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**PROVISION FOR POST-PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE  
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**Post-Project Evaluation**  
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**UNDEF- PAK-08-260: ELECTORAL AND PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS AND CIVIL  
SOCIETY IN PAKISTAN**

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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **(i) The Project**

The project *Electoral and Parliamentary Reform Process and Civil Society in Pakistan* was funded by UNDEF for a period of 24 months. It was executed by the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA and implemented by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT). The project started in October 2009 and was completed in September 2011. An amount of US\$225,000 was allocated for project activities.

The project was aimed at strengthening democracy in Pakistan by ensuring transparent and credible elections through electoral reforms and new electoral rolls. It was simultaneously directed at strengthening the effective functioning of Parliament and civil society engagement to ensure a free and fair electoral process.

### **(ii) Findings of the Evaluation**

The Project design was in line with the national agenda and constitutional mandate as well as consistent with UNDEF's requirements to strengthen democratic institutions and promote political stability in the country. The project strategy focused on the following three key areas:

- building capacity of parliamentarians, civil society organizations (CSOs) and media to promote democracy,
- using the Citizens Group on Electoral Processes (CGEP) to highlight the significance of accurate electoral rolls, and
- persuading decision makers to undertake electoral and legislative reforms.

The project objectives were relevant given the fragility of Pakistan's democratic transition. The need for electoral reforms in Pakistan is urgent, particularly as a number of factors have seriously undermined the integrity of Pakistan's electoral process over time. Widespread electoral fraud has in the past eroded democratic development, political stability and the rule of law.

With the general election approaching in May 2013 and following adoption of the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment, it is crucial that stakeholders turn their attention to reforming a weakened and flawed electoral system to support democratic governance and national stability. Hence the project seeks to strengthen the democratic process by building the capacity of parliamentarians through legislative briefs and dialogues to perform in a more effective manner their legislative, financial oversight and other constitutional functions in the governance process. Additionally, the project focuses on enhancing the capacity of CSOs to play a more active advocacy role in supporting electoral reforms, parliamentary strengthening and democratization.

Project activities were well formulated and efficiently delivered with effective use of resources to achieve the objectives of the project. Outputs included a background paper on State of Electoral Reforms in Pakistan, an updated position paper on Proposals on Electoral Reforms, a policy brief on Proposals for Electoral Reforms, two consultative workshops of CGEP members, 6 interactive sessions of CGEP with decision makers, three media briefings on significance of accurate electoral rolls and introduction of

electoral reforms, a roundtable discussion with media on the importance of monitoring and implementation of ECP 5 Year Strategic Plan, five Legislative Briefs and five Legislative Forums, and a Roundtable on Significance of Civil Society-Parliamentary Engagement.

A Directory was prepared with information on over a hundred Parliamentary Committees and over ninety relevant civil society and research organizations in Pakistan. All these activities and their planned outputs played a significant role in achieving the project outcomes.

The institutional arrangements provided the opportunity to build on PILDAT's past initiatives and take the democratic development process further. The selection of PILDAT as the Implementing Agency was advantageous as it has extensive experience since 2002 in capacity-building and issue-based briefings for the National and Provincial Assemblies. PILDAT's close linkages with parliament, civil society and the media were beneficial in implementing the project effectively both in terms of impact and cost.

Project activities and outputs had a visible impact. The Background Papers and Legislative Briefs provided updated information on key themes, expert analysis and recommendations. The Forums, Interactive Sessions and Roundtables initiated discussions on a range of reform issues relating to the electoral system, constitutional matters as well as economic and social issues between parliamentarians, media and civil society representatives. This resulted in raising the awareness of policy-makers about the importance of accurate and complete electoral reforms and rolls, strengthening the capacity of parliamentarians and ensuring participation of the media and civil society in the reform process. The Directory prepared by PILDAT serves as a useful tool for interaction between Parliamentary Committees and has also been extensively used by the media.

As a result of these activities, CGEP, facilitated by PILDAT through its consultative sessions, interactions with decision makers and media briefings, highlighted the importance of electoral reforms among civil society, academia, parliamentary staff, government officials, political parties, and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). Most of its proposals were incorporated in the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. Consequently, ECP in collaboration with the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) started working on developing accurate and up-to-date electoral rolls and prepared a 5-Year Strategic Plan 2010-2014 to implement required electoral reforms in the country before the general election in 2013.

In terms of sustainability, the project effectively focused on the following three specific areas:

- raising awareness of the importance of electoral processes through electoral reform and new electoral rolls,
- improving the functioning of parliament and parliamentary performance, and
- strengthening civil society capacity to effectively play its role in the democratic process and reform of the electoral system.

Meetings with a broad spectrum of people indicated that there was greater awareness in the media and in the public of the importance of a neutral and impartial mechanism for the management of elections. Parliamentarians appear to be more aware of key issues and benefitted from the expert analysis and recommendations provided in policy briefs, discussions and the feedback received during the forums, interactive sessions and interaction with the media. The Directory helped to promote collaboration between the parliament, civil society and the media.

### **(iii) Conclusions**

Findings of the evaluation indicate that intended outcomes were successfully completed within the two year cycle of the project. PILDAT through its Legislative Briefs, Legislative Forums, Roundtables, Background Papers, consultative workshops and media briefings raised the awareness among parliamentarians, decision makers, media and civil society about the significance of electoral reforms, legislative and constitutional issues and important role of civil society in a democratic society.

As a result of these activities parliamentarians made informed decisions on legislative questions in Parliament. Civil society played a significant role in demanding the ECP and the Government to institute comprehensive electoral reforms before the upcoming elections. CGEP urged the authorities to develop complete electoral rolls. Media was successful in effectively disseminating accurate and timely information. With the support of civil society and the media PILDAT managed to persuade decision makers to bring about electoral reforms and undertake revised computerization of electoral rolls.

The outcomes of the project executed by PILDAT are impressive. PILDAT electoral reform proposals were considered by a Parliamentary Committee. Most of the CGEP proposals for electoral reforms were accepted by the Government and incorporated in the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment. ECP in collaboration with NADRA started working on developing accurate and up-to-date electoral rolls for the upcoming elections. ECP also presented a 5-Year Strategic Plan 2010-2014 to implement required electoral rolls in the country before the general elections in May 2013.

The ECP and NADRA jointly developed the new electoral list. ECP and NADRA incorporated CGEP reform proposals for making up-to-date and accurate electoral rolls for the 2013 elections such as incorporating pictures of voters on electoral rolls, use of computerized National Identity Cards as a requirement – a procedure which has been approved by Parliament. Preparation of these electoral rolls has recently been completed.

The Legislative Briefs and Forums prepared by PILDAT on constitutional, economic and social issues provided concise and accurate information on legislative bills being debated in Parliament on which parliamentary members required more specific information. Parliamentarians are better informed about the legislative pieces under review. As a result of the initiatives taken by PILDAT under this project, more than 75 Parliamentarians participated in the Legislative Forums that were organized including senior ministers and politicians representing all political parties. This helped to improve the level of debate inside the Parliament. The ratio of Legislative Bills to Presidential Ordinances significantly improved from previous years. This could be due to the Legislative Briefs and Forum discussions organized by PILDAT.

The Directory comprising more than a hundred Parliamentary Committees and over ninety civil society and research organizations was appreciated by the Parliamentary Committees. More importantly, the media widely used this information and requested PILDAT to prepare an online version of the Directory. This was subsequently launched by PILDAT. Some civil society organizations such as Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), and Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) became pro-active and contacted the Parliamentary Committees for establishing linkages in areas such as Human Rights, Narcotics Control, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

The project went beyond achieving the intended outcomes. For instance, the Directory bridged the gap between parliament and civil society. Media used the legislative analyses and briefs developed under the project for its coverage on the need for free and fair elections thereby disseminating relevant information to an extensive audience.

The project has been successful in achieving its overall objective of promoting democratic development in Pakistan. Parliamentarians are better informed about the need to review legislation before its passage. There is greater participation of major stakeholders in the democratic process. CSOs, media, Parliament and government institutions have been instrumental in bringing about electoral reforms, including empowerment of the Election Commission.

In conclusion, democracy is work in progress. The project activities and initiatives helped in meeting the overall objectives as these addressed central elements in strengthening the democratization process in the country. However continued support is crucial for building democratic institutions and ensuring sustainable democracy in Pakistan.

#### **(iv) Recommendations**

In order to strengthen parliament and democracy the following recommendations need to be taken into consideration:

- Setting up a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to monitor the working of the polling.
- Strengthening election complaints adjudication to expeditiously settle electoral disputes.
- Encourage the Government to enhance the authority and powers of ECP to ensure free and impartial elections and also to ensure candidates contesting the elections fulfill the requirements laid down in the Constitution.
- Develop specialized training programs for staff in electoral administration.
- Promote women’s greater participation in the electoral process in Pakistan. This should include increase in recruitment of women in the ECP and its offices across the country.
- Provide training to members of CSOs to improve their advocacy capacity in the promotion of democracy and democratic procedures.
- Support regular media briefings to provide informed reporting on the importance of electoral process and exercise of democratic rights.
- Appoint an independent Consultant to monitor democracy building projects.

#### **(v) Overall assessment**

Democracy has made tangible progress in Pakistan during the past four years (2008-2012). Despite poor governance there is growing public support for democracy. Although under The Economist's Democracy Index for 2011<sup>1</sup> for the category Political Culture, Pakistan received a score of 4.38 out of 10, nonetheless there has been continued progress in building a democratic society.

The 18th Constitutional Amendment, an independent judiciary, more mature political parties; empowered parliamentarians; transparent electoral system, independent election commission, and active media have improved the overall prospects for sustainable democracy in Pakistan.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.eiu.com/public/topical\\_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2011](https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2011)

There has yet to be a transition from one democratically elected government to the next in Pakistan's history. Flawed elections undermine civilian governments and political parties. If transfer of power takes place in an orderly way through free and transparent electoral process after the elections of May 2013, the gains made by the return to civilian rule will further strengthen the democratic structures in Pakistan.

The project's explicit relevancy and impact upon democratic development has been invaluable in changing mindsets and supporting the development of a democratic system in the country. Electoral processes play a central role in democracy. The holding of upcoming elections in a nonpartisan and transparent manner will be a critical and timely step in establishing strong and sustained foundations for a democratic society in the country.

## II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

### (i) The project and evaluation objective

This report evaluates the project “*Electoral and Parliamentary Process and Civil Society in Pakistan*”. The Project was funded by The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF). It was executed by the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, and implemented by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT). The project started in October 2009 and was completed in September 2011. An amount of US\$225,000 was allocated for project activities.

The project was aimed at strengthening democracy in Pakistan by ensuring free and transparent electoral process through electoral reforms and new electoral rolls. It was also directed at promoting effective functioning of Parliament and strengthening civil society engagement to ensure a free and fair electoral process. The evaluation was undertaken to determine if the project had been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether the anticipated project outputs had been achieved and contributed to strengthening democratic process in the country.

### (ii) Evaluation methodology

This evaluation by Samina Kamal focuses on whether the achieved outputs had an impact on the country’s democratic development and whether the concepts behind the project were consistent with the challenges facing democratic development in Pakistan.

Specifically the evaluation used the five point criteria for measuring and addressed questions relating to relevance of the project design and its effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It also examined if there was any value added from UNDEF funding. It answered the following questions:

- a) Relevance: What was the degree to which the project was justified? Was the project design appropriate to the needs and the situation at the national level to strengthen electoral processes and reforms? What was the appropriateness of the executing modality and managerial arrangements of the project?
- b) Effectiveness of the project: Were the intended objectives achieved? Did the achieved outputs contribute to greater democratization?
- c) Efficiency: What was the overall project performance? What were the outputs in relation to the inputs? Was the financial management and implementation timetable appropriate?
- d) Impact: What were the positive or negative, intended or un-intended impacts, effects, changes attributable to the project?
- e) Sustainability: What are the prospects of sustainability? What sustainability strategies were put in place?
- g) UNDEF Funding: Was there any value addition as a result of the UNDEF funding.

The evaluation took place during January to February 2013. The evaluator reviewed the baseline data collected by the implementing agency PILDAT, the available documentation on the project including the Project Mid-Term Report, the Final Project Narrative Report (Third Round) as well as other pertinent documents on the subject. Interviews started with the management and project staff of PILDAT, followed by interactions with parliamentarians, representatives of the Government, DG NADRA, Chairman/representatives of ECP, representatives of CGEP, the media, and civil society.

### **(iii) Development Context**

Pakistan is a Muslim country of approximately 180 million. It is a Federal Parliamentary Republic consisting of four provinces. It has the seventh largest standing armed forces in the world and is also a nuclear power. The country has a semi-industrialized economy which is the 27th largest in the world in terms of purchasing power and 47th largest in terms of nominal GDP.

Pakistan's post-independence history has been characterized by periods of military rule, political instability and conflicts with India. It faces myriad challenges, including a deep-rooted political crisis, a weakening economy sustained by foreign aid, and a hardening of divisions between extremists and moderates. The political system of Pakistan is characterized by intermittent breakdown of constitution and political order, weak and non-viable political institutions and processes, rapid expansion of the role of the military-bureaucratic elite, military rule and military dominated civilian governments, and authoritarian and narrow-based power management. Democratic institutions in the country are weak and unstable. A weak Parliament, a lack of trust in political parties, non-transparent electoral processes and weak civil society organizations (CSOs) have constrained the strengthening and consolidation of democracy in Pakistan. The military took over government four times during the past sixty five years of Pakistan's history. Out of the nine parliamentary elections held on the adult-franchise basis, only two were accepted by the people and political parties as free and fair including the last elections held in 2008. After the February 2008 election Pakistan moved to a parliamentary democracy. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP)-led coalition government ends its five year term in March 2013. Pakistan's democratic transition will depend to a considerable extent on the manner in which the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), responsible for elections, conducts the next general elections.

For democracy to succeed, the parliament, legislature, judiciary, media and other democratic institutions need to function efficiently and effectively. In Pakistan, the Parliament has not been able to adequately perform its function of lawmaking including oversight of the Executive Branch. Parliamentarians are generally not aware or interested in legislative or oversight duties. This is partly due to lack of legislative assistance available to parliamentarians.

Electoral process and democratic institutions such as the ECP are weak. The need for extensive electoral reforms has been emphasized by political parties. The election laws need to be changed as a part of the package of reforms being demanded by a vast majority of political parties and civil society. A major issue in 2008 when this project was initiated was inaccurate, incomplete and deficient electoral rolls especially in registration of female voters.

Civil society does not have the capacity to be actively engaged in electoral and parliamentary processes to play a role in a democratic system that responds to peoples' needs. Furthermore, there is no link between the CSOs and Parliamentary Committees, consequently they seldom engage with over hundred Parliamentary Committees.

While there is an independent and efficient judiciary, parliamentarians and civil society need to be supported to ensure a stable and democratic Pakistan.

The UNDEF project was initiated at the right time to addresses three specific weaknesses in the democratic system in Pakistan - ineffective Parliament, lack of fair and transparent electoral processes and weak capacity of civil society to participate in the democratic processes - in order to improve the quality and sustainability of democracy in the country.

### III. PROJECT STRATEGY

#### (i) Project Approach and Strategy

**Implementing Partner.** The project was implemented by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) which is an independent, non-partisan and not-for-profit local think tank focused on political and public policy research and legislative strengthening. Its mission is to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions in Pakistan. PILDAT works closely with the Parliament and through its non-partisan approach, with major political parties as well as the Executive and the Media.

The project approach was to focus on three specific areas to strengthen democracy in Pakistan. These were ensuring transparent and fair electoral processes and reforms; supporting effective functioning of Parliament through policy briefs and discussions among stakeholders; and building the capacity of civil society to participate in electoral reforms and parliamentary strengthening.

The strategy used by PILDAT to achieve these outcomes was threefold. To ensure a free and fair electoral process, PILDAT decided to emphasize the importance of accurate electoral rolls and reforms by highlighting the issue in the media and thus persuading decision makers through the Citizens Group on Electoral Process (CGEP) to introduce electoral reforms and produce accurate electoral rolls.

The CGEP was formed by PILDAT in 2006 to promote the holding of credible elections in Pakistan. A number of eminent personalities from the media, legal profession, civil society and former members of the superior judiciary and armed forces, but with no present affiliation with any political party, serve as members. The CGEP is now working to institute electoral reforms in Pakistan.

The strategy used by PILDAT to improve the legislative performance of the Parliament, was to organize Legislative Forums with experts to discuss the implications of various bills. Concise and easy-to-understand Legislative Briefs, written and in audio format, were provided to the participants for information on the subject before the discussions. This strategy was expected to increase the knowledge and interest of the legislators and consequently improve their performance.

To encourage civil society participation in electoral reform and parliamentary strengthening, a Directory of Parliamentary Committees and the relevant CSOs was prepared in English and Urdu as a tool for interaction and linkage between parliamentary committees and relevant CSOs. A Roundtable was organized to raise awareness of the importance of interaction and linkages between parliament and civil society.

**Target Beneficiaries.** The target beneficiaries were parliamentarians, Parliamentary Committees, CSOs, media, potential voters and the public.

#### (ii) Logical Framework

The Project is aimed at achieving three key long term development objectives to strengthen democracy. The following provides a detailed plan of project activities, intended outcomes and their impact.

<b>Project Objective</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>	<b>Project Activities</b>	<b>Intended Output</b>	<b>Medium Term Impact</b>	<b>Long Term Impact</b>
1. Enhancing engagement of civil society in ensuring a free and fair electoral process.	Strengthened role of civil society as a key actor in raising awareness about electoral reforms and more specifically, about the need for accurate and complete electoral rolls.	One day workshop of 15 members of Citizens' Group on Electoral Processes to discuss development in electoral rolls. (12 members of the CGEP out of 21 participated).	An updated paper on electoral rolls – <i>State of Electoral Rolls in Pakistan</i> - published in English and Urdu. Both are accessible on line.	Civil society discusses the developments in electoral rolls and prepares an updated paper and policy brief on electoral reforms. CGEP representing civil society raises awareness about the importance of electoral reforms in democracy and need for accurate updated electoral rolls.	Free and Fair Electoral Processes in Pakistan
1 B. Enhancing engagement of civil society in ensuring a free and fair electoral process.	Strengthened role of civil society as a key actor in raising awareness about electoral reforms and more specifically, about the need for accurate and complete electoral rolls.	Second One day workshop of 15 members of Citizens' Group on Electoral Processes to discuss electoral reforms. (10 members out of the 21 CGEP members participated in the meeting)	An updated Paper and Policy Brief on Electoral Reforms. (i) <i>Proposals on Electoral Reforms</i> in English and Urdu and accessible on line. (ii) <i>A Policy Brief on Proposals for Electoral Reforms</i> .	Proposals for electoral reforms available for consideration, approval and implementation by decision makers and ECP. Accurate information available to all sectors of society.	Decision makers and Election Commission of Pakistan consider the CGEP proposals for initiating action on the reforms.
1C. Enhancing engagement of civil society in ensuring a free and fair electoral process.	Strengthened role of civil society as a key actor in raising awareness about electoral reforms and more specifically, about the need for accurate and complete electoral rolls.	5 Interactive sessions of CGEP with decision-makers to persuade them to provide accurate and complete electoral rolls and to introduce electoral reforms. Actually 6 sessions were organized.	Awareness of decision makers about the significance of accurate and complete electoral rolls and introduction of electoral reforms raised. Also the potential risks of not preparing accurate and complete electoral rolls and not introducing electoral reforms clarified.	Decision-makers are aware of the importance of electoral rolls and electoral reforms. Decision is taken to undertake electoral reforms and preparation of updated and accurate electoral rolls. NADRA and ECP collaborate to update electoral rolls. The CGEP reform proposals are incorporated by Government through the 18th Constitutional Amendment. Election Commission of Pakistan prepares a 5-Year Strategic Plan to institute required electoral reforms in Pakistan.	Decision-makers and parliamentarians are aware of the importance of electoral reforms and electoral rolls in democracy and ensure electoral reforms take place in the country. Complete electoral rolls are prepared in time for the 2013 elections.
1D. Strengthening civil society capacity to effectively play its role in the democratic process.	More informed media and decision-makers with greater awareness of the need for introducing electoral	3 Briefing session for Media on the significance of accurate electoral rolls and introduction of	Reporters, Editorial Staff, Talk-show hosts, columnists and commentators briefed and their awareness	Media is aware of the importance of electoral reforms and electoral rolls and media representatives highlight the importance of updated electoral	Media and civil society are aware of the importance of their role in the democratic process and play an active role in raising awareness

	reforms and preparing accurate and complete electoral roles.	electoral reforms held in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad.	<p>raised about the significance of accurate and complete electoral rolls. Also the significance of introduction of electoral reforms and what role the media can play in accomplishing these tasks is discussed.</p> <p>(More than 200 representatives of electronic and press media, current affairs show hosts, analysts, election experts, columnists and media researchers participated in media briefings in 3 cities).</p>	rolls in media. Government is urged to speed up the process of instituting electoral reforms.	about these issues among parliamentarians and decision-makers and consequently strengthen democracy by involving the civil society and influencing decision makers and parliamentarians.
2. Supporting the effective functioning of the Parliament.	Better informed Parliamentarians about the pending legislation and the significance of processing and passage of legislation by the Parliament, as opposed to promulgation by the President as an Ordinance.	5 Legislative Briefs and 5 Legislative Forums.	<p>Legislators and media people's awareness about the significance of serious consideration of legislations, knowledge about the legislations, and the relative strengths, weaknesses and impact enhanced.</p> <p>(More than 75 parliamentarians participated in the Legislative Forums. Media and civil society also benefitted from the session). Brief highlighted the issue in the press. The Brief also assisted the parliamentarians to understand the context, objective and issues related to the legislation and to take well</p>	Parliamentarians and media and thereby civil society are accurately informed. Legislators are better prepared to deal with legislation.	Strengthened Parliament promoting democracy

			considered position on the subject.)		
3.1. Strengthening the capacity of civil society to effectively play its role in the democratic process.	Better informed civil society organizations and Parliamentary Committees about the significance and procedures of establishing linkages	Tool for interaction and linkage between Parliamentary Committees and relevant CSOs provided.	Tool for interaction and linkage between Parliamentary Committees and relevant CSOs: Directory of more than 100 Parliamentary Committees, including Standing Committees of the Senate of Pakistan, National Assembly of Pakistan, and Provincial Assemblies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh, and relevant ninety civil society and research organizations, available in English, Urdu and on-line.	A resource tool available to parliament to facilitate the use of professional research sources in addressing issues relevant to the Committees. Development of additional focused linkages between Parliamentary Committees and Civil Society.	Linkages between Parliamentary Committees and CSOs strengthened. Increased role of civil society in democratization.
3.2. Strengthening the capacity of civil society to effectively play its role in the democratic process.	Better informed civil society organizations and Parliamentary Committees about the significance and procedures of establishing linkages	Roundtable on significance of civil society –parliament engagement. Discussions initiated on the significance of the linkage between parliament and the civil society of Pakistan.	Awareness of parliamentarians and CSO officials about the significance and benefit of civil society-parliament engagement and linkages enhanced.	Parliamentarians and representatives realize the importance of linkages between the civil society and the parliament.	Strong linkages and interaction between parliament and civil society.

#### IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

##### (i) Relevance

The Project design was in line with the national agenda and constitutional mandate and consistent with UNDEF’s requirements. The project objectives were appropriate, timely and relevant particularly as a weak Parliament, a lack of trust in political parties and electoral processes, and a weak civil society have

constrained consolidation of democracy in Pakistan. Widespread electoral fraud has eroded democratic development and political stability. According to IDEA<sup>2</sup>, an international organization based in Sweden, Pakistan has the lowest voter turn-out among the countries of South Asia. The average voter turn-out for the last eight general elections was 46.12%. This low credibility in the electoral system in general and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in particular has resulted in a weak political system in the country. With the next general election scheduled in May 2013, it is critical for the ECP which is responsible for holding elections to the national and provincial assemblies, to focus on ensuring an orderly political transition through free, fair and transparent elections. For this purpose, integrity of the electoral process in general and electoral rolls in particular is fundamental, as is support to Parliamentarians for a better functioning democratic system. The engagement of the civil society is essential in ensuring a free and fair electoral process by supporting an effectively functioning parliament.

The Project strategy was appropriate to strengthening democracy in Pakistan. It focused on three key areas, namely, enhancing the engagement of the civil society in ensuring a free and fair electoral process; supporting the effective functioning of Parliament; and strengthening civil society capacity to effectively play its role in the democratic process.

The project raised awareness of the importance of electoral reforms in both media and civil society through updated papers and briefs on the complex issues relating to the electoral process and electoral rolls which were discussed in briefing sessions. It strengthened the capacity of parliamentarians through Legislative Briefs and dialogues to perform their work to provide parliamentary oversight and other constitutional functions more efficiently. These Legislative Briefs enabled parliamentarians to make recommendations on major issues under discussion in Parliament. Simultaneously, the project focused on strengthening the capacity of CSO, to play an enhanced advocacy role in electoral reforms, parliamentary strengthening, and democratization through media briefings, Roundtables and a Directory to provide information on more than a hundred Parliamentary Committees and ninety relevant CSOs and research institutions. These efforts focused on bolstering key pillars of democracy.

## **(ii) Effectiveness**

The activities carried out by the implementing agency (PILDAT) outlined in the project document and in its Final Project Narrative Report were effective and efficient in achieving the key outputs and attaining the objectives of the project. Outputs included an updated paper on the “*State of Electoral rolls in Pakistan*”, a revised paper on *Proposals for Electoral reforms*, and an updated *Policy brief on the Proposals for Electoral Reforms* (also available on a CD) in both English and Urdu; six interactive sessions of the CGEP with the decision makers - one more than what was envisaged in the project document; three media briefings; a Roundtable discussion on monitoring and implementation of ECP’s 5-Year Strategic Plan; and five Legislative Briefs on (i) the Federal Value Added Tax Bill 2010; (ii) the Election Laws (amendment bill 2011); (iii) the National Commission on Human Rights Bill 2008; (iv) the Health and the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment; and (v) the Proposed Constitutional Amendments in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973 for empowerment of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Five Legislative Forums were organized to initiate dialogue on all these issues between parliamentarians, media and civil society representative both in English and in Urdu. An effective output was a Directory of Parliamentary Committees including Standing Committees of the Senate of Pakistan,

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<sup>2</sup> International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

National Assembly of Pakistan and Provincial Assemblies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh, and ninety civil society and research organizations available in both English and Urdu, in print and electronic versions.

The project strategy was effective as it supported areas that strengthen democracy and considered to be weak in Pakistan. The approach of providing accurate information on issues under discussion in Parliament, and involving a respected group of citizens to make the recommendations, as well as using the media to highlight these issues was an effective tactical move that had a visibly durable medium term and long term impact.

### **(iii) Efficiency**

PILDAT proficiently used the project funds for key activities with specific outputs linked to achieving the three stated project objectives to strengthen democracy. It cost-effectively built on past initiatives. For example, the *Updated paper and Policy Brief on Electoral Reforms* was an updated version of the paper prepared a year earlier by the Citizens Group on Electoral Reforms (CGEP). By involving the media and providing them with accurate updated information on the importance of electoral processes and reforms, it strategically used the media to create widespread awareness about electoral reforms thus pressurizing the ECP and the Government decision makers to undertake the reforms. The implementing agency strengthened the capacity of the parliamentarians by providing briefs on key issues under discussion in Parliament. The Directory provided a tool with consolidated information on Parliamentary Committees and some relevant civil society and research organizations. Together with the Roundtable, it was a cost-effective way to strengthen the links between civil society, parliamentarians and media and create extensive awareness of the electoral reform issues. When cost is compared to impact, the project can be assessed as good value for money.

### **(iv) Impact**

Project activities had a visible impact. The papers, Legislative Briefs and Directory prepared by PILDAT under the project were made easily available in English and Urdu, as well as on CDs and on-line. Discussion of the papers, and briefs in workshops, interactive sessions and the roundtable resulted in parliamentarians, civil society and media having substantive knowledge of electoral processes and awareness of areas critical for strengthening democracy. It helped parliamentarians understand the issues and make informed decisions in Parliament. It also created an understanding and awareness in civil society and media of the role they could and need to play in promoting democracy. Media became active in raising issues about electoral reforms and functioning of the Government.

The project activities also had an impact on society in general. People became aware of the significance of electoral reforms and updated electoral rolls. Several people interviewed indicated that they were aware of the importance of updated electoral rolls and the need for electoral reforms as well as a system in which they could exercise their democratic rights.

Although it may not be a direct impact of the project activities, an independent and empowered Election Commission now exists in the country. An independent judiciary is in place to protect the electoral process. There is broad national consensus in favour of transparent polls – with all major political parties

accepting the ECP. Election reforms have been approved.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, with the approaching elections, the media and civil society are keeping scrupulous watch on the entire process. The electoral list has been improved and the Election Commission has more autonomy. All these factors create optimism about fair and free polls.

#### **(v) Sustainability**

In terms of sustainability, the project effectively focused on three specific areas - raising awareness of the importance of electoral reforms and updating electoral rolls; reinforcing the effective functioning of the Parliament; and strengthening civil society capacity to effectively play its role in electoral reforms and the democratic process. Interviews indicate that sustained awareness has been created in the media and society at large of the importance of the electoral processes and rolls. Parliamentarians appear more knowledgeable of key issues and have benefitted from the expert analysis and recommendations provided in policy briefs, discussions and feedback received during the forums, interactive sessions and interaction with the media. The Directory opened the way for collaboration between the parliament, civil society and media. The recently approved election reforms, civil society participation, extensive coverage of the press all indicate that the impact was sustainable. Additionally, PILDAT continues to regularly cover the state of electoral reforms in the country and keeps the pressure by producing and disseminating the Citizen's Monitoring Report on the Implementation of the ECP 5-Year Strategic Plan. The sustained action to promote awareness and maintain pressure on the Government, ECP, and political parties has helped to produce an enduring impact of the initiatives under the project.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS**

Findings of the evaluation indicate that all intended outcomes were completed within the two year cycle of the project. The project contributed to deepening democracy in Pakistan through sustained national and local dialogue about the need for electoral reforms and accurate electoral rolls. It attracted the attention of decision makers through advocacy undertaken by CGEP. The Government and the Election Commission of Pakistan were successfully persuaded to introduce required electoral reforms in the country. CSOs and Parliamentary Committees became more inclined to develop closer linkages as a result of the project efforts. The Legislative Briefs, discussion papers and Forums helped enhance the effectiveness of the parliamentarian's role in legislation and oversight of the Executive Branch. The project helped in making a lasting impact on strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to be engaged with parliament and in the electoral process to improve the quality of democracy in Pakistan.

The project went beyond achieving the intended outcomes. For instance, the Directory bridged the gap between parliament and civil society. Media utilized the legislative analyses and briefs developed under the project for its coverage thus disseminating valuable information to the public.

At the end of the project in 2011, the Election Commission of Pakistan and National Database Registration Authority were together developing the new electoral list. Parliament and Parliamentary Committees invited PILDAT to testify before a Parliamentary Committee a few times on its proposed

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<sup>3</sup> [dawn.com/2013/01/24/ecp-approves-indian-like-electoral-reforms/](http://dawn.com/2013/01/24/ecp-approves-indian-like-electoral-reforms/)

electoral reforms. ECP and NADRA incorporated CGEP reform proposals for making up-to-date and accurate electoral rolls for the next elections such as incorporating pictures of voters on electoral rolls, use of computerized National Identity Card as a requirement – a procedure which has been approved by parliament. Media became better informed of the significance of electoral reforms in Pakistan. As a result it commented favourably on the progress made in establishing a fair and transparent electoral system in the country. Civil society organizations and Parliamentary Committees welcomed development of linkages. Around ninety organizations across Pakistan provided their data so that it was accessible for parliament and Provincial Assemblies. The media benefitted from the information on Parliamentary Committees and relevant civil society and research institutions provided in the Directory.

The overall objective of the project was to strengthen the restoration of democracy in Pakistan following the general election in 2008, by enhancing engagement of the civil society in ensuring a free and fair electoral process; supporting the effective functioning of the Parliament; and strengthening civil society capacity to effectively play its role in the democratic process. Project activities and initiatives helped cover important ground towards achieving these goals. Today, there is evidence of greater participation of various stakeholders in the democratic process. On the whole, the project has been successful in promoting democracy.

In conclusion, democracy is work in progress. This project helped cover some key areas. However, continued long-term support is crucial for building democratic institutions and strengthening sustainable democracy in Pakistan.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to strengthen parliament and democracy the following recommendations need to be taken into consideration:

- Setting up a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to monitor the working of the polling.
- Strengthening election complaints adjudication to expeditiously settle electoral disputes.
- Encourage the Government to enhance the authority and powers of ECP to ensure free and impartial elections and also to ensure candidates contesting the elections fulfill the requirements laid down in the Constitution.
- Develop specialized training programs for staff in electoral administration.
- Promote women’s greater participation in the electoral process in Pakistan. This should include increase in recruitment of women in the ECP and its offices across the country.
- Provide training to members of CSOs to improve their advocacy capacity in the promotion of democracy and democratic procedures.
- Support regular media briefings to provide informed reporting on the importance of electoral process and exercise of democratic rights.
- Appoint an independent Consultant to monitor democracy building projects.

## VII. OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND CLOSING THOUGHTS

Democracy has made tangible progress in Pakistan during the past four years (2008-2012). Despite poor governance there is growing public support for democracy. Although under The Economist's Democracy Index for 2011<sup>4</sup> under the category Political Culture, Pakistan received a score of 4.38 out of 10, nonetheless there is continued progress in building a democratic society.

The 18th Amendment to the Constitution, an independent judiciary; more responsible political parties; empowered parliamentarians; a transparent electoral system, an independent election commission, and an active media have improved the overall prospects for sustainable democracy in Pakistan.

There has yet to be a transition from one democratically elected government to the next in Pakistan's history. Flawed elections undermine civilian governments and political parties. If transfer of power takes place through free, transparent and democratic elections in the elections of May 2013, the gains made by the return to civilian rule will strengthen the democratic system in Pakistan.

The project was completed in September 2011. The project's explicit relevancy and impact upon democratic development has been invaluable in changing mindsets and supporting the democratic development of the country. The electoral processes play a central role in democracy. The holding of upcoming elections in a nonpartisan and transparent manner will be a critical and timely step in establishing strong and sustained foundations for a democratic society in the country.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.eiu.com/public/topical\\_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2011](https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2011)

## VIII. ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS

DAC Criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
<b>Relevance</b>	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to the context and needs at the beneficiary, local and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context?</li> <li>(ii) Would another project strategy have worked better rather than the one implemented to better address those needs, priorities, and context? If so why?</li> <li>(iii) Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) To what extent have the project's objectives been reached?</li> <li>(ii) To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not?</li> <li>(iii) Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives?</li> <li>(iv) What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs?</li> <li>(ii) Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability?</li> <li>(iii) Was the budget designed, and implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address?</li> <li>(ii) Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative?</li> <li>(iii) To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization?</li> <li>(iv) Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus toward democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact?</li> <li>(ii) Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?</li> </ul>
<b>UNDEF value added</b>	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.).</li> <li>(ii) Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?</li> </ul>

## ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

### UNDEF

- Project Document
- Final Narrative Report including Annexes
- Mid-Term/Annual Progress Report
- Financial Utilization Reports
- Project Monitoring and Reporting Guidelines

### PILDAT (Implementing Agency)

- Project Baseline Survey
- State of Electoral Rolls in Pakistan, Background Paper, Citizens Group on Electoral Process, Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), March 2010
- Proposals for Electoral Reforms, Position Paper, Citizens Group on Electoral Process, Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), March 2010
- Proposals for Electoral Reforms, PILDAT Policy Brief, August 2010.
- The Federal Value Added Tax Bill 2010, PILDAT Legislative Brief, May 2010
- The Reformed General Sales Tax Bill 2010, PILDAT Legislative Brief, December 2010.
- The Election Laws (Amendment) Bill 2011, PILDAT Legislative Brief, February 2011.
- The National Commission for Human Rights Bill 2008, PILDAT Legislative Brief, April 2011.
- Health and the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Retaining National Roles in Devolution, PILDAT Legislative Brief, April 2011.
- Proposed Constitutional Amendments in the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973, for Empowerment of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, PILDAT Discussion Paper, May 2011.
- Impact of the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment on Federation-Provinces Relations, PILDAT Briefing Paper 39, July 2010.
- Performance of the 13<sup>th</sup> National Assembly of Pakistan, The 3<sup>rd</sup> Year, Citizen's Report, PILDAT
- PILDAT Citizens Report on Performance of the Senate of Pakistan, PILDAT, November 2011
- The unfinished Agenda of Electoral Reforms in Pakistan, Policy Brief, PILDAT, July 2012.
- State of Electoral Reforms in Pakistan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report, Citizens Monitoring Report on the implementation of the ECP 5-Year Strategic Plan, PILDAT, June 2012.
- Directory Parliamentary Committees and relevant Civil Society/Research Organizations of Pakistan, PILDAT, September 2011.
- PILDAT Annual Report 2010-2011

### Other Sources

- ECP Five-Year Strategic Plan 2010-2014, Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), May 2010.
- Reforming Pakistan's Electoral System, Asia Report No 203, International Crisis Group, and March 2011.
- The Constitution of Pakistan up-to-date with all amendments, [www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/](http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/)

- Amendment XVIII (the Eighteenth Amendment) of the Constitution of Pakistan, National Assembly of Pakistan, April 2010
- Print Media Coverage
- Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAP), Planning Commission of Pakistan, August 2002.

### **ANNEX 3: PEOPLE INTERVIEWED**

1. Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, President, PILDAT.
2. Aasiya Riaz is the Joint Director at PILDAT.
3. Mr. Javeed Jabbar, Former Senator and Former Federal Minister For Information
4. Ms. Aroona Kamal, Socio-Economist, Gender and Institutional Development
5. Mr. Qazi Azmat Isa, Chief Executive Office, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund
6. Dr. Parvez Hassan, Partner, Hassan & Hassan Advocates
7. Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gillani, Chairman, Gallup Pakistan Ltd.
8. Mr. Akram Malik, International Correspondent APP
9. Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan
10. Mr. Shahid Hamid, Former Governor Punjab
11. Mr. Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan, Secretary, Election Commission of Pakistan
12. Mr. Chaudhry Amjed Sarfraz, Advocate High Court
13. Mr. Ghazi Salahuddin, Columnist, The News

## **ANNEX 4: ACRONYMS**

CGEP - Citizens Group on Electoral Processes

CSOs - Civil Society Organizations

ECP - Election Commission of Pakistan

GIS - Geographic Information Systems

GRAP - Gender Reforms Action Plan

HRCP - Human Rights Commission of Pakistan

IDEA - International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

NADRA- National Database Registration Authority

PILDAT - Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency

PPP - Pakistan People's Party

SDPI - Sustainable Development Policy Institute

SPARC - Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child

UNDEF - United Nations Democracy Fund

## ANNEX 5: IMAGES OF EVENTS HELD BY PILDAT



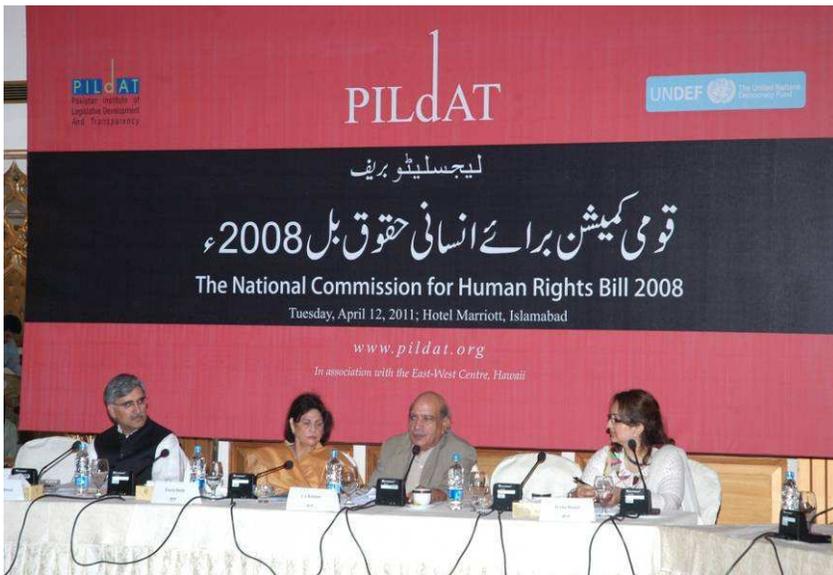
Briefing Session on Electoral Reforms in Pakistan



Briefing Session on Electoral Reforms in Pakistan



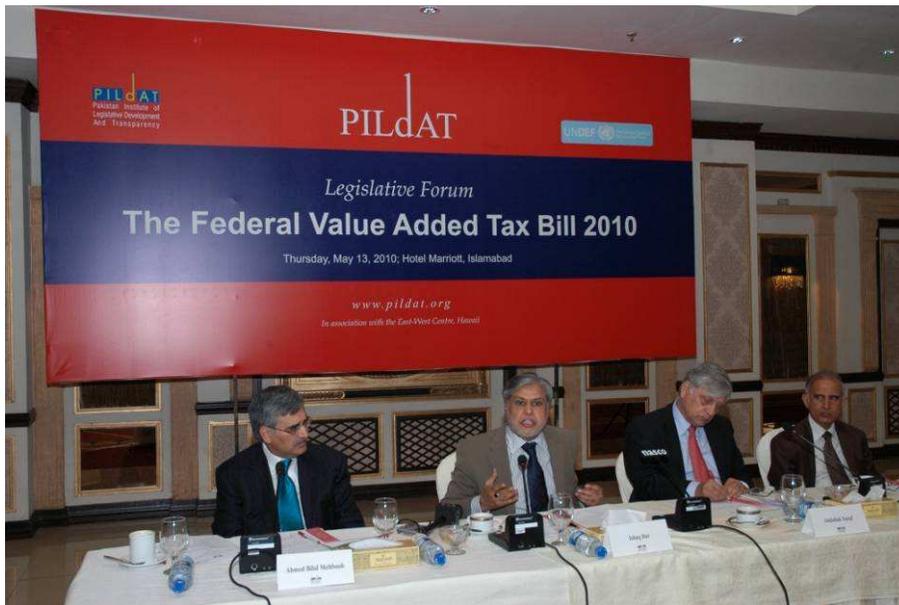
Roundtable Discussion on Electoral Reform in Pakistan  
Monitoring and Implementation of ECP 5 Year Strategic Plan



Legislative Forum on The National Commission for Human Rights Bill 2008



Legislative Forum on Electoral Laws Amendment Bill 2011



Legislative Forum on Federal Value Added Tax Bill 2010