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<u>**ANNEX I**</u>

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan in favour of Honduras for 2023 (part 2) and for 2024 (part 1) to be financed from the general budget of the Union

<u>Action Document for support to the electoral cycle for transparent and peaceful elections in Honduras</u>

MULTIANNUAL PLAN
This document constitutes the multiannual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the <u>NDICI-Global Europe</u> Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title **CRIS/OPSYS** **business reference** **Basic Act**	**Support to the electoral cycle for transparent and peaceful elections in Honduras** OPSYS number: ACT-61892 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Honduras.
4. Programming document	Country multi-annual indicative programme (MIP) for Honduras 2021-2027.
5. Link with relevant MIP objectives / expected results	The Action contributes to: <u>MIP Priority Area 3</u>: Rule of Law and Democratic Governance; Specific Objective 2: Contribute to strengthening of the democratic system and increasing citizen participation, with a specific focus on vulnerable groups, especially women; Expected results: a. Improved democratic participation for vulnerable groups, including access to citizenship registration and electoral participation b. Improved capacity of electoral bodies and national authorities to conduct elections in an independent and transparent manner c. Public policies will have integrated a gender perspective and will be designed, implemented and monitored with increased civil society involvement.

PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	151 - Government & Civil Society 152 – Conflict Peace and Security
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 16 - peace, justice and strong institutions Other significant SDGs and where appropriate, targets: - SDG 10 - reduce inequality within and among countries - SDG 5 - achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls: o Target 5c: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels
8 a) DAC code(s)	15150 – Democratic participation and civil society – 20% 15151 – Elections – 50% 15152 – Legislatures and political parties – 15% 15220 - Civilian peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution – 15%
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	41100 – UN entities
9. Targets	☒Migration ☐ Climate ☒ Social inclusion and Human Development ☒ Gender ☐ Biodiversity ☒ Education ☒ Human Rights, Democracy and Governance

10. Markers **(from DAC form)**	**General policy objective @**	**Not targeted**	**Significant objective**	**Principal objective**
	Participation development/good governance	☐	☐	☒
	Aid to environment @	☒	☐	☐
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	☐	☒	☐
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	☒	☐	☐
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	☒	☐	☐
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	☒	☐	☐
	Nutrition @	☒	☐	☐
	RIO Convention markers	**Not targeted**	**Significant objective**	**Principal objective**
	Biological diversity @	☒	☐	☐
	Combat desertification @	☒	☐	☐
	Climate change mitigation @	☒	☐	☐

11. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Climate change adaptation @	☒	☐	☐
	Digitalisation @	☐	☒	☐
		YES	NO	
	digital connectivity	☒	☐	
	digital governance	☒	☐	
	digital entrepreneurship	☐	☒	
	digital skills/literacy	☐	☒	
	digital services	☒	☐	
	Connectivity @	☐	☒	☐
		YES	NO	
	digital connectivity	☒	☐	
	energy	☐	☒	
	transport	☐	☒	
	health	☐	☒	
	education and research	☐	☒	
	Migration @	☐	☒	☐
	Reduction of Inequalities @	☐	☒	☐
	Covid-19	☒	☐	☐

BUDGET INFORMATION	
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020140
	Total estimated cost: EUR 10 000 000
	Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 10 000 000

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	
13. Type of financing	**Indirect management** with the entity to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.1.

1.2 Summary of the Action

In November 2021, Honduras conducted general elections, which were welcomed by the EU and the Organisation of American States' (OAS) Election Observation Missions (EOM) as fair and characterised by high turn-out and calmness in contrast to the 2017-2018 post-electoral crisis. The success of these elections can be mainly attributed to a number of key achievements, most of which were supported with EU funds: (i) reform and modernisation of the electoral institutions; (ii) a more accurate voter register achieved through the renewal exercise of the ID cards between 2020 and 2021 and (iii) the adoption of a new electoral law providing a legal framework for democratic and inclusive elections, although this law was passed barely one day prior to the official call for the general elections.

However, a number of key concerns outlined in the previous EU EOMs remain, including the high levels of political pre-electoral violence, political violence against women, low levels of elected women candidates, low participation of traditionally underrepresented groups (youth, women, internally displaced persons, people with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities), intense political polarisation, politicisation of the

electoral administration and a number of deficiencies in the institutional management and preparation of the electoral process.

The Action therefore aims to continue the support in addressing the outstanding recommendations of the EU EOM to strengthen the framework for future elections in the context of EU's partnership with Honduras to support its sustainable development and the stabilisation of democracy and rule of law. This will be achieved using a **comprehensive electoral cycle approach** framed around five key elements of democratic electoral processes: (i) capacity building of the electoral institutions (technical, operational, digital), (ii) transparency, (iii) inclusion of under-represented groups, (iv) equal participation in the electoral process of women and men in all their diversity, both as candidates and voters and (v) promotion of a culture of peace. This comprehensive approach will involve work with electoral institutions (at national and local level), political parties, other related government Ministries and institutions, the National Congress, elected women and female candidates, civil society organisations and under-represented groups (young people, women, internally displaced people (IDPs), people with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities), academia and media.

These issues must be addressed **simultaneously** and through **multi-actor partnerships** in order to achieve inclusive, independent, transparent and resilient democratic institutions. The Action will have an inherently **preventive** nature with a **longer-term accompaniment** of the election cycle to avoid that electoral institutions and social/political actors only receive attention in the pre-electoral period. The duration of the Action will also cover the post-electoral period of the next 2025 elections in order to ensure institutional memory from the relevant electoral actors in view of future electoral processes. To further enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency of the electoral process, the Action will also promote the **integration of digital transparency tools** for the electoral cycle in all areas where these tools have proven to foster transparent and peaceful elections. These digital solutions will facilitate equal and secure access of citizens to information and voting mechanisms, promoting inclusivity and accessibility to the electoral process.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Honduras, throughout its history, has experienced **complex electoral processes**, along with a polarised political context and low trust in democratic institutions. President Juan Orlando Hernandez (Nationalist party) was in power since 2014, and his controversial re-election in 2017 deepened the political and social crisis in the country. Following this institutional crisis, thanks to the recommendations of the EU Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) and the consensus reached by political and social actors, groundbreaking agreements were put in place in 2019, which pushed the **National Congress to adopt new constitutional reforms aimed at strengthening the Honduran electoral system**. These reforms created three new distinct electoral institutions and the authorities committed themselves to pass a new electoral law.

In November 2021, Honduras conducted **general elections, which were welcomed by the EU and OAS EOMs** as fair and characterised by high turn-out and calmness in contrast to the 2017-2018 post-electoral crisis. The elections resulted in a change of power allowing *Libertad y Refundación* (LIBRE), a relatively new left-wing political party, reach the presidency and an important percentage of deputies in the National Congress (38%).

The EU has so far conducted three EOMs in Honduras: in 2013, 2017 and 2021. At the November 2021 general elections, out of the 15 recommendations offered by the EU EOM 2017, only three had been fully implemented, five had been partially implemented and seven recommendations remained unaddressed. The success of the general elections of November 2021 can be mainly attributed to the following **achievements of the electoral reform** in line with previous EOMs, most of which were supported with EU funds: (i) reform and modernisation of the

electoral institutions; (ii) a more accurate voter register achieved through the renewal exercise of the ID cards between 2020 and 2021, and (iii) the adoption of a new electoral law providing a legal framework for democratic and inclusive elections, although this law was passed barely one day prior to the official call for the general elections.

There are currently four key institutions in Honduras responsible for organising and overseeing the country's electoral process:

- **National Electoral Council (CNE)**: institution created in January 2019 in the framework of the reforms of that year, responsible for the organisation of electoral processes in Honduras.
- **Electoral Justice Tribunal (TJE):** also created in 2019, responsible for resolving any disputes related to electoral processes in Honduras, including disputes related to the registration of political parties or candidates, or to adjudicate complaints related to electoral fraud or other irregularities.
- **Financing, Transparency and Supervision Unit (UFTF)**: a body created in 2017, now attached to the CNE, responsible for monitoring and regulating campaign finance during electoral processes.
- **National Registry of Persons (RNP)**: responsible for maintaining the national voter registry, which is used to verify the identity and eligibility of voters during elections. The RNP is also responsible for issuing national identity cards, which are required to vote.

Each of the electoral institutions are chaired by a representative from each of the three main political parties: the Liberal, National and Libre party, which was a political compromise reached in order to put an end to the 2017 post-electoral crisis. This joint chairmanship often causes divergences in the direction of decision making of the electoral institutions.

The electoral reform therefore has brought more certainty to the electoral process, but it **does not address all the concerns outlined in the previous EU EOMs.** Considerable challenges remain related to the high levels of political pre-electoral violence, political violence against women, low levels of elected women candidates, low participation of traditionally underrepresented groups (youth, women, internally displaced persons, people with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities), intense political polarisation, politicisation of the electoral administration and a number of deficiencies in the institutional management and preparation of the electoral process.

The change of government following the November 2021 elections brought a switch of political ideology. The Libre party electoral campaign relied on promises of inclusion, defence of women's rights, transparency, anti-corruption, and accountability which brings an **opportunity of consolidating the electoral reform**. At the same time, it has created an atmosphere of uncertainty at all levels because of the politicisation of the electoral institutions and the existing threat that the obtained advances would be lost due to changes in priorities, resources or knowledge transfer. The new government is expected to present another electoral reform package in 2023 focusing on further changes and improvements to the existing legal framework and addressing challenges encountered during the previous election cycle.

On top of all these issues mentioned above, the current electoral authorities in the CNE, TJE and RNP will be ending their mandates in September 2024, barely six months prior to the Primary Elections scheduled for March 2025. It is therefore important to support the hand-over of responsibilities among the exiting and entering authorities ahead of the next general elections.

2.2 Problem Analysis

The EU EOM 2021 considered that the 28 November 2021 general elections were competitive, with the polling characterised by high turnout and calmness. However, the elections took place in a deeply polarised environment and were marred by high levels of pre-electoral political violence, misuse of State resources, late approval of the election law and by-laws, non-enforcement of political finance regulations, biased State media and a general politicisation of electoral administration. **Some of the key issues identified** during 2021 elections by the EU EOM included:

- **The legal framework:** the fact that the new election law was only adopted one day before the official call for general elections did not allow for a timely operationalisation of this law. Organisation of the elections was marred by late adoption of regulations, including on polling and counting procedures, transmission and tabulation of results, special recounts, challenges and appeals. Additionally, a constitutional reform is being considered. This would imply the introduction of a second round for elections at the Presidential level. This reform would bring along wide-reaching changes throughout the current electoral legal framework.

- **Inclusion:** legal shortcomings remain which unreasonably restrict citizens from participating in elections. Although there was full compliance by the parties with the electoral regulations regarding gender parity and the so called "zipper" system, the parties' obligations to promote women's leadership and build and implement gender policies were poorly complied with. Social protest is heavily penalised, which could curtail the rights to assembly and expression. 2021 general elections were marked by an increase in cases of political violence against women politicians. No provisions were made to facilitate voting for persons with disabilities, except assisted voting.

- **Electoral campaigns:** a surge of pre-electoral political violence and killings undermined the opportunity for campaigning, in particular for women, ethnic minority groups and human rights activists. Also, misuse of administrative resources was observed for campaigning, political actors participated in violent narrative and disinformation to citizens, sanctions for not complying with campaign finance were not sufficiently enforced and public and private media showed partiality towards specific candidates.

- **Institutional deficiencies:** shortcomings remain in the internal functioning of the **CNE**, including its ability to supervise training of election staff, deficiencies in communication and education campaigns, affecting efficiency and transparency of the institution. Transmission of preliminary election results (TREP) was an essential element in contributing to public confidence but was only achieved in less than half of the voting centres. In addition, public disagreements among CNE councillors affected its institutional credibility. CNE held rulings with different interpretations of the same provisions on nominations of candidates and its decisions were not always made publicly available. This negatively affected the right of redress before the **TJE**, who operated with insufficient budget and without an Electoral Procedure Law. **RNP** managed to issue IDs to over 5 million voters, but some 400 000 persons could not retrieve their ID cards on time which effectively disenfranchised them from voting.

The Action will build on the EU positioning as a key partner for the Honduran government in the electoral reform, as part of the consolidation of the rule of law and democratic governance in the country. It aims to support the further electoral reforms prioritised by the government in the current electoral cycle. The EU EOM 2021 recommendations will guide these interventions.

The Action will use a **comprehensive electoral cycle approach** framed around five key elements of democratic electoral processes: (i) capacity building of the electoral institutions (technical, operational, digital), (ii) transparency, (iii) inclusion of under-represented groups, (iv) gender and (v) promotion of culture of peace.

Some of the key areas of support will include strengthening the CNE structures and capabilities to manage all aspects of the electoral process (EU EOM 2021 recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 22), by training election staff, contributing to the improvement of the results tabulation system; supporting the development of electoral legal reforms and strengthening processes with civil society organisations, institutions and political parties to guarantee the equal access of women to political spheres, as voters, candidates and elected officials (1, 6 , 13, 15, 16);

These issues must be addressed **simultaneously** and through **multi-actor partnerships** to achieve inclusive, independent, transparent and resilient democratic institutions. Interventions will have a strong focus on the

electoral institutions, but will also include other relevant institutional and political actors at national and local level. Civil society organisations, academia and media will directly implement initiatives of inclusion, civic education, prevention of conflicts and democratic participation. A specific component will be earmarked for sub-granting to grassroots organisations to ensure broader reach at local level. The Action will have an inherently **preventive** nature with a **longer-term accompaniment** of the election cycle to avoid that electoral institutions and social/political actors only receive attention in the pre-electoral period. The duration of the Action will also cover the post-electoral period of the next 2025 elections to ensure institutional memory from the relevant electoral actors in view of future electoral processes. To further enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency of the electoral process, the proposed Action will also promote the **integration of digital transparency tools** for the electoral cycle in all areas where these tools have proven to foster transparent and peaceful elections. These digital solutions will facilitate equal and secure access of citizens to information and voting mechanisms, promoting inclusivity and accessibility to the electoral process.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational to be covered by the action:

Electoral institutions: the National Electoral Council (CNE), the Electoral Justice Tribunal (TJE), the Unit for Financing, Transparency and Oversight of Political Parties (UFTF) and the Civil Registry (RNP)

These institutions play a critical role in the electoral process, and thus should be involved in capacity building programmes to enhance their skills and knowledge on various aspects of elections, such as voter registration, candidate nomination and results management. They should also promote transparency and accountability in the electoral process, by publishing information on the electoral process and making election results publicly available. Moreover, these institutions can promote the inclusion of underrepresented groups and gender equality in the electoral cycle, by implementing affirmative action policies and addressing gender-based political violence during elections. Electoral institutions have a key role in promoting women's electoral and political participation and should have the necessary capacity and resources to ensure that a gender perspective is mainstreamed at every stage of the electoral cycle. Finally, they should engage in initiatives that promote a culture of peace during electoral processes, such as implementing conflict prevention measures and promoting dialogue among political parties and civil society.

Secondary institutional actors: Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Governance and Justice Office, Human Rights, Women Affairs, Social Development, the Forum of Political Women of Honduras, the National Institute for Youth, the Institute for Access to Public Information, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the National Congress and the National Human Rights Institution.

These actors can support and oversee electoral processes and promote reforms and actions ensuring an inclusive and transparent electoral process. They can also promote transparency of the electoral processes by ensuring that electoral observers have access to all stages of the electoral process. In terms of inclusion, they can facilitate the registration of voters from marginalised communities and internally displaced people. Furthermore, they can encourage women's participation as election observers and monitors. Finally, they should engage in initiatives that promote a culture of peace during electoral processes, such as conflict resolution and promoting non-violent behaviour. They can also ensure that members of the polling stations are trained and certified by the electoral institutions.

Local authorities and the Association of Municipalities of Honduras:

These actors can play a critical role in ensuring that electoral processes are conducted in a fair and transparent manner by maintaining security during the electoral cycle and monitoring election proceedings. They can also promote transparency in electoral processes, such as ensuring that election materials and results are publicly displayed. Moreover, they can promote the inclusion of underrepresented groups, such as ensuring that polling stations are accessible to people with disabilities. Furthermore, they can ensure that polling stations are safe and free from gender-based violence. Finally, they can foster dialogue among communities and promote peaceful coexistence.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs - including women's and youth organisations, grassroots and community-based organisations):

These actors can participate in capacity building initiatives to enhance their ability to monitor and observe electoral processes, such as training on how to report irregularities and violations of electoral laws. They can also promote transparency in electoral processes by monitoring the accuracy of voter lists and the transparency of vote counting procedures. Moreover, they can promote the inclusion of underrepresented groups by conducting voter education campaigns targeted at women and minorities. Furthermore, they can advocate for the inclusion of gender-sensitive provisions in electoral laws and policies. Finally, they can conduct voter education campaigns on peaceful behaviour and advocate for peaceful elections.

Political parties:

Given that these institutions are essential to representative democracy and to the process of democratisation, and taking into account their influence in all aspects of political life in Honduras, political parties will participate in the Action with the objective of expanding the participation of underrepresented groups (women, youth, ethnic and racial minorities, people with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ groups). They will be involved from grassroots members to the governing boards of majority and minority parties. Political parties will promote processes of capacity strengthening, exchanges and integration of gender equality into the parties' vision and the strategic missions and plans and develop internal accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance with the gender equality objectives.

Universities:

Universities can provide technical assistance and research to support capacity building efforts, such as developing training materials and conducting impact assessments of capacity building programmes. They can also be involved in research and analysis of the transparency of electoral processes, such as conducting surveys on the public's perception of transparency in elections. In terms of inclusion, they can study the impact of affirmative action policies on voter turnout. Universities also have a role to play in the study of the impact of gender on voter behaviour and candidate selection. Finally, they can analyse the role of conflict prevention measures in reducing electoral violence.

Media: As the media are essential for democracy, particularly during the electoral process, the media and journalists will be involved through actions that increase the participation of voters and underrepresented groups in public debates. They will provide adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the election process to allow citizens to make informed choices. In the same way, the media are expected to promote awareness of gender inequality in politics by implementing tools to combat incorrect information (especially during election times) and making women more visible in public forums in radio and television broadcasts. Through special trainings, public commitments and the implementation of toolkits, the mainstream media are expected to be a crucial watchdog to democratic elections, safeguarding the transparency of the electoral process.

3   DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1   Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective of this action is to promote peaceful, inclusive, transparent credible elections in Honduras. This will be achieved through a comprehensive approach for electoral cycle (capacity strengthening, transparency, inclusion, gender and culture of peace) divided into two Specific Objectives:

The Specific Objectives (SO) of this action are:

> **SO1:** Electoral bodies, relevant public institutions have improved their electoral **operational strategies, integrity and accuracy of electoral processes** in the exercise of their mandates (*capacity building and transparency*).
> **SO2:** Underrepresented groups of populations (young people, women, LGBTIQ+, the elderly, internally displaced people, people with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities) **lead processes of**

inclusion, culture of peace and democratic participation at the political level, aimed at strengthening democracy and non-violent conflict management (*inclusion, gender and culture of peace*).

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives are:

SO1:
> **Output 1.1:** Electoral bodies and institutions have strengthened their capacities (technical and operational) and adapted their institutional functioning in line with the electoral legal reforms.
> **Output 1.2:** Electoral bodies and institutions have strengthened inter-institutional cooperation and coordination, including on human rights- and gender-based approach.
> **Output 1.3:** Electoral bodies and institutions improve their institutional communication and digital tools.
> **Output 1.4:** Electoral institutions, local authorities and political stakeholders are empowered in promoting democratic participation and representation of under-represented groups.

SO2:
> **Output 2.1:** Citizens have improved their civic education through civil society and institutional initiatives.
> **Output 2.2:** Existing institutional and civil society mechanisms for prevention and mitigation of conflict, disinformation and political and electoral violence (early warning system, observatories, platforms to counter disinformation) have been reinforced.
> **Output 2.3:** Women's civil society organisations have promoted reforms and special measures designed to increase women's political participation in the electoral cycle.
> **Output 2.4:** Civil society organisations implement actions to strengthen inclusion, citizen participation, conflict prevention and transformation in the electoral cycle (sub-granting).

3.2   Indicative Activities

Activities relating to Output 1.1: Electoral bodies and institutions have strengthened their capacities (technical and operational) and adapted their institutional functioning in line with the electoral legal reforms.

> **Activity 1.1.1:** Provide technical assistance to strengthen the institutional capacity of the CNE and RNP for the development and implementation of institutional operational rules and procedures (e.g. operations manual, regulations, action protocols, strategies, risk and action plans) and for the strengthening of the voter registry.

> **Activity 1.1.2:** Support with the identification, selection and training of permanent and temporary electoral personnel of CNE and TJE with special emphasis on the members of the polling stations, prior to the elections.

> **Activity 1.1.3:** Development and implementation of a training programme (e.g. on electoral legislation, management of challenges and nullities, electoral procedures, transparency, gender, inclusion and conflict prevention for institutional personnel of the electoral institutions (CNE, TJE and UFTF) at national, municipal and departmental levels, electoral monitors, representatives of political parties, electoral candidates and CSOs.

> **Activity 1.1.4:** Promote exchanges and sharing of best practices with regional counterparts of the electoral institutions (CNE, TJE, UFTF) and of the Institute for Access to Public Information.

Activities relating to Output 1.2: Electoral bodies and institutions have strengthened inter-institutional cooperation and coordination, including on human rights- and gender-based approach.

> **Activity 1.2.1:** The harmonisation of the procedures of the electoral institutions (CNE, TJE and UFTF) and their adaptation to the new provisions of the current electoral legal framework through the development of operational documentation and trainings.

> **Activity 1.2.2**: Provide technical assistance to electoral institutions to ensure gender mainstreaming in the electoral cycle.

Activity 1.2.3: Universities, in coordination with the implementing partners and electoral bodies and institutions, create and implement a legal assistance strategy for women in politics.

Activity 1.2.4: Include gender mainstreaming indicators/variables in the UFTF mechanisms for controlling the financial resources of political parties and candidates aimed at promoting women's leadership.

Activities relating to Output 1.3: Electoral bodies and institutions improve their institutional communication and digital tools.

Activity: 1.3.1: Strengthen the capacities of the existing electoral working group on inter-institutional coordination and cooperation in the use of digital tools to improve its functioning.

Activity 1.3.2: Support the TJE in establishing a publicly available virtual library that includes TJE-related resources and documentation, as well as a case law database to help TJE officials and magistrates access electoral jurisprudential information more quickly and effectively.

Activity 1.3.3: Support the electoral institutions (CNE, TJE and UFTF) in the implementation of differentiated, proactive and non-partisan institutional campaigns with a human rights and gender perspective (e.g. through infographics, videos and audios on mainstream and social media). These institutional campaigns will be coordinated among the institutions within the existing inter-institutional electoral coordination working group (*Mesa Permanente de Cooperación y Coordinación Interinstitucional)* with the objective of generating collective knowledge about the role, responsibilities, strategies and actions of the electoral institutions.

Activity 1.3.4: Support the UFTF in reviewing and updating the digital platform developed for reporting and monitoring campaign expenditures based on the needs of the 2025 electoral process. This support will include in-person and virtual trainings to UFTF personnel, as well as to political candidates and political parties in the use of the UFTF platform.

Activities relating to Output 1.4: Electoral institutions, local authorities and political stakeholders are empowered in promoting democratic participation and representation of underrepresented groups.

Activity 1.4.1: Support the electoral institutions (CNE, TJE, UFTF and RNP) and the Institute for Access to Public Information in the training of its technical and operational staff on inclusion.

Activity 1.4.2: Provide support to the electoral institutions (CNE and RNP) as well as relevant government institutions (the National Human Rights Institution, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Social Development) to promote information campaigns aimed at enfranchising internally displaced persons.

Activity 1.4.3: Develop and implement continuous capacity building processes for political parties and women politicians at the national and local levels from a gender and intersectionality perspective.

Activities relating to Output 2.1: Citizens have improved their civic education through civil society and institutional initiatives.

Activity 2.1.1: Assist the National Electoral Council (CNE) in creating and implementing a comprehensive strategy for civic and electoral education and inclusion that targets urban and rural populations in all 18 departments of Honduras. The strategy should leverage mainstream and social media, thematic discussion groups, forums, and training workshops to promote inclusive participation in the electoral process. Specifically, the strategy should prioritise the engagement of underrepresented groups such as young people, women, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, elderly citizens, internally displaced people, individuals with disabilities, as well as indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities in the electoral process.

Activity 2.1.2: Support CSOs from underrepresented groups and relevant Ministries in organising voter education and training processes for first-time voters, targeting public and private schools and colleges at the national level.

Activity 2.1.3: Strengthen existing digital citizen participation platforms allowing citizens to participate in the development of public policies, with a particular focus on traditionally excluded populations.

Activity 2.1.4: Support CSO and institutional initiatives to develop and implement voter, civic education and sensitisation campaigns on gender equality.

Activities related to Output 2.2: Existing civil society and institutional mechanisms for prevention and mitigation of conflict, disinformation and political and electoral violence (early warning system, observatories, platforms for fight against disinformation) have been reinforced.

Activity 2.2.1: Establish an early warning and early response system led by the National Human Rights Institution, in partnership with other relevant national actors in the field of human rights, electoral violence and gender-based violence.

Activity 2.2.2: Provide technical support to the existing civil society observatory of women's political rights (*Observatorio Politico de Mujeres)* in its work to permanently monitor electoral processes (including violence against women in politics), the political system and parties and provide legal assistance for women victims of violence in the political arena.

Activity 2.2.3: Strengthen existing institutional and CSO initiatives countering disinformation, misinformation and hate speech.

Activity 2.2.4: Support the Ministry of Human Rights to improve the efficiency and reach of the existing institutional working group on conflict prevention (*Mesa Permanente Nacional de prevención de Conflictos*), allowing this working group to become a reference at national level. The support will include digitalisation of the working group's processes.

Activities related to Output 2.3: Women's civil society organisations have promoted reforms and special measures designed to increase women's political participation in the electoral cycle.

Activity 2.3.1: Women's CSOs formulate and disseminate proposals for electoral reforms and special measures of affirmative action to promote women's fair access to political spheres—as voters, candidates, elected officials and civil service members.

Activity 2.3.2: Provide technical assistance to the Gender Committee of the National Congress (*Comisión de Equidad de Género)* to integrate a gender perspective in the organisational culture of the National Congress and promote prevention of violence against women in politics.

Activity 2.3.3: The existing forum of women in politics (*Foro de Mujeres Políticas*) implements initiatives for upholding of women's right to participate in public life, with a particular focus on the forum's Agenda for Political Equality 2023-2025.

Activities related output 2.4: Civil society organisations and platforms implement actions to strengthen inclusion, citizen participation, conflict prevention and transformation in the electoral cycle (sub-granting).

Activity 2.4.1: CSOs at local and sub-national level implement activities that contribute to increasing the participation of underrepresented groups and to the prevention and transformation of conflicts.

> **Activity 2.4.2:** Organise thematic meetings, forums and exchanges of experiences with CSOs at the national and local level to promote leadership, the promotion of political rights and accountability in the electoral cycle.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Outcomes of the SEA screening
The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening concluded that no further action was required.

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening
The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening
The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls
As per the OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality is a significant objective. Gender mainstreaming will be applied throughout the Action, including: a gender-responsive conflict analysis; assessment of the root causes of gender-based political exclusion and violence; promoting inclusive and intersectional actions, particularly directed at the demands of LGBTIQ+ groups; strengthening capacities of political women and women's organisations and platforms; offering civic and voter education and awareness campaigns on gender equality; supporting advocacy actions for gender equality with political parties, electoral authorities and other key actors. Monitoring and evaluation of the Action will be based on indicators with a gender perspective. Increasing women's representation in politics and obtaining a higher share of women elected in public offices is a concrete objective of the Action. The Action will contribute to the Gender Action Plan III, especially to the thematic area of engagement "Promoting equal participation and leadership" and to SDG 5, particularly 5.1, 5.2, 5.5. and 5.5.

Democracy and Human Rights
The principles of good governance, participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability will be at the core of the Action. This Action will support the implementation of human rights-based actions, promoting the political participation and representation of traditionally under-represented groups or people living in vulnerable situations. A core element of the Action is the incorporation of human rights and gender perspectives in the electoral reform and political participation.

Disability
As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that while persons with disabilities figure among the identified vulnerable groups, specific support is considered too marginal to be qualified higher.

Reduction of inequalities
Overall, Honduras had the fourth highest level of income inequality in 2019 (Gini index of 0.482) in the LAC region. 74% of the population lives below the poverty line, a condition that especially affects women and young people. Levels of gender inequality in health, education, labour market participation, and political representation are also higher due to growing inequalities. Poverty and lack of economic security are often considered some of the main barriers for political participation. To this extent, the Action will seek to reach the most vulnerable population through its interventions, which in general coincides with those who have traditionally been underrepresented at the political level: ethnic groups, young people, women, internally displaced persons and people with disabilities. Subgrating will establish selection criteria that prioritise civil society organisations that work with the most vulnerable population groups.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience				
By supporting the consolidation of an inclusive political culture and democracy, the Action aims to contribute to the prevention of potential conflict, focusing in particular on developing conflict prevention measures towards the most vulnerable and traditionally underrepresented population groups. The Action incorporates peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity into its interventions and activities to reduce the potential for conflict and its escalation. Precisely due to the sensitivity of the Honduran context, the Action highlights the promotion of a culture of peace and the adoption of a conflict prevention approach with a view to fostering a propitious environment for electoral and political processes.				
Disaster Risk Reduction				
The Action is not considered relevant for disaster risk reduction.				
Other considerations if relevant				
No other considerations.				

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks (R)	Likelihood (High/Medium/Low)	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
Risks related to planning, processes and systems	**R1:** Lack of timely funding for the financing of the electoral processes, affecting technical preparations and adoption of best practices for the management of the electoral process.	Medium	Medium	Develop scenarios and plans of actions for different possibilities that may occur. Build flexibility into the Action and its annual work plans.
Risks related to the external environment	**R2:** Key electoral actors do not exercise their mandate in a professional or impartial manner.	Medium	Medium	Establish monitoring capacity of key electoral actors, with clear reporting lines to signal problematic behaviours and/or shortcomings. Inform implementing partners and EU management in a pro-active manner.
Risks related to planning, processes and systems	**R3:** New electoral reforms are not approved in the proposed timeframe, thus causing delays.	High	Medium	Develop scenarios and plans of actions for different possibilities that may occur. Build flexibility into the Action and its annual work plans.
Risks related to people and the organisation	**R4:** Cases of corruption involving public figures, political leaders or high ranked civil servants erode trust in the electoral process.	Medium	Medium	The Action will maintain an impartial approach to institutional internal issues, while at the same time engaging in dialogue with all relevant actors.
Risks related to people and	**R5:** Electoral violence erupts for political or social reasons resulting in	High	High	The Action will ensure that the supported electoral actors will

the organisation	the destabilisation of the electoral process and a higher polarisation amongst political actors.			continue to function albeit the pace of work may be impacted.

In that case, the Action may need to build flexibility into its implementation timeframe. |
| Risks related to the external environment | **R6:** The worsening of the COVID-19 pandemic delays or impedes the conduct of electoral operations. | Low | Low | Develop best- and worst-case scenarios with regards to the propagation of COVID-19 and possible impact on the electoral process.

Based on potential scenarios, build flexibility into the Action implementation timeframe. |
| Communication and information | **R7:** Risk of institutional exposure for the EU and implementing partners as a result of the lack of clarity in the support provided to national actors throughout the electoral process. | Low | Medium | Establish clear guidelines and responsibility matrix with national and implementing partners.

Clarify and establish guidelines for use of visibility and branding materials with regards to supported initiatives. |

Assumptions (A)

A1: Elections will be held in 2025, with relevant phases and electoral operations being conducted in a timely manner following the electoral calendar.

A2: The electoral institutions can carry out their mandate without interference in an independent manner.

A3: The electoral institutions have sufficient (human and financial) resources to be capable of performing their mandates.

A4: New electoral reforms are approved in 2023.

A5: The COVID-19 pandemic is kept under control and does not significantly affect the electoral process nor its planned timeframe.

A6: Implementing partners are resourced with necessary funds in a timely manner counting as well with the necessary collaboration of national partner throughout the electoral process, independently of internal changes that may occur in these organisations throughout time.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

An effective electoral assistance is based on the premise that peaceful and inclusive societies also require accountable, transparent and inclusive institutions at all levels to build trust and foster citizen participation in the electoral process. Through the partnerships with relevant national stakeholders, the Theory of Change (TOC) establishes that, **IF** the key actors for the organisation and implementation of inclusive, transparent and integral elections are supported and strengthened in areas of transparency, capacity, inclusion, gender and culture of peace, **THEN** the Honduran democracy will be strengthened in the period between elections and thus prepared to face the electoral processes that will take place in 2025.

The underlying assumption for the before-mentioned TOC is supported by the following premises related to the five before-mentioned thematic areas:

- **Capacity building:** This thematic area aims to strengthen the capacity of national beneficiaries to carry out those actions specific to their mandates, thus also reinforcing the way in which the electoral process is planned and implemented. With regard to the Action's support for institutional capacity building, the TOC states that:
    1. **IF** national institutions and political actors are strengthened and supported to carry out their mandate in a credible, effective and accountable manner, **AND**
    2. **IF** the process of preparing national partners to the current electoral legal reforms is supported
    3. **THEN** the electoral process and the democratic culture in Honduras will be strengthened.

- **Transparency** This thematic area aims to promote knowledge and dissemination of useful information regarding the electoral process, as well as to strengthen mechanisms for monitoring the electoral campaign. With regard to the Action's support for the dissemination of information and the promotion of transparency in the electoral process, the TOC states that:
    1. **IF** citizens receive accurate and timely information regarding the electoral process, **AND**
    2. **IF** the monitoring, auditing and oversight capacity of political parties is strengthened
    3. **THEN** the transparency and credibility of the electoral process will be increased.

- **Inclusion**: This thematic area aims to ensure that the electoral process promotes awareness and participation of Honduran citizens in the electoral process, with special emphasis on vulnerable or underrepresented populations, such as women, youth, LGTBIQ+ persons, persons with disabilities (PWDs), internally displaced people (IDP) and indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities. With regard to the Action's support for the inclusion of citizens in the electoral process, the TOC states that:
    1. **IF** the inclusion and participation of women, youth, IDP, LGBTIQ+ persons, PWDs, indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities in the electoral process is promoted, **AND**
    2. **IF** citizens receive adequate civic education that encourages participation in the electoral process through the communication and dissemination of credible and transparent information
    3. **THEN** the inclusion, legitimacy and credibility of the electoral process will be strengthened.

- **Gender**: This thematic area aims to improve the participation of women in the cycle of electoral processes, recognising that stable peace and national prosperity can only be achieved when institutions are democratic and representative of all groups in society, particularly women who in Honduras represent 52% of the population. With regard to the Action's support to ensure that women's voices are heard, their concerns are addressed and their potential contributions to peace and democracy are maximised, the TOC states that:
    1. **IF** gender-specific positive measures for increasing women's participation in elections are promoted and established,
    2. **IF** electoral authorities and political parties ensure equal access for women to voter and civic education, provide women candidates with full support, training and financial resources, and eliminate discriminatory practices hampering women's participation either as voters or candidates,
    3. **THEN** democratic and stable elections are more likely to be achieved

- **Culture of Peace:** This thematic area aims to ensure that the electoral process is planned and implemented with a focus on preventing and/or mitigating conflicts and tensions that may arise before, during and after elections. With regard to the Action's support for conflict prevention and the conduct of elections in a peaceful environment, the TOC states that:
    1. **IF** the capacities of national actors are strengthened to prevent and/or mitigate electoral and gender-based violence in elections and politics, **AND**
    2. **IF** mechanisms are strengthened to combat the spread of disinformation and hate speech,
    3. **THEN** the electoral process will take place in a peaceful environment that allows for the effective organisation of elections and the free participation of citizens.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To promote peaceful, inclusive, transparent and credible elections in Honduras	1 Country score according to the Electoral Democracy Index (OPSYS core indicator) 2. CID Gallup Surveys Estudio de Opinion Publica de Honduras	1. 0.38 (2021) 2. Baseline to be commissioned by the Action	1. Target to to be determined at project start 2. Target to to be determined at project start	1. V-Dem data 2. CID Gallup Estudios de Opinion Publica Honduras	*Not applicable*
Outcome 1	1 Electoral bodies and relevant public institutions have improved their **electoral operational strategies, integrity and accuracy of electoral processes** in the exercise of their mandates *(capacity building and transparency).*	1.1 Status of implementation of recommendations of the Election Observation Mission (EOM) 1.2 Percentage of citizens who are fairly satisfied with the way democracy works in their country (OPSYS core indicator)	1.1 Baseline to be commissioned by the Action 1.2.30% (Latinobarometro 2021)	1.1 End assessment to be commissioned by the Action 1..2. 35%	1.1 Progress reports of the Action 1.2 Various sources of data [Latinobarometro survey; ERIC national survey)	**Electoral bodies are willing** to improve their institutional capacities and transparency and strengthen inclusion of women and traditionally underrepresented groups' in both political and electoral processes

Outcome 2	2 Underrepresented groups of populations (women, youth, LGBTIQ+, afro descendants, indigenous people, people with disabilities and internally displaced people) **lead processes of inclusion, culture of peace and democratic participation** at the political level, aimed at strengthening democracy and non-violent conflict management *(inclusion, gender and culture of peace).*	2.1 Number of people from under-represented groups (young people, women, IDPs, people with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities) who participate in processes of culture of peace, democratic participation and inclusion 2.2. Degree of political participation of underrepresented populations (index score)	2.1 0 (2023) 2.2 Index score 5	2.1 1300 persons disaggregated by sex, age and ethnicity 2.2. Index score 6	2.1 Progress reports 2.2 Beneficiary opinion study adapted from index used by The Economist Intelligence Unit. The variable captures the extent to which citizens can and do participate in politics	Underrepresented groups are interested in increasing their capacities regarding political participation Underrepresented groups recognise and exercise their leadership, and organize in structures to participate in political processes, finding openness in the political sphere for their participation
Output 1 **relating to Outcome 1**	1.1 Electoral bodies and institutions have **strengthened their capacities** (technical and operational) and adapted their institutional functioning in line with the electoral legal reforms.	1.1.1 Number of certified persons trained to man the polling stations 1.1.3 Number of Civil Servants from Electoral Institutions trained	1.1.1 0 (2023) 1.1.30	1.1.1 400 (2026) 1.1.3 80	1.1.1 Progress reports 1.1.3Progress reports	**Electoral bodies and institutions are willing** and open to work with the Action to improve their institutional functioning

Output 2 **relating to Outcome 1**	1.2 Electoral bodies and institutions have strengthened **inter-institutional cooperation and coordination**, including on human rights- and gender-based approach.	1.2.1 Number of national level inter-institutional dialogues on specific topics supported by the intervention 1.2.2. Institutionalisation level of a gender perspective in prioritised electoral institutions to address violence against women in politics and foster women's right to participate in public life	1.2.1 0 (2023) 1.2.2 Low (2023)	1.2.1 12 (2026) 1.2.2. Medium (2026)	1.2.1 Progress reports 1.2.2. UN Tool that measures gender perspective in institutions; progress reports	Electoral bodies are interested in increasing their knowledge and capacities in human rights and gender perspective, and are willing to integrate these perspectives in their work and support actions that aim to increase women political participation
Output 3 relating to Outcome 1	1.3 Electoral bodies and institutions improve their institutional communication and digital tools.	**1.3.1 Number of institutional communication campaigns supported and implemented[1] 1.3.2 Number of digital tools implemented to support the electoral institutions	1.3.1 0 (2023) 1.3.2 1 (2023)	1.3.1 4 (2026) 1.3.2 5 (2026)	1.3.1 Progress reports, campaign design and campaign monitoring reports 1.3.2 Progress reports	Electoral institutions and bodies are interested in increasing their knowledge and capacities in communication and are wiling to adapt digital tools
Output 4 relating to Outcome 1	1.4 Electoral institutions, local authorities and political stakeholders are **empowered in promoting democratic participation and representation of** underrepresented groups.	1.4.1 Number of Information campaigns catered to internally displaced persons at national level **1.4.2 Number of people from underrepresented groups with strengthened capacities to improve their participation in decision making spaces and to exercise their political leadership[2]	1.4.1 0 (2023) 1.4.2 0 (2023)	1.4.1 12 1.4.2 1300 people disaggregated by sex, ethnicity and age	1.4.1 Progress reports 1.4.2 Progress reports, training reports, official reports/ statistics on underrepresented groups	Electoral institutions, local authorities and political stakeholders are receptive to adopt an inclusive approach to democratic participation of under-

					participating in politics	represented groups.
Output 1 **relating to Outcome 2**	2.1 Citizens have improved their **civic education** through civil society and institutional initiatives.	2.1.1 Number of persons reached through civic education workshops and sensitisation campaigns 2.1.2 Number of citizen proposals on public policies presented to multi-actor digital platforms	2.1.10 2.1.2 0	2.1.1 1500 persons disaggregated by sex, age and ethnicity 2.1.225	2.1.1 Progress reports and surveys 2.1.2 Progress reports	Honduran population is receptive to sensitising messages concerning participating in public life,
Output 2 **relating to Outcome 2**	2.2 Existing civil society and institutional **mechanisms for prevention and mitigation of conflict, disinformation and political and electoral violence** (early warning system, observatories, platforms for fight against disinformation) have been reinforced	2.2.1 Number of agreements reached in inter-institutional mechanisms supported by the Action. **2.2.2 Number of actions led by institutional and/or civil society actors aimed at promoting and monitoring equality and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, age and ethnicity[3]	2.2.1 0 (2023) 2.2.2 4 (2023)	2.2.1 10 2026) 2.2.2 20 (2026)	2.2.1 Progress Reports 2.2.2 social oversight documents	Electoral processes can be audited by civil society

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[1]   Contributes to SDG 16, indicator 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group
[2]   Contributes to SDG Indicator 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions
[3]   Contributes to SDG indicator 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex

Output 3 relating to Outcome 2	2.3 Women's civil society organisations have promoted reforms and special measures designed to increase women's political participation in the electoral cycle.	**2.3.1 Number of national and/or local government policies and proposals of electoral reforms developed or revised with women´s organisations and key actors participation through EU support to include a gender perspective[4] ** 2.3.2. Number of specific actions taken by institutional and political actors to address discriminatory practices and improve women's representation indecision-making positions at national and local level (OPSYS indicator)	2.3.1 0 (2023(2.3.2 0 (2023)	2.3.1 8 (2026) 2.3.2. 15 (2026)	2.3.1 Progress reports, copies of submitted electoral and political reform proposals, copies of approved reforms 2.3.2. EU and national intervention monitoring and reporting systems	Honduran National Congress and political actors continue to be receptive to incorporating gender perspective in legal actions and to increase women participation in their structures in management positions
Output 4 relating to Outcome 2	2.4 **Civil society organisations and platforms implement actions** to strengthen inclusion, citizen participation, conflict prevention and transformation in the electoral cycle(sub-granting)	**2.4.1 Number of grassroots civil society organisations and their platforms benefiting from (or reached by) EU support[5] 2.4.2 Number of dialogues and public initiatives led by underrepresented groups on pacific, transparent and inclusive elections	2.4.1 0 (2023) 2.4.2. 0 (2023)	2.4.1 25 (2026) 2.4.2. 40 (2026)	2.4.1 Subgrant fund manuals and subgrant implementation reports 2.4.2. copies of agendas or notes on dialogues, including agreements	Civil society organizations and platforms are interested in receiving funding to implement local activities, and have the capacities to implement technically and financially

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[4] Contributes to GERF Indicator 2.29 Number of government policies developed or revised with civil society organisation participation through EU support
[5] Contributes to GERF Indicator 2.28 Number of grassroot civil society organisations benefitting from EU support

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures.

4.3.1 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

This Action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity(ies), which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: presence in the partner country, knowledge and operational capacity in the areas of democracy, electoral reform, transparency, inclusion, gender equality and conflict prevention, proven experience with working with electoral bodies and institutions, potential for coordination and experience with working with civil society and grassroots organisations, knowledge and experience of managing delegated funds.

The implementation by this entity(ies) entails the entire Action as described in this Action Document.

4.3.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

If the foreseen implementation modality under indirect management above cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the action may be implemented through a a technical assistance service contract in direct management mode with the keystakeholders as outlined in section 2.2 of this Action Document.

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Specific Objective 1 - Electoral bodies, relevant public institutions have improved their electoral operational strategies, integrity and accuracy of electoral processes in the exercise of their mandates	5 270 000
Indirect management – cf. section 4.3	
Specific Objective 2 - Underrepresented groups of populations lead processes of inclusion, culture of peace and democratic participation at the political level, aimed at strengthening democracy and non-violent conflict management	4 730 000
Indirect management – cf. section 4.3	
Contingencies	N/A
Total	10 000 000

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The entrusted entity will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Action. The entrusted entity and the EU Delegation will establish a steering mechanism to decide on strategic orientations, possible adjustments, approval and programming of the activities of the Action. The mechanism will include the participation of implementing actors, involved in the Action. Representatives from secondary institutional bodies, local authorities and any other relevant actors may be invited *ad hoc* when the need arises.

In accordance with the implementing regulations, a Project Board must be installed as the ultimate decision-making body responsible for management decisions and for directing the Project Manager or Project Coordinator when guidance is required, including approval of budget revisions. Project assurance reviews by this group are conducted at designated decision points during the development of the Start-up Plan, as necessary, when deemed appropriate by the Project Manager or Coordinator.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination.

5   PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this Action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the Action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support). Indicators shall be disaggregated at least by sex. All monitoring and reporting shall assess how the action is taking into account the human rights-based approach and gender equality.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

The implementing partner will be responsible for collecting all data required to define both the baseline, monitor progress and results achieved.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the Action, a mid-term and a final evaluation will be carried out for this Action or its components via independent consultants to be contracted by the Commission (final) and via the implementing partner (mid-term).

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least two months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.
The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation by the Commission may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 "Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions", it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Interventio (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as (tick one of the 4 following options);

Action level (i.e. Budget Support, blending)		
☐	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
Group of actions level (i.e. top-up cases, different phases of a single programme)		
☐	Group of actions	Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#):
Contract level		
☒	Single Contract 1	
☐	Single Contract 2	
	(…)	
Group of contracts level (i.e. series of programme estimates, cases in which an Action includes for example four contracts and two of them, a technical assistance contract and a contribution agreement, aim at the same objectives and complement each other)		
☐	Group of contracts 1	