

**United Nations Development Group Iraq Trust Fund**  
**Project #76508: G11-23**  
**Date and Quarter Updated: 01 October – 31 December 2011**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2011**

<b>Participating UN Organisation: UNDP (lead agency), UNOPS</b>					
<b>Sector: Governance</b>					
<b>Government of Iraq – Responsible Line Ministry: Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)</b>					
<b>Title</b>	Institutional Development Support to the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC)				
<b>Geographic Location</b>	All Governorates of Iraq				
<b>Project Cost</b>	<b>Total ITF Budget: USD 24, 861, 991</b> <b>UNDP: USD 13, 947, 279</b> <b>UNOPS: USD 10, 914, 712</b>				
<b>Duration</b>	36 months				
<b>Approval Date (SC)</b>	29 September 2010	<b>Starting Date</b>	18 October 2010	<b>Completion Date</b>	17 October 2013
<b>Project Description</b>	<p>This programme has been jointly developed by the UN and the Iraqi Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) to support the IHEC in its continued institutional development as a sustainable institution within the government structure of Iraq, carrying out its constitutional mandate independently, efficiently, transparently and accountably, in line with professional standards.</p> <p>The programme objectives are based on the results of a comprehensive IHEC capacity assessment in October/November 2009, recommendations from the IHEC and inputs of international advisors working closely with the IHEC on a day-to-day basis, and lessons learned from recent electoral events. These objectives aim to address significant gaps in the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Institutional framework and organisational capacity of the IHEC as Iraq’s permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution;</li> <li>2. Human resource capacity of the IHEC (staff skills, knowledge and resources) at both central and governorate office levels;</li> <li>3. Technological capacity of the IHEC to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner.</li> </ol>				
<b>Development Goal and Immediate Objectives</b>					
<p><b>Development goal:</b>  To contribute to an enhanced implementation of electoral processes in Iraq in line with the Governance Sector Outcome 1: <i>Strengthened electoral processes in Iraq</i> and the Iraq National development goal: <i>Strengthening good governance and improving security</i>.</p> <p><b>UNDAF (Links with but after project initiated.):</b>  Outcome 1: <i>Improved governance, including the protection of human rights</i>  1.2 <i>The Iraqi state has more efficient, accountable and participatory governance at national and sub-national levels.</i></p> <p><b>The programme’s immediate objective is:</b>  To support the IHEC in its continued institutional development as a sustainable institution within the government structure of Iraq, carrying out its constitutional mandate independently, efficiently, transparently and accountably, in line with professional standards.</p>					

<b>Outputs, Key activities and Procurement</b>	
<b>Outputs</b>	<p><b>JP Output 1: IHEC has strengthened institutional framework and organisational capacity to effectively conduct electoral processes as Iraq’s permanent electoral institution, established under the constitution</b></p> <p>Output 1.1: IHEC has improved institutional transparency and accountability;  Output 1.2: IHEC has improved institutional management structures and practices;  Output 1.3: IHEC has enhanced electoral management policies and processes.</p> <p><b>JP Output 2: IHEC has enhanced human resource capacity by improving staff skills, knowledge and resources at both central and governorate office levels for staff to fulfil their functions effectively</b></p> <p>Output 2.1: IHEC has enhanced internal professional development and capacity building strategy;  Output 2.2: IHEC staff have improved technical skills to fulfil their functions effectively.</p> <p><b>JP Output 3: IHEC has improved technological capacity to manage electoral processes in a sustainable manner</b></p>
<b>Activities</b>	<p>1.1.1 CoR reporting requirements reviewed with the IHEC  1.1.2 Board decisions published in Kurdish and Arabic  1.1.3 IHEC electoral regulatory framework reviewed  1.1.4 Electoral legal framework reviewed in cooperation with CoR Legal Committee  1.1.5 IHEC complaints process reviewed  1.1.6 Institutional framework for dispute resolution reviewed in cooperation with CoR Legal Committee, Accountability and Justice Commissioner, Electoral Judicial Panel  1.1.7 IHEC processes reviewed in relation to GoI regulations and procedures (admin, finance, contracts)  1.1.8. Number of capacity building activities<sup>1</sup> organised on transparency, accountability and legal framework  1.1.9 Number of personnel (male/female), representatives of relevant Iraqi partner institutions and external stakeholders engaged in capacity building activities on transparency, accountability and legal framework  1.1.10 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity  1.1.11 Number of consultants providing technical support to IHEC on improved transparency and accountability  1.2.1 IHEC SOPs drafted (finance, human resources, information management, administration approval processes)  1.2.2 IHEC reporting guidelines drafted  1.2.3 IHEC finance, human resources and inventory management systems assessed and upgraded  1.2.4 Number of management capacity building activities organised for enhancement of management structures and practices  1.2.5 Number of personnel (male/female) engaged in management capacity building activities  1.2.6 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity  1.2.7 Number of consultants providing technical support to IHEC to improve institutional management structures and practices  1.3.1 Assessment of voter registration policies, operational processes and systems completed, in cooperation with relevant Iraqi government bodies  1.3.2 Study of IDP data and voting patterns completed, in cooperation with Ministry of Displacement and Migration  1.3.3 Systems for managing political entity and candidate data assessed and upgraded</p>

<sup>1</sup> Capacity building activity’ refers to training, study visit, workshop, seminar, roundtable or election lessons learned event.

	<p>1.3.4 Voter information campaign evaluated</p> <p>1.3.5 IHEC governorate helpdesk and call centre services assessed and improved</p> <p>1.3.6 Number of capacity building activities held to enhance electoral management policies and processes</p> <p>1.3.7 Number of personnel and representatives of relevant Iraqi partner institutions (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities to enhance electoral management policies and processes</p> <p>1.3.8 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity</p> <p>1.3.9 Number of consultants providing technical support to the IHEC to enhance electoral management policies and processes</p> <p>2.1.1 Internal capacity building procedures and evaluation tools developed by IHEC</p> <p>2.1.2 Number of personnel (male/female) using resources provided to the IHEC resource centre (books, publications)</p> <p>2.1.3 Number of capacity building activities organised for IHEC CB personnel</p> <p>2.1.4 Number of IHEC CB personnel (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities</p> <p>2.1.5 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity</p> <p>2.1.6 Number of capacity building activities organised by IHEC CB Department</p> <p>2.1.7 Number of personnel (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities organised by IHEC CB Department</p> <p>2.1.8 Number of personnel (male/female) fully accredited as BRIDGE facilitator</p> <p>2.1.9 Number of consultants providing support to the IHEC in delivery of capacity building activities</p> <p>2.2.1 Number of capacity building activities<sup>7</sup> organised to enhance technical skills</p> <p>2.2.2 Number of personnel (male/female) engaged in capacity building activities to improve technical skills</p> <p>2.2.3 Percentage of participants satisfied with the relevance and usefulness of the activity</p> <p>2.2.4 Number of personnel (male/female) trained in use of graphic design and translation equipment</p> <p>2.2.5 Number of consultants providing technical support to improve IHEC staff technical skills</p> <p>3.1.1 Number of technological assessments completed (IT and communications)</p> <p>3.1.2 Voter registration systems and equipment upgraded</p> <p>3.1.3 GIS system developed</p> <p>3.1.4 Number of personnel (male/female) trained on the usage and maintenance of IT systems</p> <p>3.1.5 Percentage of trainees passing the end of training technical test</p> <p>3.1.6 ITC Disaster Recovery Plan is developed</p> <p>3.1.7 Strategy for improving data entry centre processes is developed</p> <p>3.1.8 Number of IHEC staff participating in a study visit on effective and efficient tabulation of results</p> <p>3.1.9 IHEC call centre systems assessed and upgraded</p> <p>3.1.10 Number of consultants providing technical support to improve IHEC's IT communication and technology</p>
<b>Procurement (major items)</b>	<p>Procurement planned under the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources for the IHEC resource centre (books, publications, equipment)</li> <li>• Graphic Design equipment</li> <li>• Translation equipment (dictionaries, glossaries, simultaneous interpretation)</li> <li>• Call centre equipment and software</li> <li>• Voter registration equipment and systems</li> <li>• GIS hardware and software equipment</li> <li>• Equipment for implementation of ITC disaster recovery plan</li> </ul>

<b>Funds Committed (UNDP)</b>	1,863,105	<b>% of approved</b>	13.5 %
<b>Funds Disbursed (UNDP)</b>	1,738,969	<b>% of approved</b>	12.5 %
<b>Forecast final date</b>	17 October 2013	<b>Delay (months)</b>	0
<b>Funds Committed (UNOPS)</b>	3,002,198	<b>% of approved</b>	27 %
<b>Funds Disbursed (UNOPS)</b>	2,639,151	<b>% of approved</b>	24 %
<b>Forecast final date</b>	17 October 2013	<b>Delay (months)</b>	0
<b>Funds Committed (total)</b>	4,865,303	<b>% of approved</b>	20 %
<b>Funds Disbursed (total)</b>	4,378,120	<b>% of approved</b>	18 %
<b>Direct Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Number of Beneficiaries</b>	<b>% of planned (current status)</b>	
Men (Target: 1471)	580	39 %	
Women (Target: 368)	150	41 %	
Children	n/a	n/a	
IDPs	n/a	n/a	
Others	n/a	n/a	
Indirect beneficiaries	By contributing to a transparent democratic electoral process, the programme benefits the population of Iraq.	n/a	
Employment generation (men/women)	Employment generation does not fall directly within the framework of this programme. However, consultancies or service provision contracts may take place during implementation of the programme, utilising Iraqi trainers and service providers wherever possible.	n/a	

<b>Quantitative achievements against objectives and results</b>			
	Target	Actual	<b>% of planned</b>
Output 1 / UNDP 1.1 IHEC has improved institutional transparency and accountability			27 %
Output 1.2 / UNDP IHEC has improved institutional management structures and practices			17 %
Output 1.3 / UNDP lead w UNOPS IHEC has enhanced electoral management policies and processes			22 %
Output 2.1 / UNDP lead w UNOPS IHEC has enhanced internal capacity building and professional development strategy			54%
Output 2.2 / UNOPS IHEC staff have improved technical skills to fulfil their functions effectively			64 %
Output 3.1 / UNOPS IHEC has improved technological capacities to support electoral processes in a sustainable manner			15 %

## **Qualitative achievements against objectives and results**

During the reporting period, the institutional development programme has continued to provide ongoing support to enhancing IHEC capacity in key priority areas of procurement, public outreach, electoral legal framework, graphic design, database development, project cycle management and capacity building. Additionally, activities were initiated in the areas of review of the strategy for domestic observation for elections, field coordination and election day reporting, security management and social media.

The IHEC-UN Projects Steering Committee and Project Management Committee held meetings to review progress in programme implementation in the fourth quarter of 2011. During these meetings, timelines were discussed and revised, and discussions were initiated on cost sharing arrangements for 2012.

### **Output 1.1: IHEC has improved institutional transparency and accountability**

During the reporting period, UNDP continued to place significant focus on the ongoing review of the applicable legal framework for future elections, including for district and sub-district elections and for Kurdistan Region Governorate Council elections.

The UNDP Legal/Complaints Advisor completed a report analysing the Electoral Law on Provincial, District and Sub-district Councils (Law 36 of 2008) and the current proposed amendment to the law. Following this, on 19 October and 02 November, the Legal/Complaints Advisor facilitated a two-day seminar on this for the IHEC Legal Committee. The seminar covered possible inconsistencies in the legal framework, implications of the law and proposed amendments on election operations, and how to address these issues with the Council of Representatives. Participants identified the main challenges as the need for clarity in defining the electoral system and procedures for vacant seat allocation, the requirement to develop a stand-alone IHEC database for voter registration, given that neither the Ministry of Trade's database nor data amassed by the Central Bureau of Statistics are adequate to develop a voter list at the district and sub-district level, and concerns related to the unclear boundaries of some districts or sub-districts and disputes between governorates over the control of some sub-districts. The IHEC Legal Committee is preparing a report on its recommendations regarding the law to the full Board of Commissioners for its consideration.

The UNDP Legal/Complaints Advisor also completed an analysis of the strengths and weakness of the Electoral Law for Kurdistan Region Governorate, District and Sub-district Councils (Kurdistan Law No 4 of 2009) and proposed amendments to the law. On the basis of this analysis, the Legal/Complaints Advisor provided guidance and advice, through a series of three working sessions in October, to the IHEC Kurdistan Regional Election Office on its approach to proposed amendments to the law, which were under discussion at the time by the Kurdistan Region parliamentary legal committee. These working sessions also discussed how to develop or amend IHEC regulations to support the Law once it is enacted.

The UNDP Legal/Complaints Advisor finalized a follow-up review to his assessment of the IHEC electoral complaints system undertaken earlier in 2011. This included discussion of the assessment report with the IHEC and consideration of how recommendations can be incorporated into complaints processes for forthcoming elections.

Given the significant impact social media has had this year in the Arab region on mobilisation for political participation, UNDP in cooperation with IREX Iraq organized two four-day training sessions on social media. These took place in Erbil on 03-06 and 12-15 December and were attended by 26 IHEC staff of public outreach and other departments. Training aimed to develop capacity to maximize available social media networks for electoral public outreach campaigns and other IHEC activities online. The programme covered objectives, opportunities and mechanisms for usage of social media, including You Tube, Facebook and Twitter. IREX provided the specialist trainer and UNDP implemented the activity. Further sessions are planned in 2012 to discuss concrete ideas on how social media can be used in the public outreach campaign for forthcoming Kurdistan Region Governorate Council elections.

## **Output 1.2: IHEC has improved institutional management structures and practices**

During the reporting period, UNDP continued to provide support to capacity development of IHEC staff in the priority area of procurement. Following recommendations arising from lessons learned reviews of the 2010 Council of Representatives election to decentralise some procurement authorities, UNDP organized a training programme for relevant staff of IHEC Governorate Election Offices (GEOs). Two five day sessions on 'Introduction to Public Procurement' were conducted on 16 to 20 October and 30 October to 03 November in Erbil. A total of 50 IHEC staff from the GEOs participated in the training, which was delivered by the UNDP Procurement Advisor together with IHEC senior procurement staff. Training consisted of seven key topics, including risk assessment, management of sourcing relevant markets, bids and proposal evaluations and contract management. The programme aimed to prepare GEO staff to undertake planning and implementation of public tenders in line with the electoral calendar and applicable legislation in Iraq.

Additionally, the UNDP Procurement Advisor conducted a two-day training on Bids and Proposal Evaluation on 12 and 13 Dec 2011 in Baghdad for 15 staff from the IHEC National Office. The course programme covered all steps of the evaluation process, focussing on the series of measures in place to safeguard the entire procurement process, as well as presentation and discussion of different evaluation methods as a mechanism to obtain the best value for money principle.

Several meetings were organised with a group of IHEC female employees from different sections to reflect on gender issues related to the institution and to electoral processes as a whole. It was agreed to establish regular meetings of the group and to develop a work plan for 2012, with guidance provided by the UNDP Gender Advisor and UNAMI electoral team gender focal point. The group intends to compile comprehensive data on gender issues, to provide the new IHEC Board of Commissioners with relevant information on gender in electoral processes and within the IHEC as an institution.

## **Output 1.3: IHEC has enhanced electoral management policies and processes**

A priority area for support by UNDP under Output 1.3 during the reporting period continued to be enhancing IHEC's ability to provide appropriate and effective voter education for electoral events. Initiatives were developed to broaden knowledge of Iraqi and comparative electoral public outreach experiences, and target improvement of specific skillsets.

On 03-10 October, eight IHEC staff from the Public Outreach Department and senior management participated in a study visit hosted by the South African Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The activity aimed to acquaint IHEC staff with the structures, best practices, and experiences of an established public outreach department in another independent Electoral Management Body. The IHEC delegation took note of the experiences of the South African IEC in the preparation and implementation of its communication plan and the mechanisms for cooperation with civil society organizations and political parties. The activity also raised useful issues for consideration in expanding work in the area of civic education, and in promoting the engagement of external stakeholders in this.

UNDP also held a facilitated working session from 09 to 13 October for IHEC trainers, to enable them to complete development of training materials for a training programme for IHEC public outreach staff on electoral technical procedures. This session included review of training materials, consideration of appropriate exercises and practice of delivery, with the overall goal of ensuring preparedness and quality of training to be delivered by IHEC trainers to public outreach staff. Seven IHEC staff participated in the working session, which resulted in agreement on the final agenda and revised materials, for delivery of training in early 2012.

The third UNDP activity in the area of public outreach was a training workshop, 'Overseeing the Production of Audio/Visual Materials for Electoral Public Service Announcements (PSAs)'. This took place on 16-20 October in Amman, Jordan, and was attended by fifteen IHEC National Office and GEO public outreach officials. The workshop focused on social marketing theory, providing step-by-step guidance on planning and production of radio, television and documentary materials for electoral PSAs. Time was also spent in practical application of planning and production based on key target groups, such as women and young voters. This was

the second session of a previously implemented workshop, with training delivered by Prisma, a Jordanian company which specialises in social marketing and behaviour change communication.

As follow up to previous UN electoral support to local observer networks and in preparation for future electoral events, a roundtable on domestic observation strategy took place in Erbil on 07 to 09 October 2011. The roundtable was facilitated by Clic-Consultants and implemented by UNOPS. The 30 participants included IHEC senior managers and public outreach staff, representatives from Iraqi observer networks, INGOs with experience in electoral observation in Iraq and other relevant stakeholders. The roundtable aimed to initiate discussions on ways to improve coordination between IHEC and national observer networks and ensure continued, sustainable observation of future elections. At the end of the roundtable a set of recommendations and an action plan were agreed, and a committee was also formed to follow up on workshop recommendations, consisting of representatives from the IHEC, Iraqi observer networks, NDI and UNOPS.

During the reporting period, two initiatives were developed to support development of IHEC staff technical knowledge and skills in issues relating to effective and accountable implementation of election operations, including voter registration, polling and counting periods.

Training on Operational Data Management was conducted in Erbil from 15 to 19 November 2011 for 15 IHEC operations staff from the national office and the Kurdistan Regional Election Office (KREO). The activity is part of a series of training sessions that aim to enhance IHEC staff capacity in election data collection and reporting as well as to improve IHEC's existing processes for data management for field coordination purposes. This training session focused on improving the effectiveness of data aggregation and systematisation with reference to various examples from other countries and analysis of different methods of data management. A practical exercise on election communication was conducted, involving 32 IHEC staff from the KREO and Erbil GEO in addition to workshop participants. This was a real-time test of reporting through all levels in order to estimate time and resources required for reporting and consolidating data, and potential ways to maximise accuracy and efficiency of the reporting process. The training was implemented by UNDP, with the programme developed and delivered by a consultant who specialises in election data management.

Following an IHEC request for additional sessions on anti-fraud, the UNDP Electoral Programme Advisor facilitated a training of trainers' session in Baghdad for three IHEC trainers on how to detect and respond to electoral fraud. Training materials were provided to the IHEC for use and adaptation in internal IHEC trainings, which aimed to stimulate thought and discussion on various scenarios of possible fraud from different countries. This was followed on 13 December by these IHEC trainers themselves delivering of an introductory session on anti-fraud to 23 IHEC participants in the National Office in Baghdad. It is planned by the IHEC that further sessions will take place for more IHEC participants in 2012.

### **Output 2.1: IHEC has enhanced internal capacity building and professional development strategy**

During the last quarter, an 'IHEC Guide on Design, Monitoring and Evaluation' was developed in response to requests from the IHEC for support in improving monitoring and evaluation of capacity building activities. This quarter, the guide was discussed with IHEC capacity building staff to ensure that the content was understood and relevant to the needs of the Capacity Building Department. Further work is required for the IHEC to develop a framework for project implementation and to agree its standards for monitoring activities. Plans are underway for a broad programme in 2012 to support the IHEC in establishing appropriate structures and practices for monitoring and evaluation of projects and activities.

Electoral programme staff continued to provide guidance to the IHEC Capacity Building Department on development and implementation of internal IHEC projects and activities. This includes improving coordination with the GEOs on implementation of activities, developing appropriate activity tracking mechanisms, the establishment of a resource centre, and the identification of a suitable, dedicated training room within the IHEC National Office building in Baghdad. All guidance to the IHEC Capacity Building Department is undertaken jointly by UNDP, UNOPS and UNAMI.

## **Output 2.2: IHEC staff have improved technical skills to fulfil their functions effectively**

During the reporting period, continuing focus was given to implementation of the agreed software development training plan for IHEC database developers. This was developed by UNDP, UNOPS, UNAMI and IFES as part of a longer term strategy to improve IHEC capacity to execute all projects relating to developing and maintaining complex database systems. Module 1 and Module 2 of the database training programme were implemented in the first three quarters of this year. Module 3, on SQL Server, is currently underway. The first session for 12 IHEC participants took place from 11 September to 12 November, with all participants passing the MS certification exams. The second and last session for 12 additional participants started on 21 November and will run to 24 January. All database training under the programme to date has been implemented by UNOPS and delivered by Providence International.

Additionally, in order to further support this capacity development of IHEC database developers, UNOPS finalised the recruitment of a national database consultant. This consultant is working on location at the IHEC offices in Baghdad and has been providing guidance and on-job training to IHEC staff on a daily basis in relevant areas, such as database development for the voter registry.

Training on project cycle management leading to examination for PRINCE2 Certification (Foundation and Practitioner) took place in Erbil from 02 to 13 October 2011. Twelve IHEC staff participated in the intensive training programme delivered by Mentor Training and Consulting and implemented by UNOPS. PRINCE2 is a process-based approach for project management, providing an easily tailored and scalable methodology for the management of all types of projects. All twelve participants passed the foundation exam while none passed the practitioner exam. The training was nevertheless found to be of great use and led to participants holding an introductory session on project management for other IHEC staff in Baghdad.

Support to developing skills and knowledge of staff of the IHEC Graphic Design Unit continued, through both on-going guidance and targeted training activities. A two-day training was held on 16-17 October at the IHEC National Office on the use of digital cameras and the mechanics of photography. This covered principles and practice of digital photography, to enable IHEC graphic designers to produce high quality images for design of election materials. Additionally, advanced training on graphic design animation was provided for six IHEC staff, with courses on Adobe After Effects and Adobe Flash CS5 taking place in Amman on 15 November - 13 December, delivered by Providence International. The training aimed to increase knowledge and professionalism of IHEC graphic designers in production of cartoons and video materials for voter education and voter information campaigns. All six participants passed the final exams with high grades.

Practical, hands-on training for 17 IHEC National Office Safety and Security staff was held in Baghdad from 21 November to 01 December, implemented by the UNOPS Security Advisor. This covered Fire Safety, Security Screening, Floor Security and Monitoring with instructions on Command and Control procedures. The exercise emphasized standard operating procedures and the importance of maintaining situational awareness on each floor and station of the IHEC National Office.

## **Output 3: IHEC has improved technological capacities to support electoral processes in a sustainable manner**

The first of a series of trainings for the IHEC ICT Section, which started on 31 July 2011, was completed on 31 October, implemented by UNOPS. This aimed to create the expertise required within the IHEC to maintain a basic network based on Windows Server 2008 and to address deficiencies detected in the overall IHEC infrastructure. Participants were divided into two groups of six for training in two stages. Eleven out of the twelve participants passed the Microsoft Certification exams. Training was delivered by Providence International, who reported that great progress had been made by the participants but also emphasised the importance of follow-up through on-job training and e-learning in order to maximise benefits of the training. A plan is now being made for training using an e-learning programme developed by Providence International.

The national ICT advisor continued on-job training of IHEC ICT staff to improve the configuration of various components of the IT infrastructure, in order to enhance the speed and effectiveness of the IHEC network. On-going guidance is also being provided on stackwise technology, to streamline connectivity of the infrastructure.



### **Main implementation constraints & challenges (2-3 sentences)**

An important aspect of the UN's support to the electoral process is the close relationship with the IHEC and daily presence in Baghdad, working with the IHEC counterparts. From January-August 2011, the main constraint was the limited access of UN personnel to the IHEC National Office in Baghdad, thus reducing face-to-face time with IHEC counterparts. This, however, improved in September 2011, with new measures in place to increase UN access to the IHEC facilities and improved IHEC security management, due to the efforts of the UNOPS Senior Security Advisor, recruited under the programme. Regular access was thereby facilitated for UN advisors to the IHEC for most of the reporting period.

A further challenge at present is the selection of the new IHEC Board of Commissioners, due in late April 2012 at the end of the five-year term of the current Board of Commissioners. In October 2011, a 21-member parliamentary committee representing all political blocs was established to undertake the selection process, according to Law 11/2007 on the IHEC. The selection process, managed by the committee, has since been on-going. This at present places constraints on institutional development support on management issues, given forthcoming changes to the IHEC Board of Commissioners and potential implications this may have for other areas of IHEC management and staffing. UNAMI, UNDP and UNOPS continue to emphasise the importance of retention of existing staff and existing capacity, and the crucial need to ensure that the selection process is conducted in a professional and transparent manner for IHEC to be a credible and legitimate institution to organize future electoral exercises. In the meantime, activities targeting development of IHEC senior management skills are reduced until the selection process is completed and IHEC management positions are confirmed.

With regard to Output 3, there has also been reduced technical advisory support for information communications and technology guidance to the IHEC because of challenges in recruitment and retention of appropriate ITC Advisors. Plans have been put in place to mitigate these challenges, which should take effect in early 2012.