

Technical Working Group on Elections

Wednesday December 11, 2013 from 9:30 till 11:00

UNDP Country Office

Attendees

The following organizations attended:

- LADE/CCER
- USAID
- Italian Embassy
- Canadian Embassy
- EU
- NDI
- Maharat foundation
- UNSCOL
- UNDP LEAP

Agenda

- A. Electoral developments,
- B. Presentation from LADE on the EU consortium project,
- C. Presentation on the Presidential election,
- D. Updates from TWGE participants.

Minutes

A: Election developments

(i) Sub-Committee on Electoral Law

LEAP gave an overview of the establishment, composition and mandate of the sub-committee on electoral law that is currently reviewing changes to the legal framework other than the electoral system (see presentation). Significantly, the sub-committee had invited LADE to attend one session to brief the committee on its recommendations for reform. The LADE representative at the TWGE stated that they were expecting invitations to further meetings of the sub-committee. LEAP noted that one of the reforms endorsed by the sub-committee was to remove any requirement for a future SCEC to have a confessional balance.

In the discussion, UNSCOL reported that many MPs appear not to consider the sub-committee to be of great relevance, highlighted by the lack of political reaction to the proposal to remove confessional representation on a SCEC.

(ii) Registration of expatriate voters

The presentation also referred to voter registration for expatriates following the Ministry of Foreign Affairs move in mid-October to reopen and ahead of the close of registration on 31 December. It was noted that there appears to be no specific awareness campaign to encourage expats to register, while key lessons learned from the 2012 experience – such as the need to ensure consistent information for interested voters – are still lacking. LADE stated that it is working on a social media campaign to motivate expatriates to register.

(iii) Voter registration update

The presentation included information on the 5 December start of the annual voter registration update.

B: Consortium on Civil Advocacy and Mobilization for Electoral Reform

Samer Abdallah from LADE presented the EU funded project: Civil Advocacy and Mobilization for Electoral Reform. This project will be implemented by a consortium composed of 7 organizations and they are: LADE, LPHU, RDFL, SKeyes, Maharat foundation, LTA, and ERIS. The project will be implemented in 3 phases of the project (see presentation) with the activities of each organization clearly outlined. Project activities had already started to be implemented (e.g. LPHU and RDFL workshops). In the case of elections not taking place, the Consortium expects to focus directly on advocacy for reforms. Within the project, LADE and LTA will apply separately for accreditation as election observers. The other groups will apply within the LADE umbrella.

C: Presidential Election

LEAP gave a presentation on the issues related to the presidential election. A broad discussion followed, and concluded with consensus that many of the issues were ambiguous and unpredictable.

D: Updates

- EU: In addition to the LADE-led consortium, the EU has extended funding for LEAP and provided additional funding. They have also concluded a process for three awards for civil society relating to democratic participation.
- NDI outlined its continuous work with CCER and LADE, including website and smart phone application development. In addition, NDI is working to building support for electoral reform with four grassroots organizations and a separate project to link decision-makers and citizens.
- Maharat outlined its work in media monitoring of 11 institutions over 2 months (September and October 2013) to assess the media coverage of the various political, security and refugee crisis facing Lebanon.

Next Meeting

UNDP LEAP will propose a date for the next meeting in January 2013.