities, ensuring timely implementation and quality outputs. S/he will coordinate with national stakeholders, mobilise expertise, and assist in preparing reports, monitoring tools, and outreach materials. The Project Officer will also help organise events and trainings, support communication and visibility efforts, and contribute to financial and narrative reporting under the guidance of the Project Manager. S/he will periodically monitor and evaluate the scope and impact of the action, collecting qualitative and quantitative data and coordinating the internal monitoring and evaluation process.
- **Finance and Administrative Officer (International IDEA, Yerevan-based, 100%)** will be responsible for managing all financial and administrative operations of the Project. S/he will prepare, track, and update project budgets, ensure compliance with International IDEA and donor regulations, and maintain accurate financial records. The Officer will also oversee day-to-day administrative functions, including procurement, HR support, and documentation, and will prepare timely and accurate financial reports for internal and donor use. S/he will work closely with the Project Manager and regional finance colleagues to ensure sound financial management and audit readiness.
- **Project Assistant (International IDEA, Yerevan-based, 100%)** will provide essential administrative and logistical support across all project activities. S/he will assist with procurement processes, contract preparation, travel and event logistics, and ensure accurate filing and documentation of project records. The Project Assistant will also support coordination with service providers, contribute to internal reporting processes, and help ensure compliance with donor visibility and communication requirements. S/he will report to the Project Manager and work closely with the wider project team.
- **Director for Europe (International IDEA, Brussels-based, 5%)** will provide strategic oversight and guidance for the Project, ensuring its alignment with International IDEA's broader regional priorities and the strategic needs of the CEC Armenia. S/he will contribute to high-level partner and donor engagement, support political and institutional dialogue, and provide senior-level input into project direction, design and implementation of outputs and activities, risk management, and visibility.
- **Programme Manager (International IDEA, Brussels-based, 20%)** will oversee the implementation of the Project from the Brussels office, ensuring delivery against the agreed work plan, quality standards, and donor requirements. S/he will coordinate with the Yerevan-based team of International IDEA, review activity outputs and deliverables, and lead on donor reporting, project monitoring, and performance tracking. S/he will also support communication, staffing, and risk management, ensuring that lessons learned are fed into IDEA's regional programming.

- **Regional Finance Manager (International IDEA, Brussels-based, 10%)** will ensure financial oversight and compliance across all aspects of the Project. S/he will provide quality assurance on budgeting, expenditure tracking, and financial reporting, and support the Yerevan-based team in adhering to International IDEA and donor financial procedures. The Finance Manager will also lead financial risk monitoring, advise on budget reallocations or amendments, and support audit processes and financial planning in close coordination with the project team.

The relevant staff and office costs are directly attributable to the Project and as direct costs are included in the Project budget.

International and local consultants will provide guidance and technical expertise to advance the Project's policy reform objectives, ensuring alignment with international standards and national priorities. Their roles and inputs will include analysing existing electoral frameworks, drafting and revising regulations to enhance transparency, gender responsiveness, inclusivity, and integrity, and facilitating multi-stakeholder consultations to validate reforms. The roles involve supporting the development and operationalization of the CEC's Outreach and Communications Policy, gender quota systems, and disability-inclusive electoral practices. The consultants will also monitor compliance with UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy, UN electoral directives, and international best practices, while collaborating with CEC, CSOs, and partners to address barriers to participation for women, youth, and marginalized groups. Additionally, the inputs will include contributing to capacity building, feasibility studies, advising on legal and regulatory gaps, and ensuring policy coherence across project outputs. The consultants will work closely with the Programme Manager(s) as a technical team to integrate policy recommendations into training programs, stakeholder engagement initiatives, and monitoring frameworks, ensuring sustainable institutional reforms ahead of the 2026 parliamentary elections.

The office costs are calculated based on the number of staff/workstations, including consultants that are required to deliver services in the Project facilities. Thus, the Project office space will accommodate core staff and key consultants. **Office rental cost** will be charged and will include safety and security, and other shared services provided.

Equally the Project will procure office and IT **equipment, furniture** and **supplies** for maintaining day-to-day operations and ensuring the smooth functioning of the project office. These supplies encompass various essentials such as stationery, equipment, and other materials necessary for administrative tasks, documentation, and communication.

The project costs will also envisage **fuel, vehicle maintenance** and **insurance** costs to ensure reliable transportation to the team members to engage with stakeholders, conduct fieldwork, and oversee project implementation. This will not only facilitate mobility but also enable timely and efficient delivery of project activities, contributing to the project's overall effectiveness and impact.

Also, for effective project implementation it would be necessary to maintain **telecommunications, internet** access, and maintenance of essential **communication infrastructure** to ensure seamless connectivity and information exchange.

To effectively disseminate knowledge and foster **capacity building** and **stakeholder engagement**, the Project will organize a series of trainings and workshops in Yerevan and regions of Armenia. These events, ranging from one to five days, will provide professional opportunities for stakeholders and beneficiaries to convene, exchange ideas, and collaborate on project organised activities. Additionally, costs associated with branding materials and **visibility** items (e.g., Project banners, folders, etc.) for trainings, workshops and other events organized will be covered by the Project. The Project will further cover interpretation costs for services foreseen during workshops, seminars, trainings with participation of local and international participants, as well as translation equipment costs as relevant and costs of translation of materials to be developed in the scope of the Project.

IX. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA) between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and UNDP, signed on March 8, 1995. All references in the SBAA to "Executing Agency" shall be deemed to refer to "Implementing Partner."

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

X. RISK MANAGEMENT

The project will apply direct implementation modality (DIM):

1. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS).
2. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the project funds 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 programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.
5. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP as the Implementing Partner will handle any sexual exploitation and abuse ("SEA") and sexual harassment ("SH") allegations in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies and procedures.
6. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.
7. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will ensure that the following obligations are binding on each responsible party, subcontractor, and sub-recipient:
 - a. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA, the responsibility for the safety and security of each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in such responsible 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 programme 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 programmes and projects. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to its (and its consultants', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with it to find a solution.
- 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.
- 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 programme, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.
- 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.

XI. ANNEXES

XI.1. ANNEX 1: PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

(This is a temporary template; the ratings are provided in the Project QA platform available since May 2023)

PROJECT QA - DESIGN	
1. STRATEGIC	
	1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the programme's Theory of Change?
☒	• 3: The project is clearly linked to the programme'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 programme'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 programme's theory of change. *Note: Projects not contributing to a programme must have a project-specific Theory of Change. See alternative question under the information icon for these cases.
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): The project is clearly linked to UNDP's Democratic Governance programme Theory of Change. It explicitly outlines pathways to strengthen the capacity and independence of the CEC, improve digital resilience, and foster inclusive participation — contributing to higher-level outcome on effective, inclusive, and accountable governance institutions. The change logic is backed by the UNDP-DPPA Needs Assessment Mission (2022) and the CEC's Strategic Pillars 2024–2028, identifying institutional capacity, digital transformation, and inclusivity as drivers of outcome-level change.
	2. Is the project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?
☒	• 3: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan and adapts at least one Signature Solution. 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. 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.
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): The project responds to the <i>Resilient, gender-equal, fair, and inclusive societies</i> development setting under the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022–2025 and integrates multiple Signature Solutions (effective governance, resilience, gender equality, digital transformation). The Results Framework aligns with SP outputs under SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and references GERF indicators 2.26 and 2.27.
	3. Is the project linked to the programme outputs? (i.e., UNSDCF/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for strategic interventions not part of a programme)
☒	• Yes
☐	• No (Project QA cannot be approved by the Project QA Approver)
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Fully aligned with the Armenia CPD 2021–2025 outcome on Strengthened democratic governance and inclusive institutions and UNSDCF Priority 1 (People-centred governance and rule of law). The Results Framework explicitly reflects these linkages through outputs on electoral integrity, inclusivity, and digital governance.
2. RELEVANT	
	4. Does the project identify target groups, and particularly those marginalized, vulnerable and left further behind (LNOB)?⁵
☒	• 3: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing 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.
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Target groups - CEC, political parties, CSOs, OPDs, media, youth, women, PWDs, refugees - are rigorously defined based on data and contextual evidence (e.g., gender representation statistics, disability participation barriers, refugee inclusion gaps). Prioritisation of that furthest left behind is embedded across outputs.
	5. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design?
☒	• 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.

⁵ Operationalizing Leaving No One Behind good Practice Note for UNCT (<https://unsdg.un.org/resources/leaving-no-one-behind-unsdg-operational-guide-un-country-teams>)

	PROJECT QA - DESIGN
☐	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. Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): The project design informed by lessons from previous UNDP ESPA projects and the 2021 OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Report. Integrates DPPA NAM (2022) findings on institutional capacity, cybersecurity, inclusivity, and voter education. References to international standards (ISO 27001, GDPR, UN Women frameworks) demonstrate evidence-based design.
☒	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: 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 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. Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): UNDP's long-standing partnership with CEC and leadership in democratic governance positions it uniquely to coordinate electoral support and digital innovation. The project explicitly maps complementarity with International IDEA, OSCE/ODIHR, IFES, FBA, and donor-supported reforms, with defined coordination mechanisms (biannual donor meetings, joint communications strategy).
	3. PRINCIPLED
☒	7. Does the project apply a human rights-based approach? 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. Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): The project design is guided by principles of accountability, participation, and non-discrimination. It upholds international standards (CRPD, CEDAW) and includes measures to prevent adverse impacts, e.g., accessibility audits, anti-hate speech training, and inclusive voter education.
☒	8. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design? 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. Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Participatory gender and social inclusion analysis (EGSIM, based on UN Women EGM methodology) informs Output 4. Gender equality is mainstreamed across all outputs; indicators are gender-sensitive and sex-disaggregated (e.g., women's representation in CEC, participation in elections, female leadership in electoral commissions).
☒	9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems? 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).

PROJECT QA - DESIGN	
☐	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 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. Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Sustainability dimensions (institutional, financial, technological, and social) are integrated through CEC capacity-building, digital systems (VAD, EVA), and inclusive outreach. Risks like cyberattacks and disinformation are assessed with mitigation plans (cybersecurity strategy, ERM framework).
	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 the preparation and dissemination of reports and communication materials; organization of events, workshops, or training; strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences; partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks; and global/regional projects with no country-level activities as well as Development Effectiveness projects and Institutional Effectiveness projects. [If SESP is not required, select all exemption criteria that apply.]
☒	Yes
☐	No (Project QA cannot be approved by the Project QA Approver)
☐	- SESP not required because project consists solely of (Select all exemption criteria that apply) *Applicable only to option "SESP not required" ☐ 1: Preparation and dissemination of reports, documents and communication materials ☐ 2: Organization of an event, workshop, training ☐ 3: Strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences ☐ 4: Partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks ☐ 5: Global/regional projects with no country-level activities (e.g. activities such as knowledge management, inter-governmental processes) ☐ 6: UNDP serves as Administrative Agent ☐ 7: Development Effectiveness projects and Institutional Effectiveness projects Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Social and Environmental Screening Procedure conducted given the project's operational activities and digital infrastructure upgrades. Identified low-moderate social risks (inclusion, accessibility) with mitigation measures embedded in Outputs 4-5.
4. 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) Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Logical Framework includes SMART indicators with baselines and targets, sex-disaggregated and vulnerable group-focused indicators (e.g., women's participation rates, youth engagement). Data sources and verification means clearly defined.
	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 at a later date. No information on the responsibilities of key positions in the governance mechanism is provided. Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Governance structure defined, including Project Board composition (CEC, UNDP, International IDEA, donors). Roles and responsibilities described, though some individual nominations pending at approval stage.
	13. Have the project risks been identified using the risk assessment tools (Project Quality Assurance, Social and Environmental Screening Procedure, Partner Capacity Assessment Tool, Harmonized Approach to

	PROJECT QA - DESIGN
	Cash Transfer, Private Sector Due Diligence, etc., if applicable), 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 register, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the programme'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, including consultation with the UNDP Security Office as required. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, including security risks, 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 register 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 register, 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, no initial risk log is included with the project document and/or no security risk management process has taken place for the project.
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Comprehensive risk register developed based on political, operational, financial, social, and cybersecurity risks. Includes likelihood/impact scoring, mitigation actions, and assignment of ownership.
	5. 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.
☒	• Yes
☐	• No
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Design leverages shared platforms (EVA, LMS), joint operations with International IDEA, and digital innovations to optimise resources. Activities integrate donor synergies and existing infrastructure.
	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 mobilization 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.
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Detailed multi-year, activity-level budget aligned with donor tranches and co-financing from EU, Sida, GIZ, Norad, other donors. Includes allocations for M&E, communications and security.
	16. Is the Country Office / Regional / Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?
☒	• 3: The budget fully covers all project costs that are attributable to the project, including programme management and development effectiveness services related to strategic country programme 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.
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): The budget covers all attributable costs per UNDP's cost recovery policy (UPL/LPL) including programme management, M&E and operational services.
	6. EFFECTIVE
	17. Have targeted groups, and particularly those marginalized, vulnerable, and left further behind (LNOB), been engaged in the design of the project?
☒	• 3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritizing discriminated, vulnerable, 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

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	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.
☐	• Not Applicable
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): The project design process included consultations with CEC, political parties, CSOs, OPDs, and youth organizations, ensuring inclusion of marginalized groups and persons with disabilities.
☒	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
☐	• No
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and upload a document that provides evidence for your response): The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework includes iterative monitoring, quarterly reviews, and evaluation for adaptive management. Lessons integrated via CEC M&E system and stakeholder consultations.
☒	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.
☐	• Yes
☐	• No
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and upload a document that provides evidence for your response): All outputs mainstream gender equality (GEN2/GEN3), especially Outputs 3-5. Gender-disaggregated indicators and dedicated budget for women's participation.
☒	20. Have societal digital risks and opportunities been taken into account when designing the project's approach and have digital or data technology solutions been considered to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and scalability of project results?⁶
☐	• 3: To the extent possible, societal digital risks and opportunities have been investigated when designing the strategy and Theory of Change, and the potential use of digital or data technologies in project activities has been considered in line with UNDP's digital standards ⁷ and data principles ⁸ . (All must be true)
☐	• 2: Only the potential use of digital or data solutions in project activities has been considered in line with UNDP's digital standards and data principles, but there is no or limited evidence that aspects of inclusive digital societies have been considered in the design of the strategy or Theory of Change.
☐	• 1: Neither societal digital risks and opportunities, nor digital or data technology solutions were specifically considered in the project design or, UNDP's digital standards and data principles are not taken into account when intending to use digital or data technology solutions in project activities.
☐	• Digital considerations are not relevant to this project. *Applicable only to the option "Digital considerations are not relevant." ☐ 1: Societal digital transformation is not a government or contextual priority ☐ 2: A non-digital approach yields higher effectiveness and efficiency ☐ 3: Other (specify in the "Evidence" section)
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Comprehensive digital transformation component (VAD, EVA, cybersecurity, OSINT tools) addresses both risks and opportunities in line with UNDP digital standards.
7. SUSTAINABILITY & NATIONAL OWNERSHIP	
☒	21. Have national / regional / global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the country / regional / global project, respectively?
☐	• 3: National / regional / global partners have full ownership of the country / regional / global 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 (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): The CEC and Government of Armenia co-led project design with UNDP and International IDEA. Aligned with CEC's Strategic Pillars and Government Programme 2021-2026.
☒	22. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific / comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted?
	• 3: 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

⁶ For a checklist and evidence template, please see the Embedding Digital Thinking into Project Design Guidelines (<https://rebrand.ly/DbDPProjectGuideEN>).

⁷ The ten UNDP Digital Standards are: a) Start with the need; b) Bridge the digital divide; c) Test early and often; d) (Perhaps) Don't build it; e) Do no harm; f) Form the Right Team; g) Measure What Matters; h) Follow The UNDP Data Principles; i) Default to Open; and j) Plan for the Long Term (<https://www.undp.org/digital/standards>).

⁸ The eight UNDP Digital Principles are: a) Safeguard personal data; b) Uphold the highest ethical standards; c) Manage Data Responsibly; d) Make data open by default; e) Plan for reusability and interoperability; f) Empower people to work with data; g) Expand frontiers of data; and h) Be aware of data limitations (<https://data.undp.org/data-principles>).

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	using clear indicators and rigorous methods of data collection and adjust the strategy to strengthen national capacities accordingly.
☐	• 2: 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.
☐	• 1: Capacity assessments have not been carried out.
☐	• Not Applicable
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Capacity assessments completed; comprehensive strategy for institutional, HRM, and digital capacities embedded with monitoring indicator.
	23. 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?
☒	• Yes
☐	• No
☐	• Not Applicable
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Procurement, HR, and monitoring processes use national systems where feasible (e.g., collaboration with EKENG, MOJ, NCET). Capacity transfer embedded in CEC institutional systems.
	24. Is there a clear transition arrangement / phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilization and communications strategy)?
☒	• Yes
☐	• No
	Evidence (Enter a short explanation and attached a document that provides evidence for your response): Sustainability section outlines transition to CEC ownership, integration into state budget frameworks, and donor exit plan by 2027. Communication and resource mobilization strategies defined.

Name and Title	Signature and Date	Description
QA Assessor: Vahan Asatryan UNDP Governance Portfolio Analyst	Signature: Date:	The QA Assessor has to be accountable for project assurance, which is independent of the project manager. A UNDP programme or monitoring and evaluation officer typically holds the project assurance role on behalf of UNDP.
QA Approver: Konstantin Sokulskiy UND Deputy Resident Representative	Signature: Date:	The QA Approver is typically the Resident Representative, Deputy Resident Representative, or head of portfolio. The QA Approver must function at a higher level of accountability than the QA Assessor. The QA Approver cannot also be the QA Assessor.

XI.2. ANNEX 2: UNDP SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

Project Information

Project Information	
1. Project Title	Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)
2. Project Number (i.e. Quantum project ID, PIMS+)	01004727
3. Location (Global/Region/Country)	Republic of Armenia
4. Project stage (Design or Implementation)	Implementation
5. Date	01/10/2025

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

QUESTION 1: How Does the Project Integrate the Programming Principles in Order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?
<i>Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams the human rights-based approach</i>
The ARTEMIS project promotes a rights-based approach by enhancing citizens' ability to participate in democratic processes through fair, inclusive and transparent elections. It strengthens the capacity of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) to uphold human rights standards in electoral management, supports marginalized and vulnerable groups—including women, youth, persons with disabilities and refugees—in exercising their political rights, and ensures equal access to information and participation in decision-making processes.
<i>Briefly describe in the space below how the project is likely to improve gender equality and women's empowerment</i>
Gender equality is central to ARTEMIS. The project supports the development and implementation of gender quota systems, strengthens women's participation as candidates and electoral managers, and ensures inclusive and accessible electoral processes. Activities include gender-responsive voter education, leadership training for women, and enforcement of anti-discrimination and gender-based violence prevention mechanisms within electoral processes.
<i>Briefly describe in the space below how the project mainstreams sustainability and resilience</i>
ARTEMIS emphasizes institutional sustainability by strengthening the CEC's strategic planning, human resource management and training systems. Technological and digital sustainability are achieved through digital transformation, cybersecurity enhancement, and the introduction of tools such as the Electronic Voter Assistance and Notification (EVA) system. The project promotes long-term social sustainability through inclusive voter education and civic engagement.
<i>Briefly describe in the space below how the project strengthens accountability to stakeholders</i>
The project ensures accountability through continuous consultation with electoral stakeholders, including CSOs, political parties, media, and organizations of persons with disabilities. It promotes transparency through open communication channels, inclusive decision-making mechanisms and public reporting on electoral integrity and reform progress.

Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks? <i>Note: Complete SESP Attachment 1 before responding to Question 2.</i>	QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks? <i>Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 5</i>			QUESTION 6: Describe the assessment and management measures for each risk rated Moderate, Substantial or High
Risk Description (broken down by event, cause, impact)	Impact and Likelihood (1-5)	Significance (Low, Moderate Substantial, High)	Comments (optional)	Description of assessment and management measures for risks rated as Moderate, Substantial or High
Risk 1: Resistance from key political actors towards gender equality and inclusivity reforms	I = 4 L = 2	Moderate	Some political actors may perceive gender equality and inclusion reforms as politically sensitive or unnecessary. This resistance could delay adoption of inclusive policies or limit support for women's participation initiatives. Engagement and advocacy are required to align political incentives with democratic commitments.	Engage in continuous dialogue with political stakeholders, civil society, and international partners to promote electoral stability and consensus-building. Support contingency planning within the CEC for election postponement scenarios while maintaining transparency and legal integrity. Strengthen security coordination between electoral bodies and law enforcement to prevent and mitigate electoral violence. Foster public confidence through transparent communication and independent election monitoring.
Risk 2: Hate speech could escalate despite mitigation efforts, impacting electoral credibility and high levels of misinformation could overwhelm mitigation efforts	I = 3 L = 3	Moderate	The use of hate speech and disinformation poses a serious risk to social stability and electoral integrity. Given Armenia's polarized media landscape, such risks could escalate around election periods, targeting women, minorities, and refugees. A coordinated communication and monitoring mechanism is essential.	Strengthen social media monitoring mechanisms to detect and counteract hate speech in real time. Work with tech companies, media regulators, and civil society to enforce policies against election-related hate speech. Provide training for journalists, social media influencers, and electoral stakeholders on ethical reporting and combating misinformation.
Risk 3: Lack of engagement from media outlets in responsible reporting practices	I = 3 L = 2	Moderate	Media outlets, particularly regional or smaller ones, may lack capacity or motivation to follow ethical standards in electoral reporting. Without proper engagement, biased or inaccurate coverage could persist, undermining voter confidence and spreading misinformation.	Establish partnerships with media organizations and incentivize responsible electoral reporting through recognition programs. Develop clear media guidelines for election coverage and promote compliance through capacity-building initiatives. Foster collaboration between CEC and media regulatory bodies to ensure fair and accurate election reporting.
Risk 4: Cultural and societal barriers may limit women's political participation	I = 4 L = 3	Substantial	Traditional gender norms and local socio-cultural expectations continue to discourage women from political engagement, especially in rural areas. This risk affects both the supply (female candidates) and demand (voter support) sides of participation, requiring sustained awareness and institutional action.	Implement targeted awareness campaigns showcasing the benefits of women's political participation through role models and success stories. Strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with gender quotas. Engage community and religious leaders to advocate for women's involvement in elections.
Risk 5: Logistical and financial challenges in retrofitting polling stations to meet accessibility standards may hinder progress on planned accessibility improvements	I = 4 L = 4	Substantial	Although accessibility is a legal requirement, infrastructure upgrades are often underfunded and logistically difficult, especially outside Yerevan. Without sustained investment, physical barriers could persist, limiting equal voting opportunities for persons with	Prioritize cost-effective accessibility solutions and leverage international donor support for infrastructure upgrades. Conduct phased implementation of accessibility improvements with a clear timeline and performance benchmarks. Encourage partnerships with OPDs to co-design and monitor accessibility initiatives.

			disabilities.	
Risk 6: Misinformation and disinformation campaigns may undermine voter education efforts	I = 3 L = 2	Moderate	Persistent exposure to misinformation-especially online-may reduce citizens' trust in electoral processes and discourage participation. This risk directly affects informed decision-making and could weaken the credibility of voter education initiatives if not systematically countered.	Develop a rapid-response misinformation debunking mechanism involving media, fact-checkers, and civil society organizations. Increase digital literacy programs targeting first-time voters and marginalized communities to enhance their ability to identify false information. Work with social media platforms to flag and remove election-related disinformation.
Risk 7: Limited reach of voter education campaigns in rural or marginalised communities may persist despite targeted campaigns	I = 3 L = 2	Moderate	Geographical, linguistic, and digital divides may restrict the reach of civic and voter education programs. Marginalized communities, including rural women and displaced populations, risk exclusion from accurate electoral information and awareness campaigns.	Deploy mobile outreach teams and digital tools, including radio and SMS campaigns, to extend voter education efforts in remote areas. Partner with local civil society organizations and community leaders to enhance grassroots voter awareness initiatives. Develop accessible and culturally relevant voter education materials tailored to diverse audiences.
QUESTION 4: What is the overall project risk categorization?				
Low Risk			☐	
Moderate Risk			☒	
Substantial Risk			☐	
High Risk			☐	
QUESTION 5: Based on the identified risks and risk categorization, what requirements of the SES are triggered? (check all that apply)				
Question only required for Moderate, Substantial and High-Risk projects				
<u>Is assessment required? (check if "yes")</u>			☐	Status? (Completed, planned)
<i>if yes, indicate overall type and status</i>			☒	Targeted assessment(s)
			☐	ESIA (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment)
			☐	SESA (Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment)
<u>Are management plans required? (check if "yes")</u>			☐	
<i>If yes, indicate overall type</i>			☒	Targeted management plans (e.g. Gender Action Plan, Emergency Response Plan, Waste Management Plan, others)
				Gender Equality and Inclusion Action Plan, Civic Education Plan, Accessibility Implementation Plan.
			☐	ESMP (Environmental and Social Management Plan which may include range of targeted plans)
			☐	ESMF (Environmental and Social Management Framework)
Based on identified <u>risks</u>, which Principles/Project- level Standards triggered?			Comments (not required)	
Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind				
Human Rights			☒	
Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment			☒	

	Accountability	☒	
	1. Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management	☐	
	2. Climate Change and Disaster Risks	☐	
	3. Community Health, Safety and Security	☐	
	4. Cultural Heritage	☐	
	5. Displacement and Resettlement	☐	
	6. Indigenous Peoples	☐	
	7. Labour and Working Conditions	☐	
	8. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency	☐	

Final Sign Off

Final Screening at the design-stage is not complete until the following signatures are included

Signature	Date	Description
QA Assessor Vahan Asatryan DG Portfolio Analyst		UNDP staff member responsible for the project, typically a UNDP Programme Officer. Final signature confirms they have “checked” to ensure that the SESP is adequately conducted.
QA Approver Konstantin Sokulskiy UNDP DRR		UNDP senior manager, typically the UNDP Deputy Country Director (DCD), Country Director (CD), Deputy Resident Representative (DRR), or Resident Representative (RR). The QA Approver cannot also be the QA Assessor. Final signature confirms they have “cleared” the SESP prior to submittal to the PAC.
PAC Chair		UNDP chair of the PAC. In some cases, the PAC Chair may also be the QA Approver. Final signature confirms that the SESP was considered as part of the project appraisal and considered in recommendations of the PAC.

SESP Attachment 1. Social and Environmental Risk Screening Checklist

Checklist Potential Social and Environmental Risks		
INSTRUCTIONS: The risk screening checklist will assist in answering Questions 2-6 of the Screening Template. Answers to the checklist questions help to (1) identify potential risks, (2) determine the overall risk categorization of the project, and (3) determine required level of assessment and management measures. Refer to the SES toolkit for further guidance on addressing screening questions.		
Overarching Principle: Leave No One Behind Human Rights		Answer (Yes/No)
P.1	Have local communities or individuals raised human rights concerns regarding the project (e.g. during the stakeholder engagement process, grievance processes, public statements)?	No
P.2	Is there a risk that duty-bearers (e.g. government agencies) do not have the capacity to meet their obligations in the project?	No
P.3	Is there a risk that rights-holders (e.g. project-affected persons) do not have the capacity to claim their rights?	No
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
P.4	adverse impacts on enjoyment of the human rights (civil, political, economic, social, or cultural) of the affected population and particularly of marginalized groups?	No
P.5	inequitable or discriminatory impacts on affected populations, particularly people living in poverty or marginalized or excluded individuals or groups, including persons with disabilities? ¹⁶	No
P.6	restrictions in availability, quality of and/or access to resources or basic services, in particular to marginalized individuals or groups, including persons with disabilities?	No
P.7	exacerbation of conflicts among and/or the risk of violence to project-affected communities and individuals?	No
Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment		
P.8	Have women's groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project, (e.g. during the stakeholder engagement process, grievance processes, public statements)?	No
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
P.9	adverse impacts on gender equality and/or the situation of women and girls?	No
P.10	reproducing discriminations against women based on gender, especially regarding participation in design and implementation or access to opportunities and benefits?	No
P.11	limitations on 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? <i>For example, activities that could lead to natural resources degradation or depletion in communities who depend on these resources for their livelihoods and well being</i>	No
P.12	exacerbation of risks of gender-based violence? <i>For example, through the influx of workers to a community, changes in community and household power dynamics, increased exposure to unsafe public places and/or transport, etc.</i>	No
Sustainability and Resilience: Screening questions regarding risks associated with sustainability and resilience are encompassed by the Standard-specific questions below		
Accountability		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
P.13	exclusion of any potentially affected stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups and excluded individuals (including persons with disabilities), from fully participating in decisions that may affect them?	No
P.14	grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders?	No
P.15	risks of retaliation or reprisals against stakeholders who express concerns or grievances, or who seek to participate in or to obtain information on the project?	No
Project-Level Standards		
Standard 1: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
1.1	adverse impacts to habitats (e.g. modified, natural, and critical habitats) and/or ecosystems and ecosystem services? <i>For example, through habitat loss, conversion or degradation, fragmentation, hydrological changes</i>	No
1.2	activities within or adjacent to critical habitats and/or environmentally sensitive areas, including (but not limited to) 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	changes to the use of lands and resources that may have adverse impacts on habitats, ecosystems, and/or livelihoods? (Note: if restrictions and/or limitations of access to lands would apply, refer to Standard 5)	No
1.4	risks to endangered species (e.g. reduction, encroachment on habitat)?	No
1.5	exacerbation of illegal wildlife trade?	No
1.6	introduction of invasive alien species?	No
1.7	adverse impacts on soils?	No
1.8	harvesting of natural forests, plantation development, or reforestation?	No
1.9	significant agricultural production?	No
1.10	animal husbandry or harvesting of fish populations or other aquatic species?	No

1.11	significant extraction, diversion or containment of surface or ground water? <i>For example, construction of dams, reservoirs, river basin developments, groundwater extraction</i>	No
1.12	handling or utilization of genetically modified organisms/living modified organisms? ¹⁷	No
1.13	utilization of genetic resources? (e.g. collection and/or harvesting, commercial development) ¹⁸	No
1.14	adverse transboundary or global environmental concerns?	No
Standard 2: Climate Change and Disaster Risks		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
2.1	areas subject to hazards such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, severe winds, storm surges, tsunamis, or volcanic eruptions?	No
2.2	outputs and outcomes sensitive or vulnerable to potential impacts of climate change or disasters? <i>For example, through increased precipitation, drought, temperature, salinity, extreme events, earthquakes</i>	No
2.3	increases in vulnerability to climate change impacts or disaster risks now or in the future (also known as maladaptive or negative coping practices)? <i>For example, changes to land use planning may encourage further development of floodplains, potentially increasing the population's vulnerability to climate change, specifically flooding</i>	No
2.4	increases of greenhouse gas emissions, black carbon emissions or other drivers of climate change?	No
Standard 3: Community Health, Safety and Security		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
3.1	construction and/or infrastructure development (e.g. roads, buildings, dams)? (Note: the GEF does not finance projects that would involve the construction or rehabilitation of large or complex dams)	No
3.2	air pollution, noise, vibration, traffic, injuries, physical hazards, poor surface water quality due to runoff, erosion, sanitation?	No
3.3	harm or losses due to failure of structural elements of the project (e.g. collapse of buildings or infrastructure)?	No
3.4	risks of water-borne or other vector-borne diseases (e.g. temporary breeding habitats), communicable and noncommunicable diseases, nutritional disorders, mental health?	No
3.5	transport, storage, and use and/or disposal of hazardous or dangerous materials (e.g. explosives, fuel and other chemicals during construction and operation)?	No
3.6	adverse impacts on ecosystems and ecosystem services relevant to communities' health (e.g. food, surface water purification, natural buffers from flooding)?	No
3.7	influx of project workers to project areas?	No
3.8	engagement of security personnel to protect facilities and property or to support project activities?	No
Standard 4: Cultural Heritage		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
4.1	activities adjacent to or within a Cultural Heritage site?	No
4.2	significant excavations, demolitions, movement of earth, flooding or other environmental changes?	No
4.3	adverse impacts to 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
4.4	alterations to landscapes and natural features with cultural significance?	No
4.5	utilization of tangible and/or intangible forms (e.g. practices, traditional knowledge) of Cultural Heritage for commercial or other purposes?	No
Standard 5: Displacement and Resettlement		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
5.1	temporary or permanent and full or partial physical displacement (including people without legally recognizable claims to land)?	No
5.2	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	risk of forced evictions? ¹⁹	No
5.4	impacts on or changes to land tenure arrangements and/or community-based property rights/customary rights to land, territories and/or resources?	No
Standard 6: Indigenous Peoples		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
6.1	areas where indigenous peoples are present (including project area of influence)?	No
6.2	activities located on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No
6.3	impacts (positive or negative) to 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)? <i>If the answer to screening question 6.3 is "yes", then Standard 6 requirements apply, and the potential significance of risks related to impacts on indigenous peoples must be Moderate or above.*</i>	No

* Note: revised July 2022 modifying presumption of risk significance from Substantial or higher to Moderate or higher.

6.4	the 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	the utilization and/or commercial development of natural resources on lands and territories claimed by indigenous peoples?	No
6.6	forced eviction or the whole or partial physical or economic displacement of indigenous peoples, including through access restrictions to lands, territories, and resources? <i>Consider, and where appropriate ensure, consistency with the answers under Standard 5 above</i>	No
6.7	adverse impacts on the development priorities of indigenous peoples as defined by them?	No
6.8	risks to the physical and cultural survival of indigenous peoples?	No
6.9	impacts on the Cultural Heritage of indigenous peoples, including through the commercialization or use of their traditional knowledge and practices? <i>Consider, and where appropriate ensure, consistency with the answers under Standard 4 above.</i>	No
Standard 7: Labour and Working Conditions		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to: (note applies to project and contractor workers)</i>		
7.1	working conditions that do not meet national labour laws and international commitments?	No
7.2	working conditions that may deny freedom of association and collective bargaining?	No
7.3	use of child labour?	No
7.4	use of forced labour?	No
7.5	discriminatory working conditions and/or lack of equal opportunity?	No
7.6	occupational health and safety risks due to physical, chemical, biological and psychosocial hazards (including violence and harassment) throughout the project life cycle?	No
Standard 8: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency		
<i>Would the project potentially involve or lead to:</i>		
8.1	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
8.2	the generation of waste (both hazardous and non-hazardous)?	No
8.3	the manufacture, trade, release, and/or use of hazardous materials and/or chemicals?	No
8.4	the use of chemicals or materials subject to international bans or phase-outs? For example, DDT, PCBs and other chemicals listed in international conventions such as the Montreal Protocol , Minamata Convention , Basel Convention , Rotterdam Convention , Stockholm Convention	No
8.5	the application of pesticides that may have a negative effect on the environment or human health?	No
8.6	significant consumption of raw materials, energy, and/or water?	No

Forced eviction is defined here as the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families, or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection. Forced evictions constitute gross violations of a range of internationally recognized human rights.

XI.3. ANNEX 3: RISK ANALYSIS

Offline Project Risk Register

Project Title: Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)					Project Number: 01004727		Date: 01-Oct-25	
#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category <i>(including Risk Appetite)</i>	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level <i>(see Annex 3 Risk Matrix)</i>	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner <i>(individual accountable for managing the risk)</i>	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
1	There is a risk of political instability, conflict, delays or changes in the electoral calendar, escalation of political polarization and potential for electoral violence negatively affecting the electoral environment.	As a result of deepening political tensions, lack of consensus among key actors, and weak conflict-prevention mechanisms.	Which will impact in disrupting electoral activities, undermining public trust, and delaying project implementation.	8. SAFETY AND SECURITY (8.2. Political instability) - UNDP Risk Appetite: CAUTIOUS	Likelihood: 4 - Highly likely Impact: 4 - Extensive Risk level: SUBSTANTIAL (equates to a risk appetite of OPEN)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 1.1: Engage in continuous dialogue with political stakeholders, civil society, and international partners to promote electoral stability and consensus-building. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
								Risk Treatment 1.2: Support contingency planning within the CEC for election postponement scenarios while maintaining transparency and legal integrity. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
								Risk Treatment 1.3: Strengthen security coordination between electoral bodies and law enforcement to prevent and mitigate electoral violence. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
								Risk Treatment 1.4: Foster public confidence through transparent communication and independent election monitoring. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
								Risk Treatment 1.5: Conduct advocacy campaigns showcasing international best practices on gender equality in elections. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
2	There is a risk of resistance from key political actors towards gender equality and inclusivity reforms.	As a result of entrenched political interests and limited understanding of inclusivity benefits.	Which will impact in slowing implementation of reforms and reducing	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk	Likelihood: 2 - Low likelihood Impact:	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 2.1: Conduct advocacy campaigns showcasing international best practices on gender equality in elections.

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category (including Risk Appetite)	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level (see Annex 3 Risk Matrix)	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner (individual accountable for managing the risk)	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
			progress on gender equality goals.	Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	4 - Extensive Risk level: MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)			Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 2.2: Facilitate high-level dialogues and awareness sessions with political parties, media, and civil society to build support for inclusivity measures. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 2.3: Establish gender and inclusivity champions within political parties and electoral institutions to foster internal advocacy. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
3	There is a risk that resistance to change from lower-level commissions and stakeholders may delay implementation.	As a result of institutional inertia, lack of motivation, and insufficient communication on benefits of reforms.	Which will impact in slowing reform rollout and reducing effectiveness of new systems.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 2 - Low likelihood Impact: 3 - Intermediate Risk level: MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 3.1: Implement structured change management strategies, including targeted training, incentives, and dialogue sessions to address concerns. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 3.2: Establish a peer-learning mechanism where successful reforms are shared among electoral management bodies. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 3.3: Strengthen engagement with lower-level commissions through participatory decision-making and structured feedback loops. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category (including Risk Appetite)	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level (see Annex 3 Risk Matrix)	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner (individual accountable for managing the risk)	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
4	There is a risk that increased cybersecurity threats targeting electoral systems during the election period could disrupt the integrity of the electronic systems.	As a result of sophisticated cyberattacks and limited cybersecurity preparedness.	Which will impact in compromising data integrity, system functionality, and public confidence in electoral systems.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 3 - Moderately likely Impact: 4 - Extensive Risk level: SUBSTANTIAL (equates to a risk appetite of OPEN)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 4.1: Develop and implement a comprehensive cybersecurity strategy, including real-time monitoring, incident response teams, and regular stress testing of electoral IT systems. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 4.2: Establish partnerships with cybersecurity experts and international organizations to share intelligence on emerging cyber threats. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 4.3: Provide regular cybersecurity training for election officials and develop public awareness campaigns to prevent cyber misinformation and phishing attacks. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
5	There is a risk that hate speech could escalate despite mitigation efforts, impacting electoral credibility and high levels of misinformation could overwhelm mitigation efforts.	As a result of unregulated online discourse and weak enforcement of hate speech policies.	Which will impact in damaging electoral credibility and fueling polarization.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 3 - Moderately likely Impact: 3 - Intermediate Risk level: MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 5.1: Strengthen social media monitoring mechanisms to detect and counteract hate speech in real time. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 5.2: Work with tech companies, media regulators, and civil society to enforce policies against election-related hate speech. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 5.3: Provide training for journalists, social media influencers, and electoral stakeholders on ethical reporting and combating misinformation.

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category (including Risk Appetite)	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level (see Annex 3 Risk Matrix)	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner (individual accountable for managing the risk)	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
								Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
6	There is a risk of lack of engagement from media outlets in responsible reporting practices.	As a result of limited incentives and weak professional standards in electoral journalism.	Which will impact in spreading misinformation and reducing transparency in election coverage.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 2 - Low likelihood Impact: 3 - Intermediate Risk level: MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 6.1: Establish partnerships with media organizations and incentivize responsible electoral reporting through recognition programs. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 6.2: Develop clear media guidelines for election coverage and promote compliance through capacity-building initiatives. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 6.3: Foster collaboration between CEC and media regulatory bodies to ensure fair and accurate election reporting. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
7	There is a risk that cultural and societal barriers may limit women's political participation.	As a result of persistent gender stereotypes and low public awareness.	Which will impact in underrepresentation of women and limited inclusivity in electoral processes.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 3 - Moderately likely Impact: 4 - Extensive Risk level: SUBSTANTIAL (equates to a risk appetite of OPEN)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 7.1: Implement targeted awareness campaigns showcasing the benefits of women's political participation through role models and success stories. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 7.2: Strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with gender quotas. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 7.3: Engage community and religious leaders to advocate for women's involvement in elections.

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category (including Risk Appetite)	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level (see Annex 3 Risk Matrix)	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner (individual accountable for managing the risk)	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
								Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
8	There is a risk that logistical and financial challenges in retrofitting polling stations to meet accessibility standards may hinder progress on planned accessibility improvements.	As a result of limited funding, technical constraints and competing infrastructure priorities.	Which will impact in delayed accessibility improvements and exclusion of persons with disabilities.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 4 - Highly likely Impact: 4 - Extensive Risk level: SUBSTANTIAL (equates to a risk appetite of OPEN)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 8.1: Prioritize cost-effective accessibility solutions and leverage international donor support for infrastructure upgrades. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 8.2: Conduct phased implementation of accessibility improvements with a clear timeline and performance benchmarks. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 8.3: Encourage partnerships with OPDs to co-design and monitor accessibility initiatives. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
9	There is a risk that misinformation and disinformation campaigns may undermine voter education efforts.	As a result of coordinated online manipulation and low digital literacy.	Which will impact in confusing voters and reducing trust in electoral information.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 2 - Low likelihood Impact: 3 - Intermediate Risk level: MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 9.1: Develop a rapid-response misinformation debunking mechanism involving media, fact-checkers, and civil society organizations. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 9.2: Increase digital literacy programs targeting first-time voters and marginalized communities to enhance their ability to identify false information. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager

#	Event	Cause	Impact(s)	Risk Category and Sub-category (including Risk Appetite)	Impact, Likelihood & Risk Level (see Annex 3 Risk Matrix)	Risk Valid From/To	Risk Owner (individual accountable for managing the risk)	Risk Treatment and Treatment Owner
								Risk Treatment 9.3: Work with social media platforms to flag and remove election-related disinformation. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager
10	There is a risk that limited reach of voter education campaigns in rural or marginalised communities may persist despite targeted campaigns.	As a result of geographic barriers, limited media coverage, and insufficient local partnerships.	Which will impact in lower voter awareness and participation in remote areas.	4. ORGANIZATIONAL (4.1. Governance) - UNDP Risk Appetite: EXPLORATORY TO OPEN	Likelihood: 2 - Low likelihood Impact: 3 - Intermediate Risk level: MODERATE (equates to a risk appetite of EXPLORATORY)	From: 01-Oct-25 To: 31-Dec-26	GOA, CEC, UNDP	Risk Treatment 10.1: Deploy mobile outreach teams and digital tools, including radio and SMS campaigns, to extend voter education efforts in remote areas. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 10.2: Partner with local civil society organizations and community leaders to enhance grassroots voter awareness initiatives. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager Risk Treatment 10.3: Develop accessible and culturally relevant voter education materials tailored to diverse audiences. Risk Treatment Owner: Project Manager

XI.4. ANNEX 4: PROJECT BOARD TOR

UNDP Standard Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Project Board of the Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)

Project Number: 01004727

Background

The *Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)* Project aims to support the institutional and professional capacities of the electoral management bodies, including the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and lower-level electoral commissions, as well as other institutional electoral stakeholders in Armenia.

The overall objective (impact) of the Project is to contribute towards achieving enhanced credibility, inclusiveness, and sustainability of the electoral process in Armenia, leading to increased public trust in democratic governance.

The specific objective (outcome) of the Project is to strengthen capacity and independence of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) of Armenia to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes by 2026 parliamentary elections

The Project aligns closely with the objectives and priorities of the development partners' collaboration with Armenia. It addresses the specific needs and constraints of the country, particularly within the context of the electoral systems. The Project is highly relevant to the needs and constraints of target groups and final beneficiaries and addresses these needs in a comprehensive manner as described in this section.

The Outputs include:

Output 1. Enhanced institutional capacity of CEC and lower-level commissions for robust electoral preparations and management. *(UNDP)*

Output 2. Enhanced digital transformation and cybersecurity of the electoral process. *(UNDP)*

Output 3. Enhanced protocols and capacities for stakeholder engagement, gender-responsive voter outreach, and countering hate speech for improved electoral transparency, inclusivity, and integrity. *(UNDP)*

Output 4. Gender equality and social inclusion in elections strengthened through increased participation of women and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities. *(UNDP)*

Output 5. Information campaigns (online and physical) for more informed and engaged electorate through inclusive and innovative civic and voter education. *(UNDP and International IDEA)*

Output 6. Enhanced expertise and capacity for oversight of campaign finance and digital campaigning. *(International IDEA)*

Output 7. Enhanced expertise and capacity for electoral risk management and crisis preparedness. *(International IDEA)*

Key target groups:

- Central Electoral Commission and lower-level electoral commissions.
- Political parties.
- Civil society organizations (CSOs), organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), media, and social media influencers.
- Voters, especially youth, women, refugees, displaced persons, and persons with disabilities.

The project, planned for the period of 20 months (2025-2027), is co-implemented by UNDP and International IDEA and supported by the European Union, the Governments of Sweden, Germany and Norway.

Duties and Responsibilities

The two prominent (mandatory) roles of the Project Board are as follows:

1) High-level oversight of the project (as explained in the “Provide Oversight” section of the PPM). This is the primary function of the Project Board. The Project Board reviews evidence of project performance based on monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, including progress reports, monitoring missions’ reports, evaluations, risk logs, quality assessments, and the combined delivery report. The Project Board is the main body responsible for taking corrective actions as needed to ensure the project achieves the desired results. And its function includes oversight of annual (and as-needed) assessments of any major risks to the programme or project, and related decisions/agreements on any management actions or remedial measures to address them effectively.

The Project Board also carries the role of quality assurance of the project taking decisions informed by, among other inputs, the project quality assessment. In this role the Board is supported by the quality assurer, whose function is to assess the quality of the project against the corporate standard criteria. This function is performed by a UNDP programme or monitoring and evaluation officer to maintain independence from the project manager regardless of the project’s implementation modality.

The Project Board reviews updates to the project risk log.

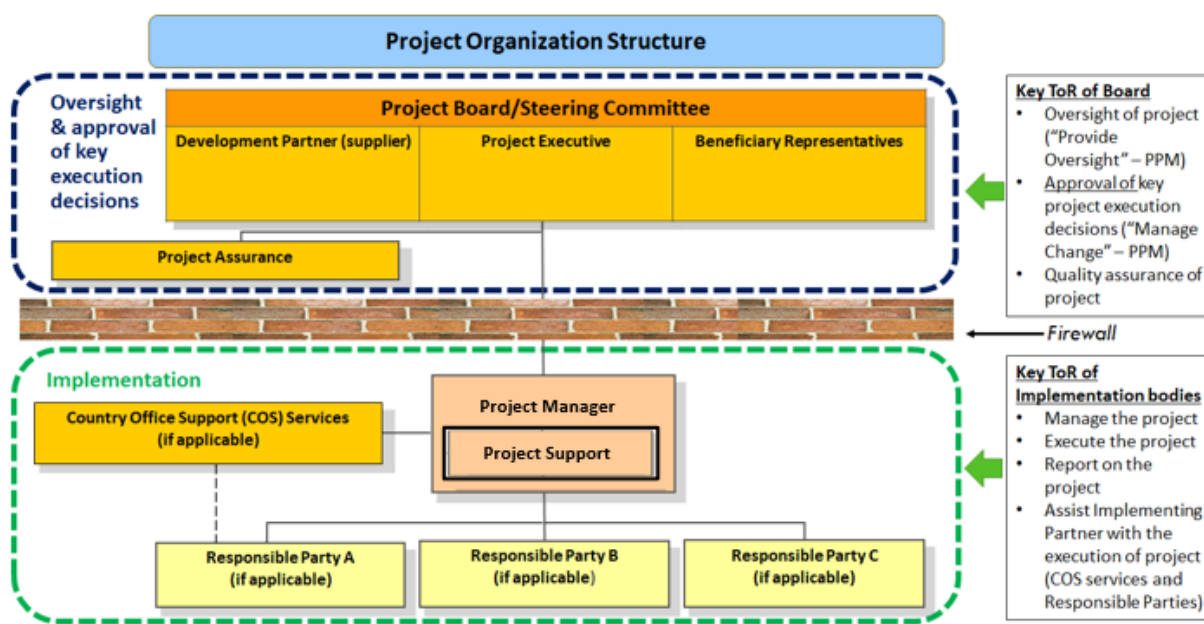
2) Approval of key project execution decisions (as explained in the “Manage Change” section of the PPM). The Project Board has an equally important, secondary role in approving certain adjustments above provided tolerance levels, including substantive programmatic revisions (major/minor amendments), budget revisions, requests for suspension or extension and other major changes (subject to additional funding partner/donor requirements).

The Project Board is responsible for making management decisions by consensus when required, including the approval of project plans and revisions, and the project manager’s tolerances. The Project Board approves annual work plans and reviews updates to the project risk log.

Within the overall governance and management arrangements of the project, the role of the Project Board as regards these two key functions (*‘High-level oversight of the project’* and *‘Approval of key project execution decisions’*) is distinct from the roles of entities involved in the implementation of the project, namely the implementing partner (IP), responsibilities parties (if applicable), service providers and project staff.

The diagram below outlines the main entities involved (and their respective responsibilities) in the ‘oversight/approval of key execution decisions’ layer and the ‘implementation’ layer of the project structure.

Diagram 1 – Standard Figure of Project Organization Structure vis-à-vis oversight & approval and implementation roles



In order to ensure UNDP’s ultimate accountability, the Project Board decisions should be made in accordance with [the Quality Standards for Programming](#) that shall ensure management for development results, best value

money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective national and international competition. An effective Project Board needs credible data, evidence, quality assurance and reporting to aid decision making (see next section on supporting functions to the Board). The Project Board also needs to be accountable to protect against conflicts of interest and fraud.

Specific responsibilities of the Project Board include the following:

- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints, and promote gender equality and social inclusion (LNOB) in the project implementation.
- Review project performance based on monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, including standard quality assurance checks, progress reports, risk logs, spot checks/audit reports and the combined delivery report.
- Address any high-level project issues as raised by the project manager and project assurance.
- Provide guidance on emerging and/or pressing project risks and agree on possible mitigation and management actions to address specific risks (including ensuring compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards, Fraud/corruption, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment).
- Agree or decide on project manager's tolerances as required, within the parameters set by UNDP ([Manage Change](#) in the PPM) and the donors, and provide direction and decisions for exceptional situations when the project manager's tolerances are exceeded;
- Advise on major and minor amendments to the project within the parameters set by UNDP and the donors.
- Agree or decide on a project suspension or cancellation, if required.
- Provide high-level direction and recommendations to the project management unit to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans.
- Receive and address project level grievance, including overseeing whatever specific compliance and stakeholder response (or grievance) mechanisms have been put in place so that individuals and communities potentially affected by the project have access to effective mechanisms and procedures for raising concerns about the social and environmental performance of the project^{xlviii}.
- Engage in the low value grant selection process where there is no Grant Selection Committee, as guided by the [Low Value Grants – UNDP Operational Guide](#).

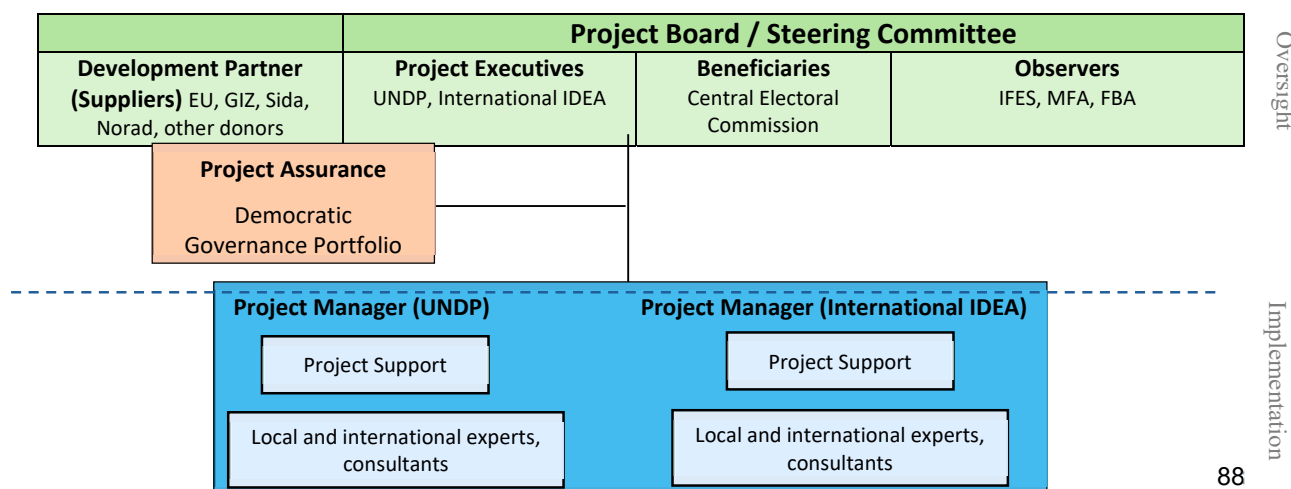
Additional responsibilities of the Project Board can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ensure coordination between the various donors and government-funded projects and programmes.
- Ensure coordination with multiple government agencies and their participation in project activities.
- Appraise the annual project implementation report, including the quality assessment rating report.
- Ensure commitment of human resources to support project implementation, arbitrating any issues within the project.
- Act as an informal consultation mechanism for stakeholders.
- Review the final project report package during an end-of-project review meeting to discuss lessons learned and opportunities for scaling up.

Composition of the Project Board

As noted in the diagram below, every Project Board in a UNDP project has three categories of formal members (e.g. voting members). The role of every formal Project Board member must correspond to one of these three roles and be identified accordingly in the project documentation.

Diagram 2 – Project Organization Structure



The three categories of Project Board members are the following:

Project Director/Executive(s): This is an individual(s) who represents ownership of the project and chairs (or co-chairs) the Project Board. The executive usually is the most senior national counterpart for nationally implemented projects (typically from the same entity as the Implementing Partner), and it must be UNDP for projects that are direct implementation (DIM). In exceptional cases, two individuals from different entities can co-share this role and/or co-chair the Project Board. If the project executive co-chairs the Project Board with a representative of another category, it typically does so with a development partner representative. The Project Executive is: *UNDP Resident Representative*.

Beneficiary Representative(s): This is an individual(s) representing the interests of those groups of stakeholders who will ultimately benefit from the project. Their primary function within the Board is to ensure the realization of project results from the perspective of project beneficiaries. Often representatives from civil society, industry associations, community groups or other government entities benefiting from the project can fulfil this role. If the project has a specific geographic focus, often representatives from the government entities in the targeted area/region will play this role. There can be multiple beneficiary representatives in a Project Board. The Beneficiary Representatives are: *Members of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Armenia*.

Development Partner(s): Individuals representing the interests of the parties concerned that provide funding, strategic guidance and/or technical expertise to the project^{xlix}. There can be multiple development partners representatives in a Project Board. The Development Partner(s) representative(s) are: *EU, GIZ, Sida, Norad, other donors*.

A UNDP representative must always be represented in the Project Board in either the project executive or development partner role.

Where applicable, representatives from responsible parties to the project cannot sit on the Project Board as a formal voting member; they can (if requested) attend board meetings as observers. Since the chief responsibility of the Board is to provide high-level oversight of project implementation, to avoid any conflicts of interest, it is not appropriate for representatives of third party entities engaged by the project to provide services – whether responsible parties or contractors/service providers – to concurrently sit on the Board. Representatives of responsible parties can attend board meetings (as observers) but can have no official role in board decision-making. The same principle applies to the project manager who in attending and presenting at board meetings, does so in a non-voting capacity.

In cases where the inputs and guidance of responsible parties or other entities formally engaged in providing goods or services to the project are needed by the Board on a recurring basis, it is recommended to establish appropriate advisory or technical committees or working groups composed of those entities that can formally report to the Board, while ensuring the impartiality and integrity of board decisions happening independent of those bodies (see Section V of the ToR).

Standard Project Board Protocols

The Project Board must meet one time annually at a minimum. It is recommended that the timing of board meetings be agreed upon in advance and corresponds to key project reporting or work planning milestones. This Project Board will meet one times annually according to this provisional schedule.

Project Board members cannot receive remuneration from project funds for their participation in the Board. However, it is allowable for board members to be reimbursed from project funds for certain reasonable, qualified expenses related to travel or lodging to attend board meetings. Such protocols are outlined in this ToR and the benefits are applicable to all eligible board members.

All Project Boards must have rules for quorum and documentation/minuting of board decisions. All board decisions and minutes should be kept by the project management unit and UNDP. Guidelines on decisions taken in between board meetings or virtually should be clearly elaborated in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Project Board.

Unless otherwise specified, Project Board decisions are made by unanimous consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached within the Board, the final decision shall rest with the UNDP representative on the Project Board or a UNDP staff member with delegated authority as the programme manager.^l

It is required that as per internationally recognized professional standards and principles of sound governance, conflicts of interest affecting board members in performing their duties must be formally disclosed if not avoidable. Where a board member has a specific personal conflict of interest with a given matter before the board, he/she must recuse oneself from their participation in a decision. No board member can vote or deliberate on a question in which he/she has a direct personal or pecuniary interest not common to other members of the board.

All board members should be presented with a TOR for the Project Board, which will include the responsibilities already outlined and indicate agreed board practices and logistics.

Standard Outputs of Project Board Meetings

In its oversight function, the Project Board will (at a minimum) review and assess the following project-related evidence at each meeting:

- Assessment of project progress to date against project output indicators (as documented in the project document results framework)
- Approval/review of annual work plans
- Assessment of the relevant Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms, including all evaluations^{li}
- Review and assessment of the Project Risk Log (with updating/amendments as needed)
- Assessment of project spending, based on a review of the combined delivery report
- Review of required resources versus available funding (if applicable) and steps taken to reduce funding gap identified at the project design stage

This will be in addition to the review and approval of any required project execution decisions.

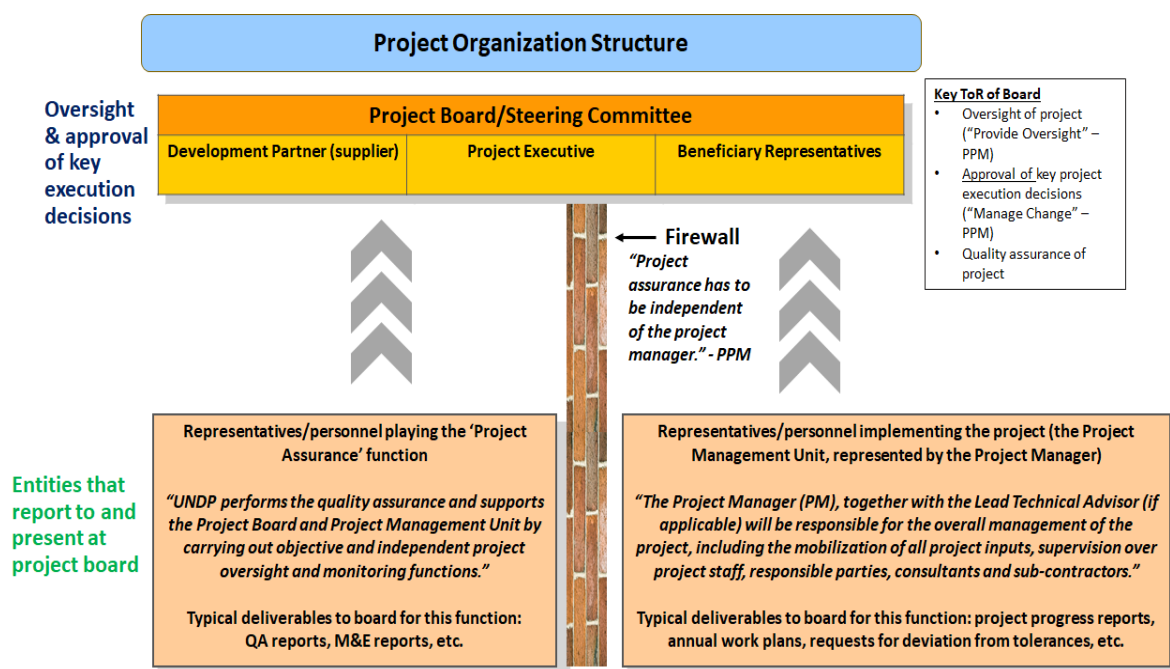
The output of every Project Board should be a written record (minutes) that captures the agenda and issues discussed and the agreed upon action items and decisions (if applicable). Each report should clearly document the members attending the meeting (as well as all participants in the meeting) and the modality used to agree on a certain action or decision (whether formal voting or no-objection or other mechanism). All records of board meetings should be documented and kept by UNDP in their quality assurance function (see next section).

Support Functions to the Project Board

There are two main entities/functions outside the Project Board structure whose role is to report to the Project Board and support board members in effectively fulfilling their roles: project assurance and project management.

The diagram below explains the primary role of these two entities in the context of their support to Board operations. A description of these two entities follows.

Diagram 3 – Standard Figure of Project Organization Structure – Board Support Entities



Project Assurance: Project assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member; however, UNDP has a distinct assurance role for all UNDP projects in carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. UNDP performs quality assurance and supports the Project Board (and Project Management Unit) by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions, including applying UNDP's social and environmental management system to ensure the SES are applied

through the project cycle. The Project Board cannot delegate any of its quality assurance responsibilities to the project manager. Project assurance is totally independent of project execution.

A designated representative of UNDP playing the project assurance role is expected to attend all Project Board meetings and support board processes as a non-voting representative. It should be noted that while in certain cases UNDP's project assurance role across the project may encompass activities happening at several levels (e.g. global, regional), at least one UNDP representative playing that function must, as part of their duties, specifically attend board meetings and provide board members with the required documentation required to perform their duties.

The UNDP representative playing the main project assurance function is: UNDP Programme Analyst Democratic Governance.

Project Support, this function is often covered by the Project Management Unit: The Project Manager (PM) (also called project coordinator) is the senior most representative of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and is responsible for the overall management of the project on behalf of the Implementing Partner, including the mobilization of all project inputs, supervision over project staff, responsible parties, consultants and sub-contractors. The project manager typically presents key deliverables and documents to the Board for review and approval, including progress reports, annual work plans, adjustments to tolerance levels and risk logs.

A designated representative of the PMU is expected to attend all board meetings and present the required progress reports and other documentation needed to support board processes as a non-voting representative. The primary PMU representative attending board meetings is *the Project Coordinator*.

Annex to the TOR A – Acknowledgement of this ToR by each designated official Project Board member

XI.5. ANNEX 5: PROJECT MANAGER TOR

Terms of Reference (TOR) for functions under a National Personnel Service Agreement

Office/Unit/Project	UNDP Armenia / Democratic Governance Portfolio ARTEMIS: Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia MAP 2.0 FORSETI: Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia - Fostering Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Transparency and Inclusiveness of Armenian Parliament
Functional Title	Project Coordinator
Classified Level	NPSA10
Duty station (City and Country)	Yerevan, Armenia
Type (Regular or Short term)	Regular
Office- or Home-based	Office- based
Expected starting date	January 2026
Expected Duration	12 months (with possibility of extension, subject to project financing and performance)

Office/Unit/Project Description

UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality, and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

UNDP does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse, any kind of harassment, including sexual harassment, and discrimination. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks.

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization in fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet. Learn more at undp.org or follow at @UNDP.

ARTEMIS Project

The *Advancing Reforms for Transparent and Inclusive Management of Electoral Systems in Armenia (ARTEMIS)* Project aims to support the institutional and professional capacities of the electoral management bodies, including the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and lower-level electoral commissions, as well as other institutional electoral stakeholders in Armenia.

The overall objective (impact) of the Project is to contribute towards achieving enhanced credibility, inclusiveness, and sustainability of the electoral process in Armenia, leading to increased public trust in democratic governance.

The specific objective (outcome) of the Project is to strengthen capacity and independence of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) of Armenia to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, and sustainable electoral processes by 2026 parliamentary elections

The Project aligns closely with the objectives and priorities of the development partners' collaboration with Armenia. It addresses the specific needs and constraints of the country, particularly within the context of the electoral systems. The Project is highly relevant to the needs and constraints of target groups and final beneficiaries and addresses these needs in a comprehensive manner as described in this section.

The Outputs include:

Output 1. Enhanced institutional capacity of CEC and lower-level commissions for robust electoral preparations and management. (UNDP)

Output 2. Enhanced digital transformation and cybersecurity of the electoral process. (UNDP)

Output 3. Enhanced protocols and capacities for stakeholder engagement, gender-responsive voter outreach, and countering hate speech for improved electoral transparency, inclusivity, and integrity. (UNDP)

Output 4. Gender equality and social inclusion in elections strengthened through increased participation of women and improved accessibility for persons with disabilities. (UNDP)

Output 5. Information campaigns (online and physical) for more informed and engaged electorate through inclusive and innovative civic and voter education. (*UNDP and International IDEA*)

Output 6. Enhanced expertise and capacity for oversight of campaign finance and digital campaigning. (*International IDEA*)

Output 7. Enhanced expertise and capacity for electoral risk management and crisis preparedness. (*International IDEA*)

Key target groups:

- Central Electoral Commission and lower-level electoral commissions.
- Political parties.
- Civil society organizations (CSOs), organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), media, and social media influencers.
- Voters, especially youth, women, refugees, displaced persons, and persons with disabilities.

The project is co-implemented by UNDP and International IDEA and supported by the European Union, the Governments of Sweden, Germany and Norway.

MAP 2.0 FORSETI Project

The *Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP) 2.0 - Fostering Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Transparency and Inclusiveness of Armenian Parliament* (FORSETI) project efforts will focus on enhancing the institutional capacity of the National Assembly to fulfil its constitutional duties in more inclusive, responsive, transparent, accountable, and effective way, including, in engaging with citizens, civil society and public sector.

The expected outcome of the Project is that the National Assembly is more inclusive, responsive, transparent, accountable, and effective. The three key outputs of the Project are focused on:

Output 1. Strategic vision of the National Assembly and roadmap for reforms, strategic communication and collaboration are consolidated empowering modern public policy and fostering inclusive practices.

Output 2. The National Assembly is equipped with state-of-the-art methods and instruments for effectively pursuing its modern public policy agenda and improving performance of its core functions.

Output 3. Competencies of the MPs and the staff of the National Assembly in utilising innovative methods, using and producing knowledge products towards advancing the modern public policy agenda and enhancing effectiveness of their core functions strengthened.

Key target groups:

- MPs, NA staff (committee secretariats, analytical services, administrative staff).
- Armenian citizens, civil society, academia, youth, women, and marginalized groups engaging with Parliament.
- NA leadership, standing committees, international partners, CSOs, and media.

The project is implemented in the period of three years (2024-2027) and supported by the Government of Sweden, the Government of Norway and the Government of Armenia.

Scope of Work

The Project Manager will ensure integrated and efficient implementation of ARTEMIS and MAP 2.0 FORSETI, liaising with the National Assembly, CEC, electoral commissions, political parties, CSOs, OPDs, media, development partners, and government stakeholders.

Lead, manage, coordinate, and develop effective project planning and implementation.

- Lead strategic planning for the ARTEMIS and MAP 2.0: FORSETI projects, including formulation and periodic revisions of the projects' annual work plans (AWP), timelines and deliverables, including plans for budget, HR and procurement that are developed in close coordination with UNDP's Country Office Programme, HR, and Procurement teams. Lead development of detailed implementation plans, ensuring effective resource allocation and adherence to project milestones.
- Manage, coordinate, and supervise project implementation to ensure the overall project relevance and performance, the effective realization and quality of outputs within the specified constraints of time and cost as outlined in the project document, and adherence to applicable UNDP policy and programme management procedures, donor and Government standards, rules, and regulations. Act as a senior

advisor on issues related to project activities, providing strategic guidance to ensure successful execution and compliance.

- Oversee and coordinate all aspects of the projects, ensuring compliance with Financing Documents and donor key requirements.
- Ensure compliance with UNDP procurement, financial management, environmental and social safeguards.
- Provide direction, guidance, and direct supervision to UNDP project personnel. Undertake technical review of project documents produced by the project teams and partners, and ensure high technical standards are met.
- Ensure proper execution of all administrative activities associated with the implementation of the projects, including mobilizing goods and services, preparing Terms of Reference, completing contracting processes, recruiting/selecting consultants and experts, and managing financial arrangements/transactions and their correct authorization.
- Identify opportunities for synergies with other projects within UNDP and beyond, to advance the key objectives and grow its focus.
- Develop and implement quality assurance measures to ensure the highest standards of project delivery.
- Coordinate and manage project logistics, including team mobilization, office setup, and procurement planning, ensuring all operational processes are aligned with project timelines and budget.
- Ensure that ARTEMIS activities (e.g., deployment of Voter Authentication Devices, development of the Electronic Voter Assistance tool (EVA), oversight of digital campaigning, inclusive outreach, etc.) are planned, coordinated, and implemented according to UNDP and donor requirements.

Develop Strategic Partnership.

- Substantively contribute to the harnessing of effective partnerships and lead the identification and onboarding process for implementing partners.
- Cultivate and maintain strong relationships and strategic linkages with implementing and development partners, government officials, businesses, NGOs, other national and regional stakeholders, and beneficiaries to support and ensure accurate interpretation of project objectives and promote inclusive project implementation.
- Provide technical support to the implementing partners and act as the primary liaison between UNDP, the National Assembly, the CEC, other national stakeholders, local government authorities, ensuring smooth communication and operational alignment across all parties.
- Ensure smooth coordination with the coordination with NA leadership and committees to ensure the parliament reform ownership.
- Lead coordination with International IDEA on joint outputs (5-7).
- Engage strategically with donors (EU, Sida, GIZ, Norad, Japan) to ensure alignment with their specific funding priorities and reporting requirements.
- Ensure synergies between ARTEMIS and other ongoing UNDP programmes (e.g., Refugee Response, Democratic Governance).
- Facilitate and document citizen engagement mechanisms (e.g., consultations, hearings, outreach strategies) with the parliament.
- Participate in project meetings, conferences, and public engagements.
- Ensure that stakeholder concerns and recommendations are incorporated into project implementation strategies.
- Ensure proper operational and financial closure of the project within the approved timeline and budget.

Monitor and report on progress in implementing project activities and achieving the targets set.

- Provide leadership and technical advice to the project in developing baselines and indicators for project monitoring and evaluation and coordinate the finalization of detailed results framework. Develop clear strategies and an effective system for data collection, means of verification, and information sharing and reporting.
- Lead the implementation of project monitoring, evaluation, and results frameworks to identify plan deviations and other problems; and make needed course corrections within agreed upon tolerances to achieve results. Conduct field visits as required to verify project activities relative to stated targets and provide regular field updates to UNDP management.
- Lead the development and conduct of mid-term and annual reviews, and end line assessment; and coordinate the conduct of independent evaluations. Organize project review and evaluation meetings. Follow up on the implementation of decisions, recommendations, and course corrections.
- Manage and monitor project risks, including social and environmental risks, initially identified and submit new risks to appropriate project governing bodies for consideration and decision on possible actions.
- Coordinate the preparation of corporate, donor and government reports in line with the reporting schedule and UNDP and donor requirements. Ensure provision of *ad hoc* reports and information

requested by relevant entities. Ensure project reports capture results, lessons learned and good practices for possible wider application.

- Ensure effective budget planning and financial management, in line with UNDP and donor financial regulations and requirements.
- Ensure timely disbursement of funds and compliance with all financial reporting requirements.
- Facilitate regular financial audits and reviews to ensure transparency and accountability in resource management.
- Ensure proper operational and financial closure of the project within the approved timeline and budget.

Facilitate knowledge and capacity building, knowledge sharing, and advocacy relevant to the assigned thematic areas.

- Identify capacity building needs and opportunities. Lead training and capacity-building efforts for the NA (MPs, Standing Committees and the NA Staff), the CEC and lower-level electoral commission on relevant issues.
- Participate in and ensure sound contributions to knowledge networks and communities of practice on development and project related issues. Support establishment of knowledge platforms for the project, facilitate innovative mechanisms for dissemination of knowledge from the project, and develop knowledge resources and products to share with project partners and to support UNDP's engagement in this area.
- Establish mentorship programs for the NA staff and the CEC staff to enhance institutional knowledge and best practices.
- Contribute to knowledge-sharing with regional parliaments and inter-parliamentary networks for learning and best practice transfer under the strategic guidance of the UNDP global programs in this area.
- Promote the adoption of digital tools and innovative technologies for improved governance (e.g., e-Parliament tools, open data, digital public engagement platforms, as well as the VADs and EVA Tool in electoral processes).
- Promote advocacy for UNDP's work and opportunities for collaboration in addressing development trends in coordination with the project partners, stakeholders, and UNDP communications staff.

Legal, Contractual, and Compliance Oversight

- Work closely with legal and technical teams to ensure compliance with contractual agreements and financing conditions.
- Review contracts, offers, and proposals, advising on contractual matters, amendments, and variations.
- Monitor construction schedules and ensure timely disbursements in line with project progress and contractual agreements.
- Identify and address any delays or issues that may impact project timelines, implementing corrective measures where necessary.
- Prepare the relevant Terms of References to mobilize, manage and oversee the work of project consultants.

Environmental and Social Best Practices, Gender Equality, and Non-discrimination

- Ensure that project interventions integrate environmental and social best practices and comply with international safeguards. Ensure all project interventions integrate a gender equality perspective/gender equality mainstreaming to the extent local context allows.
- Develop and implement gender-sensitive and socially inclusive strategies in project design and execution.
- Monitor and address any barriers impacting different stakeholder groups, ensuring equitable access and participation.
- Promote non-discrimination and equality principles in all aspects of project management, procurement, and stakeholder engagement.
- Promote inclusive participation by systematically integrating youth, women, PWDs, and refugees into project activities, ensuring that electoral reforms reflect their rights and needs.

The Project Manager will ensure that all aspects of project implementation align with international best practices, donor requirements, and national priorities, fostering effective coordination, compliance, and sustainability.

The incumbent performs other duties within their functional profile as deemed necessary for the efficient functioning of the Office and the Organization.

Institutional Arrangements:

The Project Manager works under the general supervision of UNDP CO Democratic Governance Programme Analyst / Team Leader, and collaborates closely with UNDP CO team, including but not limited to RBM Programme Analyst; Democratic Governance Programme Associate; Communications Analyst; Procurement Analyst; Operations Associate and HR Analyst, the incumbent provides effective and efficient implementation of project activities (ARTEMIS and MAP 2.0: FORSETI) with major focus on ensuring UNDP standards and donor requirements, policies and procedures under all pillars of the projects.

The Project Manager will ensure close coordination with International IDEA, including joint planning, monitoring, and reporting on co-implemented outputs.

The Project Manager applies and promotes the principles of results-based management (RBM), as well as a client-oriented approach consistent with UNDP rules and regulations.

The Project Manager will be given access to relevant information necessary for the execution of the tasks under this assignment. Materials provided to the Project Manager and all proceedings within the consultancy contract shall be regarded as confidential, both during and after the consultancy. Violation of confidentiality requirements may result in an immediate termination of contract.

The Project Manager will be based in Yerevan. S/he will report to the UNDP Team Leader – Democratic Governance Unit and work closely with:

- Task Analysts of the project ARTEMIS and the project MAP 2.0: FORSETI
- Digital transformation support analysts
- Communication analyst and the Data collection and monitoring associate
- Project Associates of the projects
- Other team members of the projects
- Consultants and vendors of the projects.

Competencies

Core		
Achieve Results:	LEVEL 3: Set and align challenging, achievable objectives for multiple projects, have lasting impact	
Think Innovatively:	LEVEL 3: Proactively mitigate potential risks, develop new ideas to solve complex problems	
Learn Continuously:	LEVEL 3: Create and act on opportunities to expand horizons, diversify experiences	
Adapt with Agility:	LEVEL 3: Proactively initiate and champion change, manage multiple competing demands	
Act with Determination:	LEVEL 3: Think beyond immediate task/barriers and take action to achieve greater results	
Engage and Partner:	LEVEL 3: Political savvy, navigate complex landscape, champion inter-agency collaboration	
Enable Diversity and Inclusion:	LEVEL 3: Appreciate benefits of diverse workforce and champion inclusivity	
People Management UNDP People Management Competencies can be found in the dedicated site .		
Cross-Functional & Technical competencies		
Thematic Area	Name	Definition
Business Direction and Strategy	Effective Decision Making	Take decisions in a timely and efficient manner in line with one's authority, area of expertise and resources and take into consideration potential wider implications.
Business Direction & Strategy	System Thinking	Ability to use objective problem analysis and judgement to understand how interrelated elements coexist within an overall process or system, and to consider how altering one element can impact on other parts of the system
Business Management	Partnership Management	Build and maintain partnerships with wide networks of stakeholders, Governments, civil society and private sector partners, experts and others in line with UNDP strategy and policies

Business Management	Project Management	Ability to plan, organize, prioritize and control resources, procedures and protocols to achieve specific goals
Business Management	Communication	Communicate in a clear, concise and unambiguous manner both through written and verbal communication; to tailor messages and choose communication methods depending on the audience. Ability to manage communications internally and externally, through media, social media and other appropriate channels
Partnership management	Relationship Management	Ability to engage with a wide range of public and private partners, build, sustain and/or strengthen working relations, trust and mutual understanding

Minimum Qualifications of the Successful NPSA

Min. Academic Education	- Advanced university degree (master's degree or equivalent) in Business Administration, Public Administration, Economics, Political Sciences, Social Sciences, or related field is required, or - A first-level university degree (bachelor's degree) in the areas mentioned above in combination with an additional two years of qualifying experience will be given due consideration in lieu of the advanced university degree.
Min. years of relevant Work experience	- Minimum 5 years (with master's degree) or 7 years (with bachelor's degree) of progressively responsible relevant experience at the national or international level in providing management advisory services, hands-on experience in design, monitoring and evaluation of development projects, and/or leading and managing projects.
Required skills	- Experience in project coordination, design and implementation, including supervising staff. - Experience in working, liaising and collaborating with Government counterparts, private and international organizations. - Experience in the use of computers, office software packages (MS Word, Excel, etc.) and web-based management systems, and advanced knowledge of spreadsheet and database packages.
Desired additional skills and competencies	- Experience in research and designing capacity development and training modules. - Experience with parliamentary development, governance reforms, or legislative strengthening projects. - Prior experience in electoral assistance, democratic governance, political institutions, and civic engagement. - Experience in coordinating multi-stakeholder projects (e.g., EMBs, parliaments, CSOs, donors). - Knowledge of digital transformation in governance and inclusive participation methods, cybersecurity is a strong asset. - Strong stakeholder engagement skills with parliamentary actors, political institutions, and CSOs. - Prior experience with the UN/UNDP.
Required Language(s)	- Fluency in English and Armenian languages is required.
Professional Certificates	None

Travel: Field visits and international travel may be required.

Approval

This TOR is approved by:

Signature _____

Name and Designation

Date of Signing

¹Freedom of Expression and Media Consumption Research in Armenia. Internews. August 2023. <https://internews.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/FoE-and-Media-Consumption-Final-Report-1.pdf>.

²Armenia Early Parliamentary Elections: ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report. OSCE/ODIHR. 27 October 2021. <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/5/4/502386.pdf>.

³<https://www.elections.am>.

⁴https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/DownloadDraft.aspx?key=ICEnwWR8rbeJM8O1ALabPw4VXZSlm9W+G16IPN6ntWBWYe86HR7f2uKWCvi3ByhRUaVA/5NK8DFmHWGfyquvzg==

⁵<http://res.elections.am/simple/index.htm>.

⁶Voter Turnout Database. International IDEA. <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout-database>.

⁷<https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=198210>.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g24/186/81/pdf/g2418681.pdf>.

¹⁰https://unprpd.org/new/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CR_Armenia_2021-db7.pdf.

¹¹https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/DownloadDraft.aspx?key=ICEnwWR8rbeJM8O1ALabPw4VXZSlm9W+G16IPN6ntWBWYe86HR7f2uKWCvi3ByhRUaVA/5NK8DFmHWGfyquvzg==.

¹²https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/DownloadDraft.aspx?key=ICEnwWR8rbeJM8O1ALabP8q9ETL1LkTlu8R+5T9r+5sfSbuQ6nAJJWGqJ0xXa8m+vem8iHqlfsTUrZqWwOgo2A==.

¹³K-927-26.09.2024-PI-01/1. <http://www.parliament.am/drafts.php?sel=showdraft&DraftID=75852>.

¹⁴UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025. https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/UNDP_Gender_Equality_Strategy_2022-2025_EN_V2.pdf.

¹⁵FP/01/2012 Policy Directive as revised, effective 3 March 2021. https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/ead_pd_un_ea_principles_types_20210303_e.pdf.

¹⁶This indicator will be informed by election observation mission reports, such as, OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission (EOM) final report for the 2026 parliamentary elections, as well as supplementary reports and assessments from other credible international election observation missions and local monitoring organisations. The Project will conduct a thorough review of the OSCE/ODIHR EOM report and identify key findings related to the project's intervention areas. Further, the Project will triangulate the EOM findings with local observer reports and public opinion surveys on electoral confidence conducted post-election. In addition, a validation workshop with stakeholders (CEC, CSOs, and international partners) will be organised to assess the alignment of the findings with project outcomes.

It is anticipated that the reports and assessments from accredited international election observation missions and local monitoring organisations for the 2026 elections will highlight progress in compliance with international standards, explicitly noting: improved capacity of election administrators at all levels to conduct elections transparently and efficiently; enhanced inclusivity of the electoral process, ensuring meaningful participation of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities; strengthened cybersecurity and integrity of electoral systems, with reduced incidents of irregularities; and effective voter education campaigns leading to higher voter awareness and confidence in the electoral process.

Election observation reports are expected to conclude that elections are professionally managed and that training for election officials is positively assessed, with no significant procedural violations reported. They are also anticipated to highlight that electoral disputes are adjudicated consistently, transparently, and in a timely manner, while electoral technologies contribute to the transparency and integrity of the process, operating seamlessly on Election Day. Observers are likely to report that Armenian voters are free in will formation and capable of making informed choices, supported by voter education campaigns targeting underrepresented groups. Additionally, media coverage of the electoral campaign is expected to be impartial, with minimal use of hate speech, and the overall process is projected to be more accessible for persons with disabilities.

¹⁷This may include the percentage of voters reporting satisfaction with the information provided about the electoral process.

¹⁸GERF indicators (level 2) 2.26 and 2.27. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5697-2022-IN/IT/en/pdf>.

¹⁹The CEC officials include the CEC members and staff.

²⁰For example, with OSCE/ODIHR best practices for technology in elections, ensuring voter authentication systems uphold human rights, data protection, and transparency.

²¹Including hardware and software, as well as logistical infrastructure for VAD maintenance (warehouse).

²²Including strategic communication protocol on cyber incidents in elections.

²³Specific objectives on promoting gender equality, increasing inclusion and access of target populations to electoral processes integrated into Development Strategy, Roadmap and the implementation Action Plan for 2024-2028.

²⁴The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is the European Union's regulatory framework designed to protect personal data and give individuals more control over how their information is used. As data privacy becomes a global concern, compliance with GDPR is increasingly viewed as a hallmark of trust and reliability. GDPR came into effect on May 25, 2018, and has since set a new global standard for data protection. The GDPR is an important component of EU privacy law and human rights law, in particular Article 8(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It also governs the transfer of personal data outside the EU and EEA.

The EU General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) (GDPR) is not applicable in Armenia. However, Armenian data protection legislation reflects most of GDPR's main principles and rules. Armenia has ratified the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms 1950 (European Convention on Human Rights). Therefore, Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights applies to personal data protection in Armenia. The Constitution of Armenia protects the right to protection of personal data. General rules concerning the processing of personal data are set out in the Law of Armenia on protection of personal data (Data Protection Law), which was adopted in 2015. https://www.dialog.am/storage/files/posts/posts_184625614492_2019_-_Global_Guide_-_TR_-_Data_protection_in_Armenia_-_overview.pdf. <https://armenian-lawyer.com/business-immigration/gdpr-armenian-data-protection-compliance-guide>. <https://retrieve.am/steps-to-achieve-gdpr-alignment-in-armenian-business-operations>.

²⁵Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 1363-N of 18 August 2021. Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (2021-2026). <https://www.gov.am/files/docs/4737.pdf>. <https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docID=155373>.

²⁶Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for 2021-2026. Annex to Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 1363-N of 18 August. <https://www.gov.am/files/docs/4737.pdf>.

²⁷<https://dppa.un.org/en/elections>.

²⁸UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025. https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/UNDP_Gender_Equality_Strategy_2022-2025_EN_V2.pdf.

²⁹UN Support to the Design or Reform of Electoral Management Bodies. FP/01/2014 Policy Directive. https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/ead_pd_un_support_to_the_design_or_reform_of_embs_20140626_e.pdf.

³⁰Such as, IFES methodology on Cybersecurity in Elections Developing a Holistic Exposure and Adaptation Testing (HEAT) Process for Election Management Bodies, <https://aceproject.org/ero-en/ifes-cybersecurity-in-elections>.

³¹For example, DCAF's Armenia Cybersecurity Governance Assessment 2020, <https://www.dcaf.ch/sites/default/files/publications/documents/ArmeniaCybersecurityGovernanceAssessment.pdf>.

³²The 2022 European Committee on Democracy and Governance Guidelines on the use of information and communication technology in electoral processes within Council of Europe member states (<https://search.coe.int/cm?i=0900001680a575d9>) emphasise the importance of ensuring the availability and reliability of ICT solutions in electoral processes. These guidelines call for the implementation and regular testing of incident response and business continuity plans. Recommended security measures include managing access rights to systems, testing systems before elections, establishing protocols for updates during operations, implementing secure methods for transmitting information, adhering to data protection requirements, identifying irregularities within the system, and maintaining effective communication in the event of issues. The COE Guidelines also advocate adherence to international standards, such as the ISO 27000 series, which provide frameworks for information security management. Specifically, ISO/IEC 27001 outlines requirements for managing the security of assets, including financial data, intellectual property, employee information, and third-party data. UNDP's ICT and Cybersecurity Assessment of CEC identified significant gaps in compliance with ISO 27001 standards, highlighting the urgent need to upgrade CEC's infrastructure. Key areas for improvement include equipping CEC facilities with modern protective equipment, ensuring appropriate conditions for server rooms, and implementing secure access control systems for authorised personnel. Achieving compliance with ISO 27001 standards will establish a foundational framework for robust information and cybersecurity, enabling CEC to safeguard its electoral processes effectively.

³³Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation. UNDP and UNIFEM. 2016. <https://www.undp.org/publications/inclusive-electoral-processes-guide-electoral-management-bodies-promoting-gender-equality-and-womens-participation>.

³⁴UN Policy Directive on Promoting women's electoral and political participation through UN electoral assistance (FP/03/2013). https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/ead_pd_promoting_womens_electoral_political_participation_through_un_ea_20131224_e.pdf.

³⁵UN Guideline on Promoting the Electoral Rights of Persons with Disabilities through UN Electoral Assistance (FP/04/2012). https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/ead_guideline_electoral_rights_of_persons_with_disabilities_201220629_e.pdf.

³⁶https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/system/files/2022-01/C_2021_9435_F1_ANNEX_EN_V2_P1_1621110.PDF#:~:text=The%20Multi%2Dannual%20Indicative%20Programme,MIP%20may%20be%20reviewed%20accordingly

³⁷CEPA fully entered into force on 1 March 2021. The Government of Armenia is committed to CEPA implementation as a blueprint for strategic reforms. It confirms the relevance and validity of the existing Partnership Priorities as being directly aligned with Government policy objectives and with the five policy objectives of the Eastern Partnership.

³⁸Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (European Commission, Euratom) No 480/2009, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategy-documents/commission-work-programme/commission-work-programme-2025_en.

³⁹Launching the Global Europe Performance Monitoring System containing a Revised GERP. Commission Staff Working Document. European Commission. 25.1.2022, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5697-2022-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁴⁰Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. European Commission Work Programme 2025: Moving forward together: A Bolder, Simpler, Faster Union. Strasbourg, 11.2.2025. COM (2025) 45 final. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023DC0638>.

⁴¹The Strategy for Sweden's reform cooperation with Eastern Europe for 2021–2027 is a long-term framework which guides Sweden's assistance in support of reform agenda and promotion of sustainable and democratic developments, with a multi-dimensional poverty focus. <https://www.swedenabroad.se/globalassets/ambassader/moldavien-chisinau/documents/strategy-swedish-reform-cooperation-with-eastern-europe-2021-27.pdf>.

⁴²Development cooperation in South-Eastern Europe, the Eastern Partnership countries, and the Southern Caucasus prioritizes EU integration goals, focusing on economic growth, rule of law, climate action, connectivity, and security, as outlined in a recent EU strategy for the Black Sea region. Key efforts include supporting renewable energy and green infrastructure, enhancing digital and transport networks, strengthening the rule of law and anti-corruption measures, and promoting resilience against environmental and security threats. <https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/197124/bmz-transformationspartnerkonzept-englisch-barrierefrei.pdf>.

⁴³Through its "BMZ 2030" reform, which it undertook in 2020, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has increased its management capacity and effectiveness by significantly enhancing its focus in terms of areas addressed and partner countries, and by introducing new planning and strategy processes. <https://mf.gov.md/sites/default/files/BMZ%202030%20reform%20strategy.pdf>.

⁴⁴Based on this Charter, Japan implements development cooperation in a more effective and strategic manner in order to actively contribute to ensuring peace and prosperity of the international community and Japan. <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100514705.pdf>.

^{xiv} UNDP will hold decision-making authority in line with UNDP rules and policies.

^{xvi} The structures and resources of the UNDP Project MAP 2.0: Fostering Responsiveness, Effectiveness, Transparency, and Inclusiveness of Armenian Parliament (FORSETI) will be instrumental in fostering the implementation of this Project.

^{xvii} FP/01/2015.

https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/ead_pd_conduct_of_un_personnel_in_and_around_electoral_sites_20150804_e.pdf.

^{xlviii} The responsibilities of the board in this regard should follow [UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards \(SES\)](#) as codified in the PPM. It should be noted that while a project board can play a role in addressing or assisting with the compliance and stakeholder response (or grievance) mechanisms put in place for a given project (as part of their quality assurance and oversight function), this will be in addition to and does not substitute for UNDP's core responsibility to ensure compliance with the SES throughout the project management cycle as part of UNDP's Programming Quality Assurance system.

^{xliv} With the exception of responsible parties or any firms/entities engaged by the project to provide technical expertise with project funds

ⁱ UNDP has this special right since the ultimate legal and fiduciary accountability for a UNDP project, irrespective of modality, rests with UNDP and UNDP must (in line with its obligations to donors and to the Executive Board) be able to ensure that no action is taken by any body in a UNDP project that contravenes UNDP rules and regulations.

ⁱⁱ Including audit reports and spot checks.