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UPCOMING EVENTS

♦ Project board meetings to take place in Mogadishu, Garowe and Hargeisa end of Jan/ beginning of Feb
♦ Legislative drafting workshop for Somaliland HoR 23-25 January
♦ Project meeting with ISWA parliament end of January

Dear Reader,

Working with parliaments in 2016 will include a number of challenges: The terms of the National Federal Parliament will end in August 2016 and the process of how to form a new parliament still needs to be defined; it is expected that a certain percentage of new MPs will join the parliament who will need training. Newly formed assemblies in Jubaland, Galmudug, ISWA and possibly in Hiran/Middle Shabelle need substantive technical and material support; a revised constitution is expected to be adopted during the first half of the year.

In order to be able to address the needs for technical and material assistance of the increased number of parliaments the project currently is actively reaching out to donor partners in order to mobilize the necessary material resources for the support to the soon-to-be seven parliaments.

The project team wishes all readers of the newsletter a Happy, Safe and Prosperous Year 2016

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.

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From the point of view of project implementation 2015 has been a very successful year. Overall the delivery rate has reached USD 4.9 million which is a significant increase compared with previous years (2013; 1.4 million, 2014; 2.6 million). Parallel to that the project succeeded to mobilize a significant amount of resources: Norway contributed an additional USD 366,000, Sweden USD 250,000 and UNDP added 1.2 million of TRAC funds.

Beyond this quantitative increase of support the project in particular focused on establishing a proper balance between material support and provision of technical advice with a specific focus on capacity building. Considering that the National Federal Parliament, the Puntland HoR and the Somaliland HoR only receive limited funds through their respective state budgets the majority of activities of these parliaments in 2015 was funded through the UNDP Parliamentary Support Project:

Major achievements during the past year were:

- Substantive support to foster legislation, e.g. with regard to Procurement / Concession Law, Anti-Money Laundering Law, Counter-Terrorism Bill, Administrative law and the Rape Act has been provided to the NFP and the Somaliland HoR.
- Based on a capacity assessment in the beginning of the year the administrative structures with regard to admin, finance, HR, procurement and assets management of all three parliaments have been significantly strengthened.
- Capacity of MPs and parliamentary staff has been augmented with a total of 776 persons (650 male and 126 female) participating in trainings, workshops or seminars.
- By providing funding and advice to outreach activities (field visits, oversight trips, conflict mediation, constituency offices) the project assisted MPs to better interact with the population.
- With the completion of the NFP security parameter wall and ongoing construction work in Garowe and Hargeisa the security of MPs and staff has been significantly improved.
- Cooperation with newly formed parliaments has started and assemblies in Jubaland and Gal-mudug received technical and material support for the initial start-up phase.

With the recruitment of three international and six national staff most key positions of the project team have been filled during 2015.

According to plan the security parameter wall construction to protect the NFP Plenary Building has been completed in end of December 2015. The compound is now protected by a 684 m long and three meter high wall built of concrete, stones and steel. A 174 m long wall divides the parking area from the inner premises. In addition at appropriated locations seven watch-towers and four security huts have been erected to provide adequate fighting positions for the forces defending the parliamentary compound. The total costs of the construction are close to 360,000 USD.

With the security parameter completed Members of Parliament can convene in a much safe environment. As a follow up the project in 2016 will assist the NFP to improve the security related Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). With these measures in place it is expected that the NFP is better prepared against possible attacks as happened twice in 2014.
PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT PROJECT

LoA Implementation by the National Counterparts

National Federal Parliament
NFP using the funds provided through LoA organized a final phase of workshops on Anti-money Laundering Bill and Public Procurement bill for the budget/finance committee. This committee also organized a public hearing on this draft bill and the committee of Economic and Trade organized a public hearing on foreign investment draft bill; NFP organized a one day public outreach meeting at the opening of the 7th session of the parliament for various groups in the society including, women, youth organizations and persons with disabilities. The NFP organized oversight missions for parliamentary committees to South West, Jubbaland and Galmudug States; also parliamentary mission went to visit Galkayo for a fact finding mission and to take part in the mediation efforts to end the armed conflict between Puntland and Galmudug States. The project funded travel-related costs of these oversight missions. The NFP used LoA funds to cover the salaries of advisors to the Speaker and Young graduates as well as internet fee for the office of Speaker and parliament offices for the month of November and December 2015. With funding from the project NFP procured ID card printing machines for the parliament.

Somaliland House of Representatives
During the reporting period the Somaliland HoR used LoA funds for the following activities: A local firm continued training the admin and finance department staff on financial management, human resource, and procurement and reporting skills.

Puntland House of Representatives
Using LoA funds MPs engaged in constituency visits and conflict resolution of local disputes between local communities in Karkar, Haylan and Ayn regions to create awareness raising, support reconciliation process by local elders and to promote an environment for lasting peace; Project funds were used by the parliament to conduct oversight missions to Bari, Gardafur, Nugal and Sanag regions to evaluate government work and delivery of services. Furthermore these funds were used to pay for internet charges and the website running costs.

Somaliland House of Representatives
During the reporting period the Somaliland HoR used LoA funds for the following activities: A local firm continued training the admin and finance department staff on financial management, human resource, and procurement and reporting skills.

A Somali Youth Parliament (SYP) exists in Mogadishu. The SYP was established in December 2014 by young people between the age of 18 and 35 who united for promoting youth leadership and participation in policy and decision making at all levels of the government. The SYP structure resembles that of the National Federal Parliament although there is no cooperation yet between NFP and SYP. As the NFP, the youth parliament consists of 275 members. “MPs” are between 18 and 35 years old, fifty percent are women. Similarly, 15 parliamentary committees run the day-to-day activities of the Somali Youth Parliament. “Youth MPs” were selected via different universities in Mogadishu with members drawn from all 18 regions of the country.

The Parliamentary Support Project in Dec 2015 met with the leadership of the Somali Youth Parliament in order to learn more about SYP, its functions, composition, and partnership with other INGOs and the assistance needs of the youth parliament. In the meeting, which took place on Dec 21, the SYP Deputy Speaker, the Chief Whip and the General Secretary of the SYP — all of whom are under 25 years of age — participated. At the meeting, the project staff has been impressed by the commitment of the youth MPs. During the meeting SYP in particular indicated the need for training and capacity building and expressed their interest to establish contact with the NFP.
PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT PROJECT

Preparation of Annual Work Plans for 2016

As it is standard practice for UNDP projects the Parliamentary Support Project in close cooperation with its national counterparts is currently elaborating the AWP 2016.

Starting in November last year the project has contacted the National Federal Parliament, the Somali Land parliament, the Puntland HoR, and the newly established assemblies of the future federal member states to enquire about their needs. In addition the project in cooperation with the NFP and the Somali Land HoR arranged meetings with of all implementers and donors in order to coordinate support and to avoid overlap of activities.

Initial draft AWPs have been sent to all parliaments with the purpose to receive further comments and amendments. Once completed the overall draft workplan will be shared with donors in order to be discussed and approved in the next project board meeting planned for end of January/beginning of February. As it has been the case in 2015 part of the AWP shall be implemented by the parliaments themselves based on Letters of Agreements.

Administrative Structures of all Parliaments Strengthened

A company called ABRIMO in early 2015 conducted assessments of the administrative structures and the regulatory framework of the NFP, the Puntland HoR and the Somali Land HoR. ABRIMO provided a number of recommendations re changing organizational structures, establishment of regulations and training of staff. In the second half of 2015 substantive progress has been achieved with regard to the implementation of these recommendations.

**Somali Land HoR**
The SL HoR, with the assistance of a local consulting company hired with UNDP support, successfully completed the implementation of all capacity building activities recommended by ABRIMO. During the month of December the company delivered a series of training on financial management and procurement and assisted the HoR to internalize and put into practice a wide range of internal control policies and procedures. In December a one-day training was dedicated to the implementation of policies and guidelines (conflict of interest, fraud risk, communications and roles and functions) for department directors and heads of sections. The Secretary General approved and signed all policies developed by the consulting company and International Consultant Austin Zvoma.

**Puntland HoR**
The implementation of capacity-building activities at the PL HoR was successfully completed in November 2015. The Puntland Parliament submitted to UNDP a request for additional capacity building activities for 2016, including translation of key materials developed with the assistance of UNDP and implementation of a computerized accounting system.

**Puntland MoCFAD**
In December the current Procurement Manual has been reviewed and further improved. A guideline for preparing an annual procurement plan, general procurement forms and standard bidding and contract templates were created. During this month, a consultant also delivered a series of on-the-job training to ensure that staff are able to conduct standard procurement transactions. The project also provided technical assistance to enable the Ministry to fill the additional staff positions recommended by ABRIMO. MoCFAD filled the cashier, procurement officer and administrative services officer positions. The ministry is working to fill the internal auditor position in Jan 2016.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT PROJECT

The UNDP Parliamentary Support Project is supported by the European Union, Norway, Sweden (Sida), the United Kingdom (DFID), and UNDP, and is managed by the United Nations Development Programme in Somalia.
During the past weeks the National Federal Parliament endorsed a number of laws important for the economic development of the country such as the:

- Foreign Investment bill on 23 November 2015,
- the Public Procurement, Concessions & Disposal bill on 12 December 2015,
- the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorism Financing Law on 26 December 2015,
- the Media Law on 28 December 2015,
- the Closing of Accounts on 30 December 2015 the Budget for 2016 on 31 December 2015.

As it has been reported in details in the previous newsletters, the UNDP Parliamentary Support Project has provided extensive technical support and advice to the Budget, Finance and Planning Committee in reviewing and revising of the Public Procurement, Concessions & Disposal bill and the Anti-Money Laundering & Counter Terrorism Financing bill. In order to come into force the laws still need to be signed by the President.

Based on an ICT needs assessment conducted in late 2015 the Puntland HoR with funds provided by the project procured ICT equipment for the use of MPs and parliamentary staff. The Speaker of Puntland’s House of Representatives officially received computers, laptops, screens, cameras and other equipment during the official handover ceremony held at Parliament on 17 December in Garowe. Equipment was bought from local vendors thus contributing to the Puntland economy.

The event was attended by the Speaker and the two deputy Speakers, the Secretary General, MPs, parliamentary staff and two representatives of UNDP/Garowe. The Speaker thanked UNDP and said that the ICT equipment would assist parliament to carry out its functions more effectively. The computers and laptops have been labelled and will be distributed to the parliamentary staff and committee chairpersons. This is a significant contribution in order to enable MPs and staff to better carry out their legislative, oversight and representative roles.

In this context it also should be mentioned that the project assisted the PL HoR to upgrade its internet connectivity in order to make better use of the new equipment.

UNDP’s Parliamentary Support Project has contracted a local construction firm to upgrade and strengthen the security infrastructure of the Puntland parliament after an assessment had been made in December 2014. The work started in December 2015, with the contractor first demolishing the existing concrete barriers at the front side of the parliament and finishing the construction of a 53m long concrete T-wall. The foundation structure as well as the superstructure of the existing four watch towers were demolished. The excavation of footings and foundation walling of the three watch towers and construction of columns are now in progress. The work is progressing according to schedule and expected to be finished in February 2016. Once completed MPs and HoR staff will work in a significantly safer location.
Donor Coordination Meeting arranged by Somaliland HoR

On 17 December 2015, Somaliland House of Representatives hosted a donor coordination meeting. Masoud Ali, representing UNDP, attended and gave a presentation on the activities which UNDP will support in 2016. The USAID-funded project implemented by Chemonics also attended and presented its activities. Somaliland Parliament has shown leadership in championing coordination, and all participants agreed to work together under the Speaker’s guidance to ensure collaboration and avoid duplication.

Upgrade of Security Parameters for Somaliland Parliament

The UNDP Parliamentary Support Project is supporting the improvements to the Somaliland House of Representatives’ security infrastructure. After the competitive bidding process, UNDP’s Procurement Unit offered a contract to a local contractor to do the construction work to upgrading the security infrastructure of the House of Representatives and Guurti building. To date, more than 50 percent of the construction have already been completed and remains construction remains ongoing. The work is expected to be finished by February 2016.

Support to Jubaland and Galmudug Assembly

In support to establishing the communication infrastructure of the recently established regional parliaments, the UNDP Parliamentary Support Project completed the procurement of IT equipment for the Jubaland regional assembly and the delivery of these items is imminent. With support of UNDP ICT specialists, the project identified an internet service provider and is in the process of installing internet connectivity for Jubaland assembly. Earlier this year with funding from the project, National Federal Parliament sent some of its young graduate staff members to Galmudug State regional parliament for exchange of knowledge and experience on parliamentary business and to support the committees in developing rules of procedures.

CONTACT DETAILS PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT PROJECT (PSP)
MAILING ADDRESS:
UNDP Somalia Country Office – UN Common Compound, Airport Road, Mogadishu, Somalia | registry.so@undp.org
Contact: Mohamed Ali Farah [TELEPHONE: +252 617885584]
EMAIL: mohamed.ali.farah@undp.org