

Technical Working Group on Elections

Tuesday 11 December 2012 at 11.00–12:30
UNDP Lebanon Country Office

Attendees

The following organisations attended:

1. European Union (EU)
2. International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)
3. National Democratic Institute (NDI)
4. Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) also representing Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform (CCER)
5. Partnership Centre for Development and Democracy (PCDD)
6. SKEyesCentre for Media and Cultural Freedom (SKEyes)
7. United Kingdom Embassy (UKE)
8. UN Development Programme (UNDP)
9. UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance Programme (LEAP)
10. UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UN RCO)
11. UN Special Coordinator's Office for Lebanon (UNSCOL)
12. United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
13. Women in Front (WIF)

The names and emails of representatives are annexed. The meeting was chaired by UNDP LEAP.

Minutes

1. Introductions and overview of TWGE methodology

The Technical Working Group on Elections (TWGE) provides a forum for coordination and information sharing by national and international actors engaged in providing support to the 2013 parliamentary elections in Lebanon. Secretariat support to the TWGE is provided by UNDP LEAP.

2. Briefing by UNDP LEAP on the elections timeframe, impending deadlines and operational preparations for the 2013 elections

UNDP LEAP provided an overview of the operational timeframe for the elections that has been prepared for the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, working on the assumption of a 9 June 2013 election day. The timeframe for voter registration was also provided. Copies of the timeframes will be distributed to all participants.

On Out-of-Country voting, LADE/CCER provided information they have received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the numbers of voters who have registered as overseas voters. In order for polling to take place, there must be more than 200 voters registered at an embassy. Currently, only three locations – Montreal and Ottawa in Canada, and Muscat in Oman – have met this criteria. Other locations that are expected to pass the threshold are: Paris (France), Freetown (Sierra Leone), Dakar (Senegal) and Rome (Italy).

On SCEC appointment, UNDP LEAP provided information that names of nominees had been provided by 5 of the 6 nominating bodies. However, there was still no date on when the SCEC would be appointed.

3. Update from TWGE participants on their electoral activities for the 2013 elections

- EU** Supporting civil society with a call for proposals that ends 21 Dec.
Supporting official preparations through UNDP LEAP.
Maintaining support for reform initiatives.
- IFES** Regional political finance programme, which includes Lebanon.
New project on electoral violence risk assessment (LEVRA).
- SKEyes** Establishing a hotline for journalists to provide advice on issues of protection.
Qualitative research on people's perception of the election through video interviews etc.
Monitoring of social media.
- PCDD** Running the 'Plan & Win' project with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung working with potential candidates.
- CCER** On-going advocacy for reform, including press conference on 13 Dec in relation to role of parliamentary committees reviewing the new law.
- LADE** Preparing the January launch of the observation project in order to send a message that elections should take place in June.
- UNSCOL** Will continue convening meetings of the Elections Forum
- UKE** Supporting LEVRA and UNDP LEAP
- SMART** Four projects: (1) focus on debate at universities (2) Women Advocates for Women's Votes (WAWVotes) working with campaign managers for women candidates (3) 'One Voice Can Change' aimed at new voters (4) 'Women Towards Parliament' (with Women In Front).
- NDI** Supporting civil society in the building a long-term constituency for reform, including focus groups.
Supporting LADE in the domestic observation project.
Regional training on campaigning.
Supporting civil society on women's participation issues, including development of an election-related declaration.
Unclear if NDI will deploy an international observation mission.
- WIF** Three projects: (1) promoting women to stand as candidates (2) supporting women standing as candidates (3) training media on representation of women as candidates.
- USAID** Supporting UNDP LEAP.

4. Discussion on electoral developments generally, including out-of-country voting

Discussion on the issue of what can be achieved in terms of reform without a change in the law. This included on whether uniform ballot papers can be adopted without legal amendment. The deadline for changing the law was identified as the date elections are called and candidate registration must start (i.e. not later than 11 March). There was also discussion on candidate

registration and interest from PCDD and SMART on including formal guidelines for the participants in their trainings.

5. Next TWGE meeting

It was tentatively agreed that the TWGE will meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. The next meeting will thus be on **Tuesday 8 January at 11:00**. Location will be confirmed.