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**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX I**

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the Annual Action Plan in Favour of Lebanon 2023

**Action Document for “Support to the Election Process and Reforms and Support to Civil Society in Lebanon”**

**ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan in the sense of Article 23(2) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

**1. SYNOPSIS**

**1.1. Action Summary Table**

<b>1. Title OPSYS Basic Act</b>	<b>Support to the Election Process and Reforms and Support to Civil Society in Lebanon</b> Annual Action Plan in Favour of Lebanon 2023 OPSYS business references: ACT-61920 ABAC Commitment level 1 number: JAD. 1247102 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
<b>2. Economic and Investment Plan (EIP)</b>	No
<b>EIP Flagship</b>	No
<b>3. Team Europe Initiative</b>	No
<b>4. Beneficiary of the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in Lebanon.
<b>5. Programming document</b>	Lebanon Multi annual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 <sup>1</sup>
<b>6. Link with relevant MIP objectives/expected results</b>	Priority 1: Enhancing Good Governance and Supporting Reforms Support Measures: Measures in favour of civil society

<sup>1</sup> C(2022)8363 final of 24/11/2022

<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>				
<b>7. Priority Area(s), sectors</b>	MIP – priority area 1: Enhancing good governance and supporting reforms (DAC code 150, 740) MIP –Support Actions in favour of Civil Society (DAC 150)			
<b>8. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	Main SDG (1 only): SDG 16: Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 5: Gender Equality SDG 10: Reducing inequalities			
<b>9. DAC code(s)</b>	15151: Elections (45%) 15150: Democratic participation and civil society (5%) 15152: Legislatures and political parties (10%) 16061: Culture and recreation (5%) 16080: Social Dialogue (35%)			
<b>10. Main Delivery Channel</b>	40000 - Multilateral organisations 20000 – Non Governmental organisations (NGOs) and Civil society			
<b>11. Targets</b>	Please, indicate (if relevant) to which spending target(s) this action is contributing to (indicatively) <input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
<b>12. Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women’s and girl’s empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**13. Internal markers and Tags**

Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
EIP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EIP Flagship	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Tags	YES	NO	
transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
environment, climate resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
digital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
economic development (incl. private sector, trade and macroeconomic support)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
human development (incl. human capital and youth)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
health resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
migration and mobility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
agriculture, food security and rural development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
rule of law, governance and public administration reform	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Digitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tags	YES	NO	
digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
digital skills/literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>Connectivity</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tags	YES	NO	
digital connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

	education and research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>			
<b>14. Amounts concerned</b>	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020110 – Southern Neighbourhood Total estimated cost: EUR 10 000 000 EUR Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 10 000 000		
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>			
<b>15. Implementation modalities (management mode and delivery methods)</b>	Project Modality Direct management through: - Grants  Indirect management with the entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.2.1 and 4.3.2.2		

## 1.2. Summary of the Action

The Action aims to ensure that people in Lebanon benefit from strengthened election processes and representative democracy and from a vibrant civil society (overall objective) through achieving three specific outcomes (1) Lebanese electoral processes are compliant, fair, inclusive, representative and legitimate; (2) the Lebanese Parliament's legislative and oversight functions are exercised to international democratic standards; (3) Social cohesion is enhanced and reflected in democratic processes.

The Action will contribute to democratic consolidation through the enhancement of the capacity of national stakeholders to conduct periodical, credible, transparent and inclusive elections in Lebanon and through supporting Lebanese authorities to prepare and adopt reform measures through the implementation of some of the key EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) 2022<sup>2</sup> priority recommendations. In parallel, the Action will strengthen the role of civil society organisations in enhancing democratic participation. To achieve these outputs, the proposed programme will work closely with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, which currently has responsibilities for electoral management, administration and overall electoral operations. It will support also the other electoral stakeholders, such as the Constitutional Council, the Supervisory Commission for Elections (and judicial bodies with responsibilities for electoral disputes and the monitoring of the electoral campaign.

The programme also aims to engage with the Parliament and political parties to promote and support the reform process, through the strengthening of the oversight role, the capacity to draft quality legislation, monitor implementation of legislation, and strengthen democratic processes and transparency within the Parliament.

Finally, the Action will support civil society organisations to enhance democratic participation, social cohesion and foster dialogue and exchanges to strengthen the civic national identity across confessions. It will

<sup>2</sup> [EU EOM Lebanon 2022 Final report | EEAS \(europa.eu\)](#)

allow engaging with Lebanese civil society and grass roots organisations along the lines of the Civil Society Roadmap 2021-2027. It will support multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovative schemes of cooperation between government authorities, CSOs, local authorities, not-for profit cultural operators and other relevant stakeholders.

The action is in line with the European Commission's priority "A new push for European democracy", in particular the policy area "European Democracy Action Plan". It is also aligned with the Joint Communication on a Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood – A new Agenda for the Mediterranean<sup>3</sup>, in particular the policy area "Human development, good governance and the rule of law" and its Flagship 2 – Human rights, the rule of law, and modern, effective administrations, governance and accountability. It is also in line with the measures in favour of Civil Society under the Multiannual Indicative program 2021-2027. The "Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)" launched by the European Union, the United Nations and the World Bank in December 2020 is complementary to the implementation of this action. The action will contribute to the SDG 16 "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels".

### **1.3. Beneficiary of the action**

The Action shall be carried out in Lebanon, which is included in the list of ODA recipients.

## **2. RATIONALE**

### **2.1. Context**

Lebanon is facing an unprecedented crisis, which has led to a dramatic economic contraction, a large increase in poverty, unemployment and brain drain. In March 2020, Lebanon defaulted on its Eurobonds which was followed by a deep recession, a dramatic fall in the value of the Lebanese currency and triple digit inflation. The deteriorating economic situation has hit the public sector to an extent that it is now visibly disintegrating. Public authorities lack the necessary funds to maintain operations and to pay their staff more than symbolic salaries. The COVID-19 pandemic and the August 2020 port of Beirut explosion have compounded the crisis, while Russia's military aggression against Ukraine is exacerbating pressures on inflation and straining further food and fuel supplies. Devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria multiplied the psychological impact of crises in Lebanon, adding further strains on Syrian refugees.

The crisis has had devastating effects on the country's economy and its people, resulting in a massive impoverishment of the middle classes. The public sector has been particularly hard hit with the bulk of the labour force still paid in Lebanese lira, suffering from plummeting purchasing power. Thousands of highly qualified civil servants are leaving for better paid jobs in the private sector or migrating in search of better opportunities.

The current economic crisis in Lebanon is a result of a complex set of factors, including political instability, corruption, and mismanagement of public finances. The economic contraction has resulted in a sharp increase in unemployment, poverty, and inflation, making it difficult for the government to deliver essential services and for the people to access basic necessities. In addition, the 2020 default on public debt cut Lebanon's access to financial markets. In 2021, the devaluation of the national currency against the US dollar accelerated, affecting dramatically an economy highly dependent on imports. The Central Bank and the banking sector severely restricted access to people's savings and limited cash withdrawals. Subsidies (food, gasoline, medications) were lifted abruptly. Lebanon's economy contracted by 10.5% in 2021, the highest contraction amongst 193 countries globally, and is estimated to further contract by 5.2% in 2022, with real GDP more

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<sup>3</sup> JOIN(2021) 2 final

than halved over the span of 4 years. This devastating contraction reflects the near complete destruction of an economy and a shrinking GDP to 21.8 billion USD. This multi-faceted crisis is also worsening as a result of climatic impacts. As stated in the 2021 Lebanese Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), the country's priority for the next decade is to spur sustainable growth through the creation of decent jobs and improve the well-being of its population through welfare programmes and protection of natural resources. Consequently, the implementation of the NDC consists of inherent components in Lebanon's economic recovery path, while reaffirming Lebanon's commitment to the climate fight. The implementation of the NDC can only be achieved through the cooperation of all national stakeholders, with the support of the international community.

Since 2005, Lebanon has witnessed repeated calls for electoral reform that would bring Lebanese elections closer to international standards. In 2017, the Lebanese Parliament approved the new Electoral Law 44/2017, which represents a breakthrough in terms of electoral system in Lebanon, voting and counting procedures, introduction of unified ballot papers and the existence of a quasi-permanent Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE). The new electoral framework provides for a proportional system in 15 major districts and grants a preferential vote in 26 minor districts. The law also preserved the 128 parliamentary seats divided on sectarian basis as per the previous Law 26/2008. This unique combination of proportional representation, preferential voting and sectarian divide posed challenges in its implementation, particularly in terms of the level of understanding on how the elections work.

Following this development, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) reiterated its request to the EU to continue its support to elections. The EU, as main donor, USAID, Germany and the International Organisation of La Francophonie consequently agreed to fund the "Lebanese Electoral Assistance Project (LEAP)" implemented by UNDP, to continue support for the period 2020-2023.

The international community and the Electoral Observation Mission (EOM)'s main praise for the 2022 parliamentary elections was that they were delivered on time, despite limited financial and human resources. (there is consensus that they would not have taken place without donor funding support). Nonetheless, as concerns standards, the EOM detected serious flaws "*which distorted the level playing field and seriously affected the voters' choice*". Critical reforms were also not implemented in time for elections. The outcome of these elections included the election of 13 independent and 8 women Members of Parliament (MPs), some of whom coming from civil society (compared with 1 and 6 respectively in the previous Parliament). Despite the fact that the 'post-elections' euphoria has largely evaporated due to the ensuing political stagnation, some CSOs are engaging with pro-reform MPs, including from traditional parties, to advocate their agenda for change.,

As concerns the municipal elections, authorities postponed twice the elections originally scheduled in 2022. The first time because they assessed that they were not capable of organising both Parliamentary and Municipal elections in the same year. The second time allegedly due to organisational reasons, the main one being the lack of budget (which the MoIM estimated at USD 8.9 million). This second postponement featured a high degree of uncertainty throughout the first part of 2023, which is still ongoing.

After months of uncertainty, on 3 April the caretaker Minister of Interior and Municipalities had called the municipal elections to be held from 7 May to 28 May 2023. However, on 18 April the Parliament approved a Law extending the mandate of incumbent municipal council and mukhtars until 31 May 2024. On the same day the Council of Ministers met and the Prime Minister asked the MoIM to carry out the necessary verifications to present new dates and identify the funds for these elections. Afterwards, the MoIM announced that the '2022 municipal elections' would take place at the latest by 31 May 2024. In the following days, several Members of Parliament submitted 3 appeals challenging the legality of the Law extending the mandate of municipal authorities. On 30 May, the Constitutional Council voted 7 to 3 a decision, which does not invalidate the Law approved in April, and is in accordance with the principle of continuity of the public utility.

CSOs and international community condemned this situation as depriving citizens of having their voices heard, holding officials to account and eroding the country's democratic values and traditions.

For decades, **civil society organisations** (CSOs) in Lebanon have been operating in a volatile political and security environment as well as under dire socio-economic conditions that negatively affected their capacities and ability to function. Yet, Lebanese CSOs, including women and youth organisations, contributed not only to enhance democratic participation for a better election process, advocate for reforms and monitor their implementation but also to promote culture as a tool to stimulate constructive dialogue and building consensus around key themes associated with inclusion, accountability and identity thereby fostering social cohesion and resilience of the Lebanese society.

However, Lebanon still lacks a consistent national framework that could consolidate co-operative mechanisms for Lebanese CSOs that lack the expertise for being a sound interlocutor in a fragmented landscape. According to the CSOs mapping for Lebanon commissioned by the EU, they face both internal and external challenges. The external constraints are mainly a consequence of the political system, the security threats, the unfavourable legal framework and the economic crisis, while the internal challenges are those related to their internal organisation, in particular management capacities and financial sustainability.

Following the Port of Beirut Blast, Lebanese CSOs were fully engaged among other stakeholders in broad-based consultations to respond effectively to the impact of the explosion and to effectively reflect the needs, interests, and priorities of the affected communities. This engagement by different civil society actors reinforced EU's belief in the role civil society could play in development cooperation programmes.

In consideration of the above, it is of utmost importance to continue supporting Lebanon electoral process amidst the current multiple crises and strengthen the role of civil society organisations whether in enhancing democratic participation and in building consensus for a common vision for the new Lebanon. This action aims at supporting the pre-election-post phases and institutional players (MoIM, SCE, Constitutional Council) for the 2026 parliamentary elections and prepare the ground for the 2030 municipal elections. The program includes support for well-calibrated and impactful activities to enhance democratic participation at local and community levels as well. An important component will be to support the reform agenda, including the implementation of some of the 2022 EOM priority recommendations. The proposed programme was discussed with leading officials in the MoIM, with the most active actors and donors of the international community and extensive consultations were held with CSOs, playing an essential role in terms of oversight, promotion of reform and awareness raising.

## 2.2. Problem Analysis

### Short problem analysis

Governance in Lebanon has been suffering from weak institutional performance and a lack of a stable strategies and plans for governance's reform. However, the country has a long history and tradition in terms of holding national and local elections. Since 1943 it has conducted 16 national elections and 6 local elections and is still mainly considered a leading country in the region in terms of democratic standards. However, there is consensus that today Lebanese authorities would not be able to carry our elections successfully without the support of the international community. The relatively successful conduct of the 2022 Parliamentary elections, incl. some positive outcomes, and some positive of its positive results stemming from it, energised pro-reform players and raised hope amongst Lebanese citizens.

However, none of the 23 EOM recommendations made in 2022 have been implemented so far, similarly to the 2018 EOM recommendations. The complexity of the political context and the deep confessional division is making the adoption of reforms very difficult. Any change requires a thorough consultations process, with consensus rarely being achieved by political parties. Despite Lebanon experiences today and the unprecedented institutional vacuum (e.g. no President since October 2022, caretaker government since May 2022, fractured judiciary, and second postponement to May 2024 of the municipal elections), political leaders do not consider a priority the regular holding of elections, let aside full compliance with international standards.

Beyond the lack of political will to seek acceptable political compromises, the prospect of reform is affected by the current situation in the public administration stemming from the deepening financial and economic crises. The MoIM remains understaffed and with limited capacity. Salary level is almost of a symbolic nature, with the average salaries at around USD 50 (and varying daily due to the fluctuations of the USD-Lebanese pound exchange rate). This creates additional challenges in terms of the sustainability of capacity building activities. As indicated, the second postponement of the municipal elections was due to purported 'logistical and financial challenges'. The international community was united in stating clearly that while it can provide technical assistance, the cost for the 'sovereign tasks' (salaries of staff engaged at the polling stations, security forces, and for logistics during the days voting) must be covered by Lebanon. Despite these difficulties and before the decision to postpone was made, the MoIM had started with the operational preparations for the 2023 municipal elections to the extent possible, significantly assisted by UNDP under the LEAP II project, including campaigns to update the voters' register and for voter education.

Lebanon remains a deeply divided society across sectarian and political lines. The same political leaders who were fully engaged in the civil war in Lebanon are still leading many of the largest political parties thus gaining the largest representation in the Lebanese Parliament. With the multi-faceted crisis that hit its most vulnerable citizens, there is still much to be done on social cooperation at national and community levels. The last demonstrations that took place in 2019 but also 2015 (during the so called "wastes' crisis") showed that citizens of different societal groups, political and religious backgrounds can come together across communities to challenge the issues that affect them. Dialogue and cooperation promote the conditions for social cohesion in Lebanon and should be reflected in increased democratic participation at national and local levels. The prevailing absence of trust coupled with the existing lack of social cohesion and a vision for Lebanon's future will hamper recovery, economic growth and wealth redistribution. Restoring trust of Lebanese citizens in the State is difficult to achieve without the government's will and ability to deliver on basic people's needs, upholding the rights of the people, and moving forward with necessary public sector reforms in the country. Rebuilding trust in government would reinforce the need for re-shaping the social contract between Lebanese citizens and the State and a sense of common identity amongst Lebanese. For this, new ideas and narratives on topics of common interests - bringing together Lebanese and not dividing them -



need to be developed and discussed across communities to be later reflected in elections and any democratic participation.

Lebanon's civil society remains very active and determined to continue the path of reforms and consolidation of democratic gains. They do so in partnership with the international community, which consistently urge authorities to undertake essential reforms. The UNDP LEAP-organised Electoral Working Group, including main international players and many active CSO, provides a unique forum for high-quality exchanges both on political developments and on activities coordination and reform promotion. As concerns the latter, greater women representation, to be reached through women's quota; the establishment of an independent, empowered and fully functional Supervisory Commission for Elections to efficiently oversee the elections and sanction violations; and the establishment of mega centres to enhance voter participation and minimise risks of vote incentivising or vote pressuring, are considered priorities that could have a significant impact on the credibility of institutions and consolidation of democracy in the country.

CSOs have an additional key role to play. Solidarity has been a cornerstone for the existence and success of Lebanese CSOs. In particular, the values for democracy and non-violence and gender equity and the commitment to a sustainable environment, climate action and poverty eradication are solid. Their ability to articulate societal concerns is remarkable. Their presence, mobility and ability to form pressure groups are positive factors; which led to important achievements, especially on the legislative level. Furthermore, trusted partnerships and connection with civil society, specifically women and youth groups, relevant local actors and community leaders, contribute to social cohesion using innovative approaches that reduce intercommunal tensions (e.g. culture, artistic and creative expressions, and intercultural dialogue) and strengthen democratic participation.

In spite of the liberal CSO environment in Lebanon compared to other countries in the region, CSOs continue to face legal, financial and political constraints. They suffer from weak institutional capacity, and limited competence in policy development. In addition, the absence of dialogue and interaction among CSOs and between CSOs and the government limits the impact that civil society could have on policy making and on mainstreaming social cohesion at community level.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action.

– **Rights holders:** The main beneficiaries of the intended intervention are the voters, the citizens and the overall Lebanese society. It is anticipated a positive impact on rights holders' participation (2018 and 2022 parliamentary elections saw 49% turnout), knowledge, understanding and secrecy of voting through the expected improvement of the efficiency and quality of elections services and mechanisms. Moreover, the program aims at the strengthening of the implementation of electoral international standards at all the levels of the preparation and organisation of the electoral processes.

– **Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) – Electoral Management Body:** through its conduct of the 2009, 2010, 2016 and 2018 and 2022 polls, the MoIM has established a reputation as an effective election administrator; however, in terms of its electoral capacity, the MoIM is today both under-staffed and under-resourced. The effects of the financial, monetary and economic crisis have been increasingly affecting the functioning and effectiveness of the public administration in Lebanon. The MoIM Directorate-General of Political Affairs and Refugees (DGPARG), which has the main responsibility for electoral operations, has limited staff that covers electoral preparations. The Directorate General for Personal Status (DGPS) has also an important role to play relating to the voter registration data. As it was the case for all public administration, in the last year this staff have been in office occasionally due to the erosion of salaries for the devaluation of the Lebanese pound. Other MoIM officials, including local governors and district level administrators (*qaemaqams*) may be called upon to support when needed.

– **The Supervisory Commission for Election (SCE)** is an autonomous institution mandated to monitor the electoral campaign and the financing of the political parties. After the approval of the new electoral law in 2017 the dedicated parliamentary committee working on electoral reforms ceased its activity. While the Constitutional Council praised the work of the SCE during the 2022 elections for timely delivering their reports, civil society and other observers were critical with their performance, claiming that the substance of their work was ensured by UNDP. Recommendation 1 of the 2022 EOM states: *“Establish the SCE as a separate legal entity that is fully independent from the MoIM, including in financial and administrative terms”, i.e. an independent, empowered and fully functional electoral management body to effectively oversee the elections and sanction violations*”. On 19 April 2023, the SCE forwarded to the 2022 EOM Chief Observer MEP Holvenyi their final report on the 2022 Parliamentary elections including 29 recommendations.

– **Judicial Bodies (Constitutional Council and State Council):** The electoral dispute resolution (EDR) following the 2022 elections proved to be effective and efficient. Despite objective logistical difficulties (lack of electricity during the Summer, lack of support staff, lack of basic supplies), the Constitutional Council delivered timely decision on 5 cases, including the reversion of the elections of two MPs, who were replaced by those with the highest number of votes. These decisions were enforced, showing resilience in this important component of the election process. The proposed intervention will provide technical and advisory support to address specific aspects where the Constitutional Council can further improve its performance in terms of logistical support, digitalisation and enhance know-how and competences.

– **Parliament and Lebanese political parties:** For the electoral reforms required to implement the EU EOM 2022 recommendations, outreach to Parliament and political parties is essential. Once they will have shown commitment to engage on this path, this program will provide the needed support in the most appropriate format. In the meantime, the program would support civil society and other interested players to discuss and promote the reforms and their benefits.

– **Civil society:** Lebanon has a vibrant, diverse and active civil society. CSOs represent a wide range of voices in reform and development debates, while also being actively engaged on issues related to electoral reform and promoting citizens’ participation in the electoral process. They play an important role in promoting human rights and raising awareness on electoral related issues as well as an effective watchdog of the fairness of electoral processes. Among the most prominent organisation working in the area of elections is the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE). Traditionally active in the area of human rights, electoral international standards and governance, LADE organised the main domestic observation mission for the recent elections, including the 2022 parliamentary elections, deploying national observers in almost all the polling centres around the country. It is considered that this observation played an important role to limit violations. Other relevant organisations are the Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities, the Maharat Foundation, the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies and the Policy Initiative (think tanks), Transparency International Lebanon (advocacy) and Fifty-Fifty (the leading organisation for empowering women in civic and political life and advocating for the introduction of quotas in elections legislation. All these organisations are among the most vocal participants in the LEAP EWG

CSOs also have a significant role in fostering social cohesion through cooperating and supporting municipalities, community-based organisations and local communities. CSOs play an essential role in the provision of services in the area of agriculture and rural livelihoods, rural tourism, primary healthcare, social services, municipal waste management and renewable energy. CSOs were the first to provide emergency support in the aftermath of the explosion of the Port of Beirut and until recently, were the main vehicle for the reconstruction efforts, channelling massive amount of donations from the Lebanese diaspora. This contributed to reinforce their legitimacy within local communities. CSOs are equally important in the area of music, performing arts, visual arts, cinema, literature and heritage, activities through which they have a pivotal role in reinforcing social cohesion amongst youth and young adults.

– **International organisations:** The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) traditionally supported electoral processes however interrupted its operations in Lebanon in 2015. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is present in the country and organised activities particularly focused on the capacity building of political parties and potential candidates, while today focuses on women. As for the observation mission, the EU EOM, joined by members of the diplomatic community, observed the 2018 and 2022 parliamentary elections. In the past the Carter Centre also monitored elections.

### 2.3. Lessons Learned

The proposed action builds on the ongoing LEAP II program, implemented by UNDP, and follows-up on the EOM recommendations (2018 and 2022) and will consider SCE recommendations on the 2022 parliamentary elections. The Results Oriented Mission carried out in November 2021 found that LEAP II succeeded in reaching all institutional actors; made the process more inclusive for women, youth and people with disabilities; improved the institutional infrastructure, including websites and voter registration system; improved the capacity of the direct beneficiaries; made good use of local (instead of international) experts; and re-used procured supplies. While it is acknowledged UNDP success to support the pre-election-post phases and relevant institutions (MoIM, Supervisory Committee for Elections, Constitutional Council), it is also concluded the need to diversify and innovate activities to enhance democratic participation and promote change. During the period of implementation of the current LEAP II project, none of the relevant recommendations suggested by the EOM was adopted. This work requires a more systematic engagement with political actors, such as MPs and political parties, to promote reforms in line with EU EOM's and other relevant recommendations. Local and regional pro-reform actors are increasingly requesting the EU to assume a more political role, as this can influence leaders and decision makers. The UN (UNSCOL and UNDP) plans to deploy in May 2023 a mission to conduct a needs assessment for a potential future cycle of the LEAP project. The conclusions and recommendations of the needs assessment will be used to draft the design of the action to be implemented by UNDP.

Lebanese CSOs are fully engaged among other stakeholders in broad-based consultations to respond effectively to the impact of the Port of Beirut's that occurred in 2020 at all levels of society and in all sectors of the economy, and to effectively reflect the needs, interests, and priorities of the affected communities. They are an integral part of The Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) that was established after the explosion, as a uniquely inclusive platform to coordinate people-centred recovery in the affected areas, as well as provide a comprehensive plan to support national reforms and investments in reconstruction. The 3RF uniquely includes CSOs as partners at all levels: the strategic high-level Consultative Group, in technical sector Working Groups, and monitoring the whole framework in an Independent Oversight Board. Inclusion of CSOs bolsters legitimacy of the 3RF, strengthens the public voice, and builds civil society capacity to counterbalance political discourse. Organisations are selected based on impartiality and ensuring a balanced representation from NGOs, academia, and the private sector. Although CSOs play a crucial role in providing services like health and social assistance, and are strongly advocated for transparency and accountability, their capacity for effective policy dialogue needs strengthening.

The project will complement and work in synergy with the EU project *Working for Engagement, Acceptance and Mediation: A community-based approach to social cohesion in Lebanon* (WE'AM) implemented by Oxfam Italy since 2022.

### **3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION**

#### **3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs**

The Overall Objective(s)/Impact(s) is that people in Lebanon benefit from strengthened election processes and representative democracy and from a vibrant civil society.

The Specific Objective(s) (Outcomes) of this component is:

SO1 Lebanese electoral processes are compliant, fair, inclusive, representative and legitimate.

SO2 The Lebanese Parliament's legislative and oversight functions are exercised to international democratic standards

SO3 Social cohesion is enhanced and reflected in democratic processes

*Contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1):*

Output 1.1 The electoral management bodies and their staff have increased capacity fulfil their functions to international standards

Output 1.2 Public awareness of electoral processes and reformed electoral procedures are enhanced through targeted communication efforts

Output 1.3 Progress is achieved towards the establishment of the SCE as an independent, robust and fully functional electoral management body that effectively oversees elections in fulfilment of its mandate.

Output 1.4 Mega centres for election voting are identified and their establishment is supported

Output 1.5. Legal reform that enables introduction of quotas for female political representation at national and municipal levels is supported

Output 1.6 Support to CSOs and grass root organisations is provided to enhance democratic participation at central and local level

*Contributing to Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2):*

Output 2.1 The capacity of the Parliament to produce quality legislation in line with international standards for the implementation of Lebanon's reform agenda is enhanced

Output 2.2 The oversight role of the Parliament is enhanced through improved practices and processes, including digitalisation.

*Contributing to Outcome 3 (or Specific Objective 3):*

Output 3.1 Capacity of CSOs to engage people in activities that foster an understanding among communities, value different cultures and promoting cultural exchanges, heritage and traditions is enhanced

Output 3.2 Innovative social and cultural initiatives piloted across communities or within the same community are supported

## 3.2. Indicative Activities

### Related to Output 1.1

- Reinforce the capacity for the management and administration of elections through the provision of continuous technical assistance, such as for the development and implementation of operational plans, training, to the MoIM;
- Provide technical assistance and advisory support to the reformed SCE in the area of strategic planning, internal organisation and comprehensive training programme for SCE members, secretariat and monitoring staff;
- Strengthening the capacity for the resolution of electoral disputes including through strengthening the capacity of the Constitutional Council to investigate and deliver timely legal opinions and decisions;
- Establish lessons learnt process upon completion of election.

### Related to Output 1.2

- Design, development and production of comprehensive voter awareness and education campaigns focused on existing and reformed elections processes and procedures; including specific programmes and activities leading to increased accessibility of PWDs to elections
- Strengthening co-ordination on voter education initiatives implemented by different stakeholders, including official and civil society efforts in order to ensure effective targeting of appropriate groups;

### Related to Output 1.3

- Support discussions and debates on electoral reforms and legal framework, including the 2022 EOM and SCE recommendations, through workshops, thematic debates, specialised technical working groups (e.g. EWG) and co-ordination mechanisms;
- Technical assistance supporting to the drafting of legislation for electoral reform.
- Support towards the establishment of the SCE as an independent, robust and fully functional electoral management body that effectively oversees elections in fulfilment of its mandate.

### Related to Output 1.4

- Support to MoIM to finalise and operationalise the establishment of the Mega election voter centres.

### Related to Output 1.5

- Information campaigns, workshops and seminars focused on women, as well as youth and PWDs, participation and representation;
- Trainings programme and information sessions for women potential candidates or involved in the elections process;

### Related to Output 1.6:

- Provide financial support to CSOs and grass root organisations to implement initiatives that creates civic space for dialogue, enhance democratic participation and strengthen capacity
- Design, development and production of a civic education campaigns aimed at informing voters on their roles and responsibilities in relation to elections, human rights, the role of the parliament etc.;

Related to Output 2.1

- Support to the Parliament’s Secretariat and Committees to enhance their capacities to perform oversight and legislative functions; and strengthen democratic processes and transparency within the Parliament.
- Increase the efficiency and the transparency of the Parliament by proposing innovative methodologies and introduction of e-Parliament procedures and other forms of digitalisation.

Related to Output 2.2:

- Build capacity of MPs, in particular women and new and younger MPs, on developing and monitoring the implementation of public policies, budgetary oversight and post-legislative scrutiny, in line with good international practices.

Related to Output 3.1:

- Design and organisation of cultural and recreational initiatives to enhance social cohesion at central and local level.
- Create collaborative working relationships to respond to issues of concern to local communities
- Capacity building activities to strengthen the role of CSOs and grass root organisations in social dialogue.

Related to Output 3.2:

- Capacity building activities and technical assistance to support civil society organisations in designing and implementing initiatives that foster social cohesion and a common identity.
- Provide financial support to third parties to implement initiatives to foster cohesion that foster social cohesion and a common identity.

### **3.3. Mainstreaming**

#### **Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity**

##### **Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening**

The EIA screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

##### **Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening**

The 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 OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality and empowerment of women will be addressed among the specific objectives and will be mainstreamed in the Action. The Action will promote meaningful and active participation of women in planning and decision making namely in the implementation of the 3RF agenda to ensure an inclusive recovery process. It will cover the needs, interests, and priorities of both women and men to support gender sensitive policies and engagement of women in the governance process.

National data and statistics reveal clear and wide qualitative gender gaps across the Lebanese public administration. In the public sector, while women make up 45% of all public administration positions, they account for only 21% of grade 1 positions. Several studies highlighted the legal barriers and the challenging gender norms that prohibit women’s advancement in public spheres. Even though there has been some

progress as a result of civil society organisations campaigns over the years, women’s equal participation across different sectors and mainly in public administration has yet to be achieved.

**Human Rights**

The proposed action is fully aligned to the existing EU human rights strategies and action plans. Human rights concerns are mainstreamed throughout the action and will be taken into consideration in the finalisation of the activities to be drawn up during implementation stage. The action has been designed following a “rights-based” and “leave-no-one behind” approach. It promotes equal participation of all segments of the population in the decision-making at various levels. Consultations with civil society actors were organised and their recommendations are duly reflected in the design of the action.

**Disability**

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D1; this implies that Persons with Disabilities’ concerns will be mainstreamed across the Action, in line with the 3RF process which is a based on a people-centred and inclusive approach.

**Democracy**

The main purpose of the action is to actively promote the empowerment of government, civil society and citizens and increase their participation in decision-making at local and national level mainly under the 3RF reform process. Through this Action, the EU promotes legally binding international standards to promote the respect of democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law.

**Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience**

This action takes into consideration conflict-sensitivity and a do-no harm approach, and addresses related priorities and recommendations.”

**Disaster Risk Reduction**

Not applicable.

**3.4. Risks and Assumptions**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Risks</b>	<b>Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)</b>	<b>Impact (High/ Medium / Low)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
1- External Environment	Political stalemate, continuing financial economic crisis and social tensions resulting in an overall deterioration of the situation, including security	High	High	The international community remain committed to support Lebanon recovery based on the IMF plan following implement of needed reforms.
	Limited capacity of Lebanese authorities, in particular the MoIM to organise	Medium	Medium	The MoIM continues to receive support and assistance with transfer of knowledge and training through the

	and implement municipal and parliamentary elections.			dedicated UNDP elections assistance project (LEAP II), funded by the EU.
	Lack of political will by political parties and Parliament to undertake and adopt electoral reform.	High	High	The international community, the EU and EU MS, implementing partners and the UN, in partnership with CSO, should keep a positive pressure on the government and political actors. Awareness campaign would inform people of the benefits of reform, to obtain their support for the reform.
2- People and the Organisation	Lack of motivation and commitment of civil servants	Medium	Medium	Skills enhancement will be organised in a manner motivating the civil servants for the short and medium term with a view to contributing to the country's recovery.
	Insufficient governmental budget to organise and conduct the upcoming municipal and parliamentary elections. The main reason claimed for the second postponement of the 2023 municipal elections was the lack of budget.	Medium	Medium	The international community and civil society are putting pressures on authorities to allocate the needed funds for the organisation of elections.  EU-funded UNDP LEAP project continues to support the organisation of election cycles, including procurement of equipment and supplies, still usable; and of software and other ICT tools.
	Lack of reliable CSO to propose and having the capacity to implement social cohesion activities	Medium	Medium	Strengthening the capacity of CSO to identify, propose and implement activities that can enhance social cohesion and reflect it in democratic participation

## External Assumptions

In view of the current situation in Lebanon, assumptions relating to context and relevant actors are made. Clearly if some of these do not hold the action will be subject to risks. Mitigation efforts would then be required not only by the Action but more broadly by EU and the wider international community.

Assumptions are presented in the log frame matrix relative to particular results. Among the most significant are:

- The broader security, financial and political situation is sufficiently stable to enable elections and encourage people, political leaders and CSOs to embrace the reform agenda and be open to learning and mutual exchange.
- The donor and international community continues to support the reform processes even, indeed especially, in the most difficult circumstances.



- The MoIM, with the support of the EU-funded LEAP, will deliver free, fair and transparent elections in the next cycle, contributing to democratic consolidation.
- Policy and technical discussions (see LEAP Electoral Working Group (EWG)), will continue and will advocate and promote the adoption of technical solution and measures to improve the legal and technical framework governing elections.
- Parliament staff and MPs remain committed to embrace a meaningful learning process. The adoption of key reforms, as identified in the EOM 2022 priority recommendations, will represent a major test to strengthen the election processes.
- MPs are committed to the reform agenda.
- Civil Society Organisations embrace standards of internal good governance such that they retain and enhance credibility with non-CSOs.
- Civil Society Organisations will continue to show their commitment to actively engage in democratic participation and engage in activities that foster social cohesion and promote the well-being of the population.

### **3.5. Intervention Logic**

If the current severe financial, economic and monetary crises will continue deteriorating public administration effectiveness and efficiency, including the capacity to organise and manage all phases of the election process, timely and in line with international standards, if the civil society and other interested actors will continue assessing that it is essential that the next parliamentary and municipal elections take place according to the calendar and that the common vision of Lebanon and the acceptance of others is reflected in elections, this action will be instrumental to support Lebanon's electoral bodies to organise the aforementioned elections on time and with at least minimal acceptable standards, safeguarding this essential democratic process and overall Lebanon's democracy and prospect for recovery.

If Lebanon's political leaders will agree for the election of a President of the Republic and the formation of a pro-reform Government, and, together with the Parliament, will engage in identifying appropriate legal and administrative measures in line with EOM 2022 and other relevant recommendations, to enhance Lebanon's capacity to conduct elections as free, transparent and fair; civil society and other influential actors will be able to contribute to policy making and to better address interests and needs of disaffected citizens and vulnerable categories, such as women, youth and people with disabilities, and of the overall Lebanese public, thus creating the premises for recovery.

If CSOs create spaces for dialogue, promote arts and culture and address the weaknesses of the social cohesion system by adopting new ideas and technologies at community level, then the engagement of citizens in activities that value different cultures and promote culture exchanges, heritage and tradition and that contributes to social cohesion and reduction of social and political tensions will be implemented. Then differences and accepted and sectarian tensions are reduced and a more coherent vision for the future of Lebanon and a more democratic and inclusive environment are promoted.

### **3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix**

In view of the highly fluid situation in Lebanon, values for indicators (baseline and target values) will be identified during the inception period through relevant studies.

Results	Results chain: Main expected results	Indicators	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
<b>Impact</b>	To benefit the people in Lebanon from strengthened election processes and representative democracy and from a vibrant civil society	Country score according to the Electoral Democracy Index developed by V-Dem	0,43 (2022)	0,49 (2027)	<a href="#">V-Dem</a>	
		Country score according to the Deliberative Democracy Index developed by V-Dem	0,25 (2022)	0,27 (2027)	<a href="#">V-Dem</a>	
<b>Outcome 1</b>	Lebanese electoral processes are compliant, fair, inclusive, representative and legitimate	[Opsys 481] Number of women standing for election	2022 figures for Parliamentary elections to be provided No. and % of overall candidates standing	TBD	MOIM Election data	There is sufficient political will to change  Donors continue to support the country
		[Opsys 582] Extent to which Election Observation Mission's recommendations are followed up [i.e. implemented]	0 <sup>4</sup> [recommendations implemented from EOM 2018 Report and EOM 2022 Report]	TBD	EOM Final Report	

<sup>4</sup> EOM Report 2022 indicates no 2018 recommendations were followed/implemented

<b>Outcome 2</b>	The Lebanese Parliament's legislative and oversight functions are exercised to international democratic standards	Extent to which Parliament's legislative and oversight functions are exercised to international democratic standards	TBD	TBD	Endline Survey (Project)	The Parliament is fully functioning and operational
<b>Outcome 3</b>	Social cohesion is enhanced and reflected in democratic processes	# of documented examples from within financed projects that demonstrate a contribution to a) a reduction of social and political tension and b) social cohesion  # of persons involved in CSO actions who confirm they have a more positive attitude towards other communities or cultures than previously  [OPSYS 1371] Number of initiatives funded under the Intervention that strengthened CSO) capacity to response to changes in, uphold and promote an enabling environment	0	TBD	Project Reporting documents	CSOs embrace standards of internal good governance such that they retain and enhance credibility with non-CSOs
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 1</b>	The electoral management bodies and their staff are able to fulfil their functions to standards	[Opsys 670] Number of trained actors in electoral dispute management and electoral violence mitigation (male and female)	TBD	TBD	Project M&R system [Expert assessment]	Trained staff and members of electoral bodies remain in function
		Extent to which electoral management bodies are competent to fulfil their functions to standard [disaggregated for each body]	TBD	TBD		Senior management of the relevant bodies champion change process
		Number of persons completing training and competent to standard	TBD	TBD		

						Civil servants go to work regularly
<b>Output 2 related to outcome 1</b>	Public awareness of electoral processes and reformed electoral procedures is enhanced through targeted communication efforts	% of persons surveyed indicating adequate awareness of electoral processes and reformed electoral procedures	TBD	TBD	Endline Survey (Project)	Traditional and social media are functioning properly and uninterruptedly
<b>Output 3 related to Outcome 1</b>	Progress is achieved towards the establishment of the SCE as an independent, robust and fully functional electoral management body that effectively oversees elections in fulfilment of its mandate.	Status as a permanent body	0 [is not]	1 [is]	EOM Election Report	SCE members and support staff remain in their post and embrace a meaningful learning process
		Degree of financial independence	0 [is not]	1 [is]	EOM Election Report	
<b>Output 4 related to Outcome 1</b>	Mega centres for election voting are identified, and their establishment is supported	No of Mega centres identified	TBD	TBD	MOIM	Energy supplies and access are sufficient for the functioning of the mega election centres
		Existence of Action Plan to operationalise centres	0: not exist	1: Exists	MOIM	
<b>Output 5 related to Outcome 1</b>	Legal reform that enables introduction of quotas for female political representation at national and municipal levels is supported	Status of laws for women political representation in (a) Parliamentary Elections (b) Municipal Elections	a) in Parliamentary procedure b) being drafted	a) Law Adopted b) Law Adopted	Official Gazette	Women candidates run for elections

<b>Output 6 related to Outcome 1</b>	Support to CSOs and grass root organisations is provided to enhance democratic participation at central and local level	[Opsys 1366] Number of Civil Society Organisations' (CSOs) representatives and staff trained by the EU-funded intervention with increased knowledge and/or skill  [Opsys 1369] Number of initiatives under the Intervention which specifically promote the inclusion of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in public policy formulation				
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 2</b>	The capacity of the Parliament to produce quality legislation in line with international standards for the implementation of Lebanon's reform agenda is enhanced	[Opsys 1244] Number of parliamentary committee members and support staff trained by the EU-funded intervention who increased their knowledge and/or skills to draft, revise and harmonise legislation related to implementation of Lebanon's reform agenda (disaggregated: MPs, staff)	TBD	TBD	Project internal M&R system	MPs are committed to the reform's agenda  Staff remain in their post and are motivated
<b>Output 2 related to Outcome 2</b>	The oversight role of the Parliament is enhanced through improved practices and processes, including digitalisation.	Number of parliamentary committees, MPs and support staff trained by the EU-funded intervention, who increased their knowledge and/or skills to develop and monitor the implementation of public policies	TBD	TBD	Project internal M&R system	MPs are committed to the reform's agenda  Staff remain in their post and are motivated

<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 3</b>	Capacity of CSOs to engage people in activities that foster an understanding among communities, value different cultures and promoting cultural exchanges, heritage and traditions is enhanced	# events undertaken that promote cultural exchanges  # people involved in these events (disaggregated sex + community + age...)	0	TBD during inception period		There is sufficient trust to facilitate explicit exchange and consideration of cultural difference  People in Lebanon are willing to participate in cultural events
<b>Output 2 related to Outcome3</b>	Innovative social and cultural initiatives piloted across communities or within the same community are supported.	# projects (disaggregated Cross-community + within community + innovation)  # people involved in these projects (disaggregated sex + community + age...)	0  0	TBD during inception period		There is a willingness among project stakeholders to reflect on the “social cohesion” dimension of their projects

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **4.1. Financing Agreement**

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the Government of Lebanon.

### **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 adoption by the Commission of this financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer responsible in duly justified cases.

### **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.<sup>5</sup>

#### **4.3.1. Direct Management (Grants)**

##### **a) Purpose of the grant(s)**

The grant(s) will contribute to achieving the output 1.6 of Outcome 1 and Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 of Outcome 3 described in section 3.1 and 3.2.

##### **b) Type of applicants targeted**

Non-Governmental Organisations.

#### **4.3.2 Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity**

##### **4.3.2.1 Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity**

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with a pillar-assessed entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Specific sector / thematic expertise: Adequate capacities to engage with a variety of Lebanese stakeholders across the institutional spectrum and civil society and with the international community, in order to implement technical assistance in support to the organisation and management of elections, and technical assistance to support the Parliament's legislative and oversight functions.
- Logistical and/or management capacities: longstanding experience in the implementation of programmes related to elections and support to democracy globally (preferably in the region); and medium to large portfolio of projects / programmes.

The implementation by this entity entails performing activities leading to the achievement of output 1.1 and output 1.2 of outcome 1 and output 2.1 and output 2.2 of outcome 2, described in section 3.

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<sup>5</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu) Note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy the OJ prevails.



#### **4.3.2.2 Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity**

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with a pillar-assessed entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- Specific sector / thematic expertise: Adequate capacities to engage with a variety of Lebanese stakeholders across the political spectrum and with the international community, in order to implement technical assistance in support to the preparation, advocacy and promotion of electoral reform. In addition to successful track record and demonstrated engagement in working with Lebanese Civil Society organisations.
- Logistical and/or management capacities: longstanding experience in the implementation of programs related to elections and support to democracy globally (preferably in the region); and medium to large portfolio of projects / programmes.

The implementation by this entity entails performing activities leading to the achievement of output 1.3, output 1.4 and output 1.5 of outcome 1 described in section 3.

#### **4.3.3. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances**

If the implementation modality under direct management as described in section 4.3.1 cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation would be indirect management with a pillar assessed entity using the following criteria:

- Specific sector / thematic expertise: (a) adequate capacities to engage with a variety of Lebanese stakeholders across the political spectrum and civil society (b) experience with strengthening the capacities of CSOs in the area of social cohesion and policy dialogue.
- Logistical and/or management capacities: (a) longstanding experience in the implementation of civil society programmes in Lebanon of similar value. (b) proven Experience in implementing and providing financial support to third parties to implement initiatives in the field of policy dialogue (including capacity building activities ) and social cohesion (including cultural initiatives)

If the implementation modality under indirect management as described in 4.3.2.1 cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by grants under direct management would be used. a) Subject matter of the grant(s): Outputs and activities described in section 3 leading to the achievement of output 1.1 and output 1.2 of outcome 1 and outcome 2. b) Type of applicants targeted: Public bodies and Non-governmental organisations.

If the implementation modality under indirect management as described in 4.3.2.2 cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by grants under direct management would be used. a) Subject matter of the grant(s): Outputs and activities described in section 3 leading to the achievement of output 1.3, output 1.4 and output 1.5 of outcome 1. b) Type of applicants targeted: Public bodies and Non-governmental organisations.

#### **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, subject to the following provisions.

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). Indicative Budget

<b>Indicative Budget components</b>	<b>EU contribution (amount in EUR)</b>
<b>Implementation modalities</b> – cf. section 4.3	
<i>Outcome 1 – Output 1.1, 1.2 and Outcome 2</i> composed of:	<b>4 500 000</b>
Indirect management with pillar assessed entity – cf. section 4.3.2.1	4 500 000
<i>Outcome 1 – Output 1.3, 1.4, 1.5</i> composed of	<b>1 000 000</b>
Indirect management with pillar assessed entity – cf. section 4.3.2.2	1 000 000
<i>Outcome 1 – Output 1.6 and Outcome 3</i> composed of	<b>4 500 000</b>
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1.	4 500 000
<b>Evaluation</b> – cf. section 5.2 <b>Audit</b> – cf. section 5.3	N/A
<b>Strategic communication and Public diplomacy</b> – cf. section 6	N/A
<b>Contingencies</b>	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 000 000</b>

#### **4.5. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities**

The EU Delegation will actively contribute in the steering committee/s to be formed at the start of the project, which will include the various entities engaged in the project and other relevant stakeholders.

The Electoral Working Group (EWG) established under UNDP LEAP should be continued to be used for both outcome 1 and 2. This Group include all relevant CSO active in the elections portfolio, including NGOs representing and persons with disabilities, women rights and promoting youth engagement in democratic processes.

The EU Delegation will have the role of “Observer” in all Evaluation Committees to be formed under the Financial Support to Third Party in case the action proposed financial support to CSOs.

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.

#### **4.6. Pre-conditions**

N/A

### **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 Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the log frame matrix (for project modality).

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).

Arrangements for monitoring and reporting, including roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

- Baseline and targets will be provided at the contracting phase.
- The implementing partner will ensure that all reports shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged according to the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the Action implementation. All reports shall include Sex, Age, and Disability Disaggregated Data (SADDD) by communities of origin.
- Results monitoring will be requested at midterm and will be based on the principles of simplicity, and promoting a learning culture to inform and, where necessary, adapt delivery.
- The EU Delegation will undertake regular project monitoring visits through its own staff for independent monitoring reviews at both operational and financial level (spot-check missions).

#### **5.2. Evaluation**

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluations will be carried out for this action or its components contracted by the Commission.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the actions will be implemented to promote the engagement of CSOs in policy dialogue and to encourage the CSOs to implement innovative actions to foster social cohesion and reduce tension.

The Commission shall form a Reference Group (RG) composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations (private sector, NGOs, etc.), etc.) levels. If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join. The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least one month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation exercise and 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 shall be shared with the partner country 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, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall 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**

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation 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. To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the 2022 guidance document Communicating and raising EU visibility: Guidance for external actions (or any successor document).

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and contribution agreements.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds. Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and the EU Delegation fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before the implementation. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.

Any actions related to communication and visibility will be coordinated with the strategic communication actions of the EU Delegation, to ensure coherence of narrative and message, as well as horizontal strategic communication.