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Dear Reader,

A frequent feedback that the project team receives reads: “You are conducting an impressive amount of activities, but what is your overall concept, what is the “bigger picture”?

In order to better explain our approach we have included an article on page 2 “PSP Storyline - the Bigger Picture”. Since its start in 2013 the project has matured in the sense that it developed from a mechanism that primarily passed funds and resources to parliaments to a team of experts which provides know-how and technical assistance to national counterparts.

In this respect the highlight of this month’s activities was a seminar on procurement law which shall enable the NFP Budget and Finance Committee to finalize the draft law.

Upcoming

◆ SL HoR board meeting 21 August 2015
◆ PL HoR board meeting 25 August
◆ NFP project board meeting 27 August 2015
◆ NFP 6th sessions closes on 27 August
◆ NFP Workshop on Counter terrorism Law/ Money Laundering Law
◆ NFP ICT Needs Assessment
◆ PL HoR M&E Workshop
◆ SL HoR M&E Workshop
◆ PSP staff in collaboration with the planning units of PL & SL parliaments developing M&E plans for each of PL & SL Houses of Representatives
◆ PL HoR workshop on Budgeting and Financial Oversight

The UNDP Parliamentary Support Project (PSP) provides support to the NFP, and the Parliaments of Puntland and Somaliland in order to capacitate them to operate as inclusive, transparent and effective law-making, oversight and representative bodies. The project provides technical assistance to

1. enact quality legislation and to maintain effective oversight over the government
2. establish effective institutions, with a functioning administration and infrastructure
3. empower MPs to represent and remain accountable to the people and to provide leadership

The Project is supported by the European Union, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and UNDP.

The total budget for 2013-2016 is 11.7 million USD.
The UNDP Parliamentary Support Project seeks to increase the ability of the National Federal Parliament, Somaliland Parliament (HoR) and Puntland Parliament (HoR) to exercise their basic functions: representation, legislation, and oversight. Additionally it also works to strengthen the links between citizens and lawmakers.

A budget analysis conducted by the Project indicated that the vast part of the NFP budget (76%) and of the SL HoR (85%) are spent for human resource related cost. In practice this means that most activities of the three parliaments need to be financed by donor funding.

As the largest contributor the project in initially had the important function to “keep the parliaments’ doors open and the electricity running”. The project continues to provide material assistance with regard to procurement of essential office equipment, covering key expenses and contributing to staff costs. However, there was a clear shift during the past months to enhance activities of the project which focus on developing capacity and provide technical assistance.

**SUPPORT TO LAW MAKING**

Initial support has been focused on capacity building of committee staff with regard to enhance their research capacity in order to provide support to MPs. Blue prints for NFP committee reports have been developed and MPs can now rely on a significant number of trained young graduates working in the committees. Since 2015 the project involves in direct technical support to specific legal projects (e.g. procurement law) by recruiting subject-matter experts to work with the respective committees.

Another focus is support to improve the internal governance frame work and to bring it in line with international best practice. An example is the support provided to the PL HoR for the revision of the Rules of Procedures.

**STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

End 2014/15 a specialized company assessed the institutional capacity of all three parliaments against the HACT criteria (Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers). Based on the recommendations received the project jointly with the Secretariats developed capacity building action plans and national experts have been recruited with project funds which are advising the parliaments on necessary organisational changes, revision of procedures and processes and conduct training of staff. Once completed there will be an increased level of accountability, transparency, internal and external control.

Another activity is the Young Graduates Programme which provides the NFP with 40 YG who meanwhile build the back-bone of the National Federal Parliament secretariat’s work force. Project’s efforts to build or re-enforce Security Parameters shall provide for a saver environment for MPs and staff. The upgrading of the parliaments’ ICT infrastructure is one of the key priorities for the remaining months of 2015.

**EMPOWERING MPs / ESTABLISHING a LINK to the POPULATION**

With support by the project all parliaments are engaged in oversight missions to different regions. Findings are used to present reports to the plenaries highlighting need for improvement. With the help of the project (planning, funding) five parliamentary constituency offices have been established in Somaliland. A similar initiative is planned for the National Federal Parliament. These offices shall bring MPs closer to the population and shall provide a forum where average citizens can meet MPs and voice their requests.
**Overview about LoA Implementation**

**National Federal Parliament**

The NFP has implemented regional outreach activities during its recess and LoA funds were used to cover expenses associated with these outreach activities. As part of a south-south know-how exchange the NFP, using LoA funds, organized a workshop on drafting Parliamentary Rules of Procedures for the newly formed Galmudug assembly which was attended by 12 MPs from Galmudug. Moreover, 13 MPs and 1 secretariat staff of the NFP attended a procurement law-drafting workshop in Nairobi between 29 July and 4 August 2015. During the workshop MPs worked intensively on the text of the draft law.

Project contribution to salaries / running costs: Young Graduates salaries for July paid; internet fee for the Office of the Speaker and the parliament covered; three local experts (chief technical advisor, media & reporting officer & senior resource officer) recruited; tendering for a national company for capacity building started.

**SomaliLand House of Representatives**

To exercise their representation and oversight duties four committees of the SL HoR visited Awdal, Sahil, Togdheer, and Sool regions of SomaliLand. The House similarly hired a national expert to help the establishment of Hansard and legislative archive of the House. Three legislation volumes comprising the years 1991 till 2015 Statutes Acts has been collected and published. The parliamentary Hansard for the years 2005-2015 has been established in both electronic and paper formats. The project provided technical and financial supports to the five regional constituency offices. Using LoA funds the HoR paid rent, utility, and stationary bills of these regional offices.

To respond to ABRIMO findings, SL HoR hired a national consultancy firm to assist secretariat staff in the admin, finance, Human Resources and procurement functions of the House. The positive impact was already visible with regard to the preparation of the last financial report for the second quarter of 2015.

All above activities were financed using LoA funds provided by the UNDP Parliamentary Support Project.

**Puntland House of Representatives**

Using LoA funds PL HoR recruited a national consultant who carried out an ICT needs assessment re the Parliament and then together with the HoR produced an ICT action plan. The HoR also furnished the offices of the SG, the 2nd Deputy Speaker, the Human Rights and Environment committees’ offices and a large office space occupied by department directors. The HoR also started to recruit national experts. A professional accountant was contracted in July and a recruitment of an internal auditor is at its final stage.

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**Meeting with the Chair of the Women’s Parliamentary Forum**

As part of UNDP’s continued support to the NFP, a meeting was held with the Chair of the Women’s Parliamentary Forum (WPF), Honorable Bibi Khalif Mohamed. The WPF is currently working on a census of women in government positions, is engaged in consultations with CSOs to increase the number of women in the parliament in 2016, is working to ensure that there are female members appointed to the various independent commissions, and is also engaged in reviewing draft legislation.

The project discussed ways the WPF can participate in the review of the Provisional Constitution and ensure that the review process focuses on women’s rights, gender issues, and quotas for female MPs. The WPF could engage with CSOs and stakeholders; conduct public consultations; research other countries’ efforts; develop a communication/public outreach plan; consult with Committees, Leadership and Ministries; and, engage the international community. UNDP pledged support to the WPF for its ongoing efforts.
Procurement Law Workshop Organized in Nairobi

A 7-day procurement workshop for members of the Budget, Finance and Planning Committee (BFPC) of the National Federal Parliament was held from July 29 to August 4, 2015 in Nairobi. The workshop was conducted by a UNDP procurement consultant (Mr. Dahir Warsame) and participated by 14 members of the BFPC. The objective of the workshop was:

1. to further the MPs’ knowledge of regarding procurement, concessions and asset disposal including legal and institutional arrangements
2. to assist the BFPC in the review and modifications of the Procurement, Concession and Disposal bill that has been presented to NFP for debate and enactment.

The consultant, who is Somali native speaker and worked many years for the World Bank, gave insights of the issues related to topic 1 in the first one-and-a-half days and then worked with the participating MPs on the review and revisions of the draft bill.

Mr. Warsame carried out the introductory session and explained recommended changes in Somali language. The participating MPs progressed with the review of the Bill and a revised text is ready for fine tuning. The members of the workshop also started translating the bill into Somali language. However, due to time constraints and the need for assistance of a Somali-speaking lawyer, BFPC decided to complete the translation in Mogadishu.

Based on remarks made by a number of MPs at the closing of the workshop, BFPC commended the project for arranging the workshop. It is planned that the consultant will continue assisting the MPs in finalizing the draft procurement law.

As part of DFID’s overall monitoring of project activities IBTCI, a specialized company, conducted third-party monitoring of the entire workshop.

Capacity building with regard to the ABRIMO assessments for the National Federal Parliament; the HoR of Somaliland and of Puntland and the Puntland Ministry of Constitution, Federal Affairs and Democratization, the Parliamentary Support Project continued.

National Federal Parliament: The recruitment of a consulting firm for National Federal Parliament (NFP) is ongoing with the anticipation of launching the implementation of the capacity building services from the month of September on.

The objective of the capacity building activities is to address financial management and internal control deficits of the NFP identified through micro capacity assessments in 2014/15.

Puntland House of Representatives and Puntland MoCFAD: To strengthen internal controls, internal audit charters have been developed for these two institutions. Both institutions began a recruitment process to hire an internal auditor. In addition, PSP assisted the two institutions to develop guidelines for conducting financial and procurement transactions, ensuring that there is sufficient segregation of duties. The guidelines ensure that different functional responsibilities are performed by different individual staff members, detailing the responsibility of each officer involved in procurement and asset management.

Somaliland House of Representatives: A local consulting firm conducted a three-day workshop on financial management and internal control for key secretariat staff. The staff also received on-job-training to ensure that they follow the accounting and procurement manual whose development was funded by the Project. Capacity building activities also included development of several forms and vouchers necessary for conducting financial transactions.
The 35th session of the Puntland HoR ended on Thursday 30 July 2015 thereby setting MPs off for a short recess. PL HoR Secretary General Mr. Ali Ahmed Salah addressed the progresses achieved during the 35th session to the plenary highlighting that the parliament has debated and approved key legislations; the parliament endorsed the recently appointed members of the cabinet and that several ministers were called upon for questioning.

Addressing the media Speaker Hon. Said Hassan Shire stated that the parliament has passed 2015 annual budget totalling USD 60.20 mill. which is twice as much as 2014’s annual budget (29 million). It is expected that the 2015 annual budget will lead to improved security and healthcare services as well as infrastructure and economic development. The HoR did not have time to approve the Rule of Procedures and review the Constitution and postponed it to the subsequent session.

In his closing remarks the Speaker stated that the Puntland parliament would remain committed to supporting constructive political dialogue, national reconciliation and justice, consensus-building, and good governance in a spirit of genuine cooperation for lasting peace in Somalia.

PL Parliament 35th Session Ended on July 30

With regard to this findings the consultant recommended to:

- Develop a parliamentary website that meets the standards of the Inter-Parliamentary Union guidelines for parliamentary websites.
- Dispose existing ICT equipment/facilities and replace it with more efficient hardware and software facilities
- Upgrade the ICT skills of the secretariat staff
- Develop and implement proper ICT maintenance procedures and schedules
- Improve internet services available for the parliamentarians

Based on these findings, the consultant has been required to develop a comprehensive ICT investment plan to be implemented as part of the 2015 / 2016 AWPs of the project.

The first steps in this direction have already been taken. Puntland parliament with support of the project team has immediately developed and advertised Terms of Reference for a national expert to develop a parliamentary website for the PL House of Representatives (http://puntlandi.com/shaqo-ka-banaan-baarlamaanka-puntland-parliamentary-website-development/).

The Puntland parliament website would serve as a tool to communicate with citizens in order to increase the awareness of the public and to be a site to look for parliament activities thereby increasing the outreach and accountability of MPs.
Training on Outreach Materials and Skills Conducted

Somaliland HoR with support by the project (funding, planning) in 2014 established five regional constituency offices in five regions (Maroodijeex, Togdheer, Sahil, Sool, and Sanag) to support MPs and committees to connect with the constituencies and to conduct outreach activities. Along with this project staff in Hargeisa organized between the 4th and 6th of August a workshop which enhanced the communication and outreach skills of MPs and constituency office staff. Twenty-five MPs and constituency offices staff attended the workshop. Having both MPs and staff in the workshop provided an opportunity to test the draft brochure of the constituency offices which a UNDP consultant had produced together with the Secretariat. The workshop also facilitated discussions re the preparation of additional brochures such as communication and outreach materials.

At the opening of the workshop, Hon. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi emphasized on the importance of outreach and direct communication with citizens in the different regions of Somaliland and the significant role of constituency offices in supporting the outreach and representational functions of MPs. Hon. Abdirahman expressed his appreciation for UNDP’s continuous support of the SL HoR functions.

Using the skills gained during the first two days of the workshop, participants on the last day of the workshop developed individual outreach action plans for each constituency office.

Training on Gender-Sensitive Budgeting Implemented

On 8th / 9th of August UNDP Parliamentary Support Project implemented a two-day training workshop on gender-sensitive budgeting in Hargeisa. MPs of Somaliland HoR, HoR staff, and representatives from civil society organizations attended the workshop.

The workshop aimed at discussing the concept of gender sensitive budget and explaining the importance of analyzing the impact of the national budget on women. The workshop provided detailed information on how to integrate gender aspects into the budget. The workshop also facilitated interaction between participants. MPs and participants from women’s rights CSOs discussed the need to involve women and other key stakeholders in the budgeting process.
August 1st 2015, in Kismayo, Jubaland will be a date long to remember for young Jubalanders in their school history lessons as the day when Jubaland adopted its first Provisional Constitution in history. UNDP has been on the front line of constitutional support here since the beginning of March 2015. At the Constituent Assembly, on August 1st, 300 official delegates voted unanimously to adopt the Provisional Constitution of Jubaland. This was the final day of a long process which began three months earlier with the nomination by the Interim Jubaland Administration of a 15 person all-clan Constitutional Drafting Committee, whose members were instructed to seek the views and vision of all Jubalanders in their villages and communities. This process was designed as a ground-up constitutional consultation. From Doble to Kismayo opinions were expressed peaceably and loudly, but determinedly: People wanted an end to corruption, an end to abuse of human rights. They wanted free and transparent elections for all. And a change to the subjection of women. A parliament that would truly represent them and a government that will be accountable.

A Constitution does not guarantee peace and happiness, but it will lay the foundation stones of the new Jubaland. The adopted provisional Constitution stipulates:
- The formation of the State of Jubaland, as part of Somalia
- A State Assembly to be elected by all Jubalanders in a free and universal vote;
- A universally elected President
- Supremacy of the Federal Provisional Constitution.
- A government / executive that will be accountable to parliament for its actions and spending
- Constitutional support for the equitable treatment of women and their fair place in Jubaland society and institutions
- Courts of Law that are free from corruption.

Mr. David Payne, UNDP Consultant and Canadian Constitutional and Parliamentary Specialist has been in Jubaland for several months, and has been mentoring IJA and the Drafting Committee throughout the process. He advised the Drafting Committee on international best practice and how to remain consistent with the Provisional Constitution. Somalia Stability Fund (SSF) contributed to the process by planning the outreach consultations. The adoption of the Constitution was an important milestone in the Jubaland state formation process. As one delegate stated on leaving the Convention Hall. “We have spoken: but will they (the government) listen?” “Time will tell, but we will help you and them,” responded David Payne.