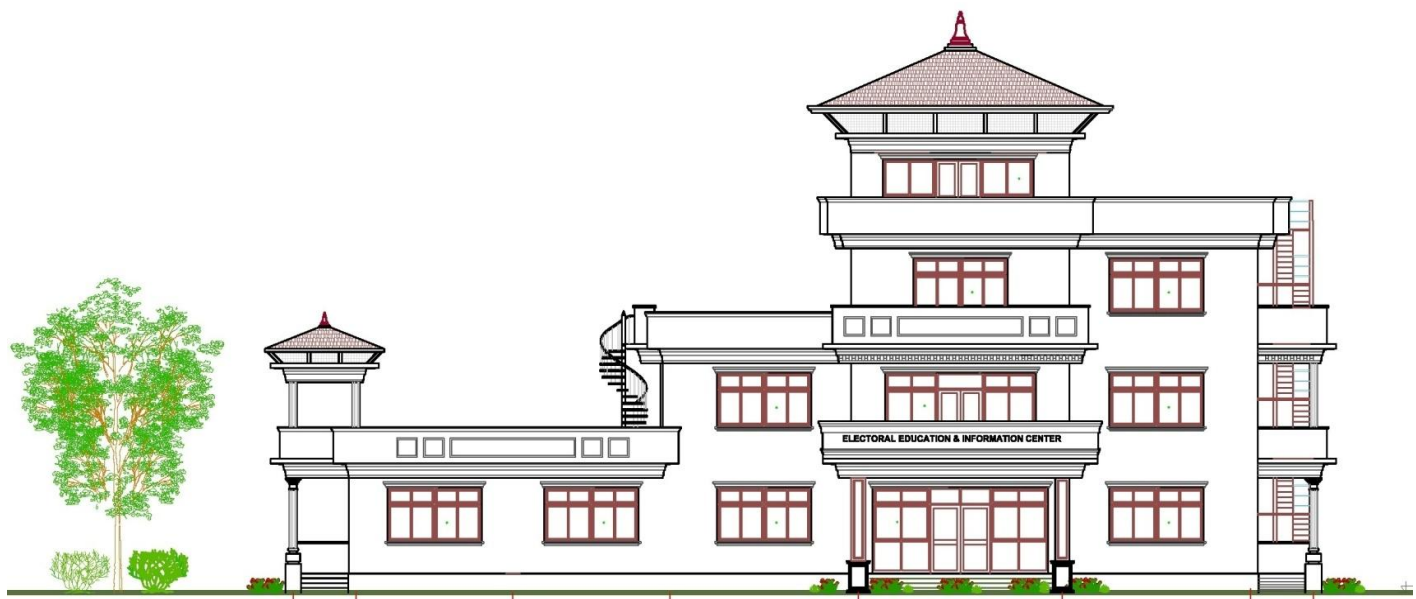




निर्वाचन आयोग, नेपाल  
ELECTION COMMISSION, NEPAL

## Electoral Education and Information Centre

- EEIC -



Electoral Support Project

## CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	4
2.0	ELECTION COMMISSION OF NEPAL STRATEGIC PLAN.....	4
2.1	THE EOCTORAL CYCLE MODEL – THE PRE VOTING PREPARTATION PERIOD.....	5
3.0	STRATEGIC GOAL OF THE EEIC .....	6
4.0	OBJECTIVES OF THE EEIC .....	6
5.0	PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE EEIC.....	7
5.1	INFORMATION CENTRE.....	7
5.1.1	THE THEATRE.....	7
5.1.2	INTERACTIVE LEARNING AREA (Working title: It's my democracy).....	8
5.1.3	THE POLLING PLACE.....	9
5.2	AUDIENCES FOR THE EEIC.....	10
5.2.1	SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRAINING CENTRE STUDENTS.....	10
5.2.2	NON SCHOOL VISITORS.....	11
5.2.3	MEDIA.....	11
6.0	GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION.....	11
7.0	OUTREACH.....	12
7.1	REPURPOSING CONTENT DEVELOPED FOR THE INFORMATION CENTRE.....	12
7.2	USING COMMUNITY LEADERS.....	12
7.3	USING THE EDUCATION SECTOR NETWORKS.....	13
7.4	USING THE ECN NETWORK.....	13
7.5	USING THE NGO/CSO/CBO NETWORK.....	13
7.6	MOBILE PUBLIC OUTREACH.....	13
7.7	ENSURING CONSISTENCY – DEVELOPING THE ECN BRAND.....	14
8.0	MUSEUM.....	14
9.0	LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTRE.....	14
9.1.1	PHYSICAL LIBRARY.....	14
9.1.2	E-LIBRARY.....	15
9.1.3	E-LEARNING.....	15
9.1.4	ARCHIVES AND RECORD MANAGEMENT.....	15
9.2	AUDIENCES FOR LIBRARY RESEARCH CENTRE.....	15
10.0	TRAINING ROOM.....	15
11.0	CALL CENTRE.....	16
12.0	ACCESSABILITY.....	16

13.0	PROMOTION OF THE EEIC.....	17
14.0	ADVISORY PANNEL/PARTERSHIPS.....	17
15.0	ORGANISATIONAL, MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING FRAMEWORK.....	18
15.1	Phase 1: 2011 – ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRAL EEIC AT ECN IN KATHAMANDU.....	18
15.2	Phase 2: (2012/2013) EXPANSION TO REGIONAL CENTRES.....	18
15.3	Phase 3: (2013/2014) EXPANSION TO FEDERAL UNITS.....	19
15.4	Phase Four: (2014 onwards).....	19
16.0	LINKAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS.....	20
17.0	TIMELINE.....	21
18.0	INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING LAYOUT (Kathmandu).....	23
19.0	BUDGET.....	24
19.1	EEIC – KATHAMANDU.....	24
19.2	REGIONAL EXPANSION (2012 to 2015).....	25
20.0	ADVISORY PANNEL.....	25
21.0	SUSTAINABILITY.....	25

#### ANNEX:

ELEVATION AND FLOOR PLAN.....	27
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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

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The April 2008 Constituent Assembly (CA) elections in Nepal were a significant step forward in the country's peace process. The conduct of the elections met many international standards and resulted in a transformation of Nepal's political landscape. In its inaugural sitting in May 2008, the Constituent Assembly ended the 240-year old monarchy and established the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. The 2010 period saw a constituent assembly hindered by a lack of leadership and in early 2011, the political impasse created following the May 2009 decision of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to withdraw from government, was finally brought to an end with the appointment of a Prime Minister, and an expected acceleration of the delayed constitutional drafting process.

The CA election was a noteworthy test for the institutional, managerial and organizational capacities of the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN). For the first time in Nepal's history, the legal framework provided for an inclusive process and the elections allowed for a broad and diverse representation of traditionally marginalized groups and women, a fundamental element for the advance of Nepal's democratic culture and institutions. International and domestic election observers concurred that the election was generally well managed under the most challenging conditions. The European Union Election Observation Mission concluded that the ECN had "acted as an independent body with integrity and competence. Logistical and technical preparations were generally conducted in an effective manner and key components were delivered according to the timetable. The Election Commission acted in a largely transparent manner consulting political parties and other stakeholders on issues."<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the success of the CA elections, the ECN and electoral stakeholders identified a number of recommendations leading to the development of a 5 year ECN Strategic Plan highlighting the need to shift international technical assistance and financial support from an event-driven process to a long term and broader approach. This new approach encompasses the entire electoral cycle while addressing election administration weaknesses and systemic deficiencies.

## **2.0 ELECTIONS COMMISSION OF NEPAL'S STRATEGIC PLAN**

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The ECN Strategic Plan for the electoral cycle 2009-2013 identifies 8 main areas of activity for capacity development:

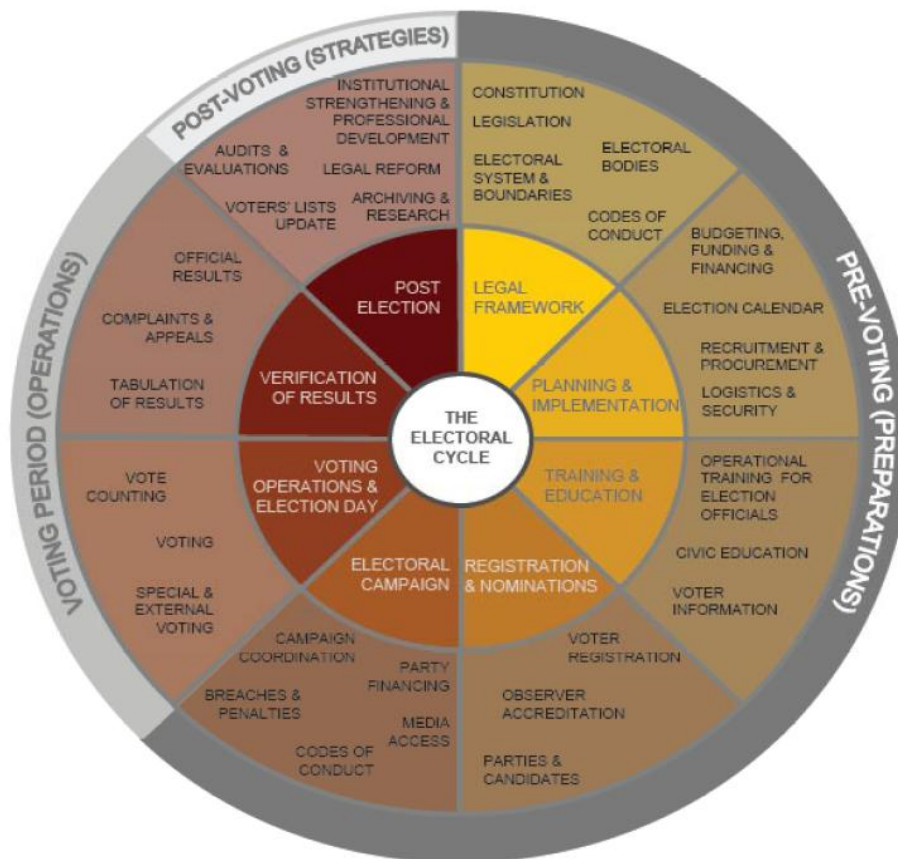
- Enhancement of organizational effectiveness and management to respond to emerging challenges in a timely and cost effective manner;
- Electoral framework reforms;
- Continuous voter registration: increase the enfranchisement and inclusiveness of potential voters through a more accurate register, and strengthen the local/field institutions with direct impact on the accuracy of the voters' register;
- Voter identification with photograph;

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<sup>1</sup> European Union Election Observation Mission to Nepal: Final Report, September 2008.

- Electronic voting: acquisition and use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs);
- Civic and voter education;
- Strengthening political parties and civil society;
- Monitoring mechanisms and media.

## 2.1 Electoral Cycle Model - the Pre-Voting Preparation Period:



While the ECN was able to deliver internationally accepted CA elections in April 2008 some aspects, including election management, voter registration and voter education, presented challenges which are currently being addressed in the Strategic Plan. The plan follows the Electoral Cycle model and highlights the development of an organization with a sustainable and enduring institutional and professional capacity that can be easily and effectively reemployed in future elections. It also seeks to enhance and further consolidate the institutional and professional capacities of the ECN, its secretariat (operational staff) and its regional and district offices to meet the priorities that will further improve Nepal's future electoral processes.

As part of the ECN's five year strategic plan and given the high importance placed on sustainable professional capacities, information dissemination, voter education, outreach and research and development, the ECN prioritized the development of an Electoral Education and Information Centre (EEIC) at its headquarters in Kathmandu. Following the distribution of a concept paper designed by UNDP-ESP and the ECN to various donors, stakeholders and agencies, the Australian Development

Agency, AUSAID, agreed to provide funding for phase one of the EEIC. Construction of the EEIC commenced in January 2011.

The USD 1.2 million project, funded by AUSAID, is being implemented by UNDP Nepal's Electoral Support Project on behalf of the Election Commission of Nepal. The initial USD 1.2 million budget, provided by AUSAID, covers conceptual design, construction, program area design, equipment and ongoing technical assistance that will be provided by UNDP-ESP and the Australian Election Commission. UNDP-ESP has contracted UNOPS to oversee physical construction.

Additional Electoral Education and Information Centres will be established at decentralized levels throughout Nepal over the course of the next 5 years to enable ECN staff and other stakeholders to have access to relevant information and resources.

*Phased Implementation: the 1st phase (2010-11) includes the construction and establishment of an Electoral Education and Information Centre at the ECN headquarters in Kathmandu; the 2nd phase (2012-13) will concentrate on developing 4 regional EEICs in Dhangadhi, Nepalganj, Pokhara and Biratnagar respectively; the 3rd phase (2013-14) will see the establishment of centres in strategic locations within Nepal's future federal boundaries; while the 4th and final phase (2014 onwards) will see the incorporation of compact EEICs in District Electoral Offices.*

### **3.0 STRATEGIC GOAL OF THE EEIC**

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To increase skills and knowledge, and promote values that encourages the people of Nepal to be informed and active citizens in their democratic society through political participation.

### **4.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE EEIC**

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1. To provide an educational environment that equips Nepali citizens, present and future, to be engaged citizens.
2. To increase the capacity of key players (educators, media, CSOs) to deliver civic education in their sphere of influence.
3. To enhance the capacity of the ECN and other stakeholders to deliver electoral events.
4. To be a centre for resources and expertise in civic education and the custodian of Nepal's electoral history.
5. To raise the profile of the ECN as a respected, active promoter of Nepali democracy.
6. To raise computer skills of Nepali population by giving access to technology in a friendly and supported environment.
7. To train election officials of the ECN and election stakeholders and allow participation in training programmes, presentations and events to increase knowledge and skills on electoral processes (e.g. BRIDGE training<sup>2</sup>).

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<sup>2</sup> The BRIDGE project was launched by International IDEA, the UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) and the Australian Election Commission to provide a capacity development tool for Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections. In 2007,

## **5.0 PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE EEIC**

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The EEIC is an ambitious project that aims to deliver a range of programs to a variety of audiences. It comprises an Information Centre, Library and Research Centre and training facility. It also has a responsibility for extending in-house programs and resources to a national audience and a role in coordinating information and communications messages to ensure consistency.

Opportunities for information, education, research and training presented by the EEIC program are outlined in the sections below.

### **5.1 Information Centre**

The information Centre has three discreet program areas that allow for an integrated program where visitors pass through all areas, or choose particular aspects and content that suit their particular needs. The Information Centre comprises a theatre, interactive learning area and a 'polling place'. It is designed around a maximum group size of 40 people. It is anticipated that larger groups wanting a formal education program will be accompanied by an educator to interact, answer questions and stimulate discussion. Smaller or informal groups will self-guide around the Centre, but staff will be available to answer questions as needed.

#### **5.1.1 The Theatre**

A purpose-made DVD will be screened to give background and set context for general- interest visiting groups. The DVD will answer the question of how Nepal arrived at where it is today in terms of its governance systems. It will stress that there has been a history of citizens participating in elections, but there have also been many forms government with varying degrees of democracy.

This is the opportunity to discuss, through film, the principles of democracy; what democracy can deliver to a country's citizens; the checks and balances that the ballot box applies to an elected government; citizen's rights and responsibilities; the duty of elected representatives to serve their constituents. The DVD will finish with the new constitution and what it enshrines for the future of Nepal's system of government.

This introductory DVD with a working title of *Nepal's Democracy* will be approximately 10 – 15 minutes in length and should also be narrated in major local languages as well as display closed captions for the hearing impaired.

Existing films such as *Constitutional Assembly Election: Beginning of a new Era 10 April 2008* and *People's Constitution* already have excellent footage that could form the basis of this introductory DVD.

Over time, and in response to determined need, the Centre will develop a range of other DVDs. These will address in detail specific aspects of election processes and will be useful to build on the knowledge of repeat visitors or special interest groups.

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IFES and UNDP joined the project as partners. BRIDGE is the most comprehensive professional development course available in election administration. More information can be obtained on [www.bridge-project.org](http://www.bridge-project.org).





### **5.1.2 Interactive learning area (Working title: It's my democracy)**

After watching the introductory DVD, visitors move go the interactive area where they move in small groups between a range of learning areas. Each one stands alone, but builds the picture about an aspect of Nepal's democracy, and the role of the individual in supporting it. Visitors spend 5 – 10 minutes at each station, depending on time and level of interest before moving on to the next one.

Many topics can be explored through this medium and eventually a suite of learning modules will be developed that can be 'mixed and matched' to suit the learning needs of the particular visitor group. The building design allows for several discreet learning stations in which CPUs are linked to touch-screen or mouse-driven monitors. Creative programming is needed to deliver a wide range of learning experiences using this standard technology. Key messages will be highlighted through attractively-designed information panels mounted on walls behind the learning stations. Alternatively, pull-up banners can be used to display this information to retain flexibility in the topics being presented.

The content and learning activities will be supported by student worksheets, teachers' notes links to school curriculum and suggestions for follow-up activities. The content of the learning modules will also be repurposed for CD, web delivery or print to give access to for remote users.

Adult visitors will also be encouraged to go through the learning areas although their visit may be less formal.

The learning modules have the following aims:

- To impart information



- To stimulate thinking
- To promote debate
- To encourage acceptance of personal responsibility

Some suggested topics include

- 'Democracy' – values principles and benefits
- Voting – a right not a gift
- Rights and duties of citizens
- Voter registration – why, how, when ( incorporating a 'mock registration' where visitors are photographed, scanned and enter their own data to produce a mock voter card)
- Participation and representation – why vote, who are we voting for, levels of government, referendums
- Political participation – voter, party member, candidate, activist
- 'Behind the scenes' look at running an election
- Functions of government at different levels
- Structure of federal parliament – houses, seats, party representation
- Law –making process
- 'Have your say' – visitors are presented with a topical issue and a couple of arguments for and against the issue. They are encourage to debate the issue for 5 minutes, then cast a vote with an agree/disagree button. Their vote is then added to earlier votes to give a cumulative response to the issue.
- Players in a democracy – elected representatives, government officials, NGOs, CSOs, media, law enforcers, citizens, private sector etc
- A day in the life of a politician – visitors construct a diary as they perceive the typical day in a politician's life. This is then compared to an actual day from a diary contributed by a politician
- Comparative democratic systems – case studies
- Conflict resolution in elections
- Interactive snapshot of election results

To ensure that the learning modules comply with curriculum needs and educational learning theory (pedagogy), the EEIC can draw on the experience of several sections within the Department of Education including the Curriculum Development Centre and the Education and Material Development section.

### **5.1.3 The Polling Place**

A visit to the Polling Place will give understanding, confidence and motivation to voters (especially first time or reluctant voters) by replicating the experience of voting in a parliamentary election. Scenarios will be developed that involve groups in all aspects of the electoral process and related roles that impact on the process such as candidates, media, electoral officials.

The program will be about 40 minutes in duration and cover the following content:

- Ballot paper issue/using an electronic voting machine
- Voting formally
- Counting the vote

The experience of a mock election will then be linked to the real world by using GIS data to show participants the election results for their district. The data can be used to display electoral maps, details of the voting behaviour at the last election and the outcome.



**Mock elections**



**Audio Materials**



**Electronic voting**

## **5.2 Audiences for the EEIC**

### **5.2.1 School/college/training centre students**

It is anticipated that senior secondary students from the Kathmandu Valley will be the prime audience for visiting the EEIC in terms of numbers. Students from adjoining districts and students who visit Kathmandu as part of a broader education tour from more distant parts of the country would also be interested visitors to the EEIC.

Students will represent the majority of visitors because:

- Students, more than any other group, have the opportunity and motivation to participate in learning programs
- School curriculums have a focus on civic education so it can be anticipated that there will be an interest in the Centre among the education sector, especially at a time of radical overhaul of democratic processes. This does also present the challenge that teachers will not be knowledgeable about the new systems and will have to be supported with professional development and resources. The National Centre for Education and Development is responsible for teacher training and early engagement with this centre will be valuable in building capacity of teachers to support the work of the EEIC with the school sector.
- Students are good 'teachers'. Recent newspaper reports describe how health messages in rural Nepal are effectively spread to adults through their children.

Senior secondary school students are a valuable target group as they will soon be first-time voters. Research consistently shows that young people for whom voting becomes a social 'norm' at an early age are more likely to participate in electoral processes throughout their lives. Involvement in programs at the Information Centre would be an important step in gaining this habit.

Although there are an estimated 2000 schools in the Kathmandu Valley region, it must be acknowledged that lack of resources especially in the public school sector will limit attendance from even within the valley. It is essential therefore that outreach activities supplement the incursion activity to the centre.

As secondary students are likely to be the most populous visitors, and are a key target group for voter education, it is recommended that programs for in-house visits be developed initially for this group.

### **5.2.2 Non-school visitors**

Many groups, families and individuals will be attracted to the programs available at the Information Centre, so its programs must cater for a range of visitors. In addition to the generic video *Nepal's Democracy*, a menu of videos can be developed to be shown in the theatre to cater for special interest groups including:

- Political science/law students
- CSOs – women, disability groups, youth
- Community based organisations
- Candidates
- Political parties and sister organisations
- Professional organisations
- Elected members
- Media
- Teachers.

### **5.2.3 Media**

The media has a unique relationship with the ECN in that they are mutually dependant to meet their respective goals. Therefore, there has to be ongoing consultation between the two groups: to determine what information the media needs for the ECN to report events effectively, and for the ECN to stress the key messages it would like the media to disseminate.

The relationship-building between the media must be at all levels from senior managers to journalist in the field, and take different forms including high-level stakeholder engagement, targeted training, briefings, regular media releases and using media networks such as the Media Institute to ensure wide reach.

At all times, the media must be allowed access to information in the most time-efficient and user-friendly formats. This may be through a dedicated section of the website, face-to-face briefings, or access to GIS data.

A media strategy needs to be developed that describes how best to build this mutually beneficial relationship, and to maximise the benefit offered by the EEIC to media.

## **6.0 GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**

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Addressing gender disparity through initiatives promoting the participation of women in the electoral process and their empowerment in political life (both as registered voters and as potential candidates) as well as the participation of other vulnerable and under-represented groups, will be a primary objective of the EEIC and will complement the ECN's gender equality and social inclusion strategy.

The EEIC will facilitate research, awareness raising, outreach and public sensitization to better understand gender dimensions of Nepal's electoral law, administration, management and electoral quota system. The centre will have the potential to develop programs that address gender inequality, women's civic and political participation and electoral legislation that impact on women in Nepal. The centre is expected to develop information products and packages specifically targeting women and certain population groups including Dalits and Madheshi communities and other groups as defined in the Interim Constitution of Nepal. Consideration should be given to establishing a gender desk/unit within the EEIC to act as a focal point for relevant inquiries and requests and to ensure that gender dimensions are included in programme activities, training and voter education. These measures may result in further electoral reform that promote equitable and inclusive governance processes benefiting women and traditionally marginalized groups in Nepal.

Gender equity and access issues will be mainstreamed within the EEIC activities, including training programmes. BRIDGE training, for example, has a mandatory module entitled "Gender and Elections" which will be delivered to ECN staff and officials.

## **7.0 OUTREACH**

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While the physical attendance at the EEIC will mainly be from the Kathmandu Valley, the impact of the Centre's education and information programs must extend to the whole country. This is especially important in a time of significant change in the country's democratic systems and when new demands are being made of the citizenry to fulfil their civic responsibilities.

The EEIC is not specifically funded to employ outreach staff. However it will have an important role in disseminating information to people living remotely from the main population centres. It will have two strategies to achieve this – firstly to develop information materials that are useful for outreach audiences and secondly to use and build on existing networks to reach remote and marginalised groups.

### **7.1 *Repurposing content developed for the Information Centre***

Education programs, videos and related learning materials developed for the EEIC can be 'repurposed' for use in several formats including electronic, CDs and print copy. These can be disseminated through existing networks that are already delivering voter education. This is not only an efficient use of the specialist education resources that will be employed at the EEIC, but also important in ensuring that messages that are accurate and meaningful are delivered consistently through the country.

The existing ECN website has a dedicated section for voter education which is underutilised. Material developed for the EEIC can easily and with little expense be delivered to a wider audience through this medium. It is important that material is visually interesting not just text based so that it engages its users.

### **7.2 *Using community leaders***

Teachers, media, CSOs, religious leaders, locally elected officials and other community leaders have wide spheres of influence and can be used as a conduit for spreading voter education. The EEIC must be proactive in involving these groups in the centre and giving them appropriate professional development so they are familiar with key civic education messages and have creative ideas for delivering to their

audiences. This investment in developing well-informed and motivated ‘ambassadors’ for the EEIC will significantly extend its reach for little cost.

### **7.3      *Using the education sector networks***

A meeting with the Ministry of Education confirmed not only the education sector’s interest in the establishment of the EEIC, but stressed the high priority it must give to outreach activities. To this end the Ministry offered its network of teacher- training hubs that are established in each district, as a valuable dissemination point.

### **7.4      *Using the ECN network***

The network of DEOs is well placed to deliver strong civic education to their communities either directly or by tapping in to other local players who have an interest in strengthening democracy. The DEOs have a training role with local community leaders and can schedule an ongoing program of activity throughout the year, nor tied to the election cycle. The EEIC is the appropriate venue for resourcing the DEOs in this work and training them in how to deliver clear, key messages. The DEOs are also a valuable source of information about their own communities in terms of need for translated materials or picture based-based information in areas of high illiteracy. The EEIC needs to garner this information from the districts and respond by producing suitable resources.

Subsequent phases of the EEIC project include establishment of regional centres (as before the CA elections in 2008) and federal units strategically located within the yet-to-be-determined federal boundaries. These centres would act as satellites for the central EEIC and would assist greatly in getting blanket coverage for voter education. Further, there is a concept for ‘mini EEICs’ to be established at the district electoral office level.

### **7.5      *Using the NGO/CSO/CBO network***

The network of organisations throughout Nepal can be harnessed to supplement the work of the DEOs in regional, remote communities and with special audiences. The Centre for Constitutional Dialogue has used this model successfully to raise awareness and seek community input into the Constitution development process in all districts. Representatives from community consortiums need to be consulted on resource and training needs and how to best reach their communities with electoral education.

### **7.6      *Mobile Public Outreach***

The EEIC will contribute to the development of future ECN mobile electoral and voter information activities and campaigns. Mobile teams equipped with loudspeakers, flip-charts, audio-visual equipment, generators and resource materials are an effective and popular means for reaching remote and difficult to reach areas. Given the appropriate resources and support, teams of roving Voter Education Volunteers and District Electoral Officers would be responsible for the dissemination of electoral information packages, DVDs, pamphlets and posters at schools, village gatherings, markets and similar remote venues.

## **7.7      *Ensuring consistency – developing the ECN brand***

To ensure that there is consistency in the messages delivered, it is essential that EEIC staffs who are involved in development of in-house education programs also have input into other information campaigns. To this end, a communication plan should be developed that defines the whole range of audiences and summarizes the messages and mediums best used to reach them. The different phases of an information campaign throughout the election cycle also have to be defined. The EEIC must be seen as just one part of an overall communication strategy, albeit a very important one as it is best placed to coordinate and disseminate resources to support the information campaigns.

In this way, a strong ECN brand will develop that is easily recognised and trusted by voters. This will not only increase the impact of ECN information campaigns but enhance the creditability of the Commission in any election activity.

## **8.0      MUSEUM**

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Nepal has an electoral history that dates back several decades, and an appreciation of this history is important in reaching an understanding of where the country sits today. There is also educational value in making comparative studies of election material from other democracies. For this reason, a museum area that displays significant documents and objects from past electoral events in Nepal, elsewhere, is planned for the EEIC. However, rather than a dedicated room to this purpose, with the risk of not being seen by some visitors, it is recommended that these historical objects be displayed in walkways and reception areas where they will be visible to all. Suitable spaces have been identified where purpose-built cabinets are mounted on walls in direct line-of-sight for visitors.

## **9.0      LIBRARY/RESEARCH CENTRE**

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### **9.1.1    *Physical library***

The ECN currently houses an extensive collection of books and publications in the main ECN building. The collection is not catalogued and therefore not readily accessible to researchers or interested readers. There is little demand for the collection with the reading room used mainly for accessing newspapers. It is understood that there are many books in the collection of value for historic purposes and for reference, but also many titles that are of little relevance that should be culled.

The existing collection, once assessed and catalogued, will form the basis of a comprehensive physical library and research collection on electoral matters. The collection will be updated as new titles are released, but a strategic approach and management from a professional librarian is needed to ensure that important titles are continually sourced for the collection. The library should also subscribe to relevant journals to keep abreast of local and international developments in the elections and democracy field. A well-appointed and comfortable reading room with associated library services will ensure that this collection realises its potential as an academic resource.

### **9.1.2 E- Library**

Increasingly, the storage and management of, and access to, information is electronically-based. The issue in the world today is with too much information, rather than not enough. Therefore the librarian needs to locate digitised material from a wide range of sources, local and international, and manage this collection to make it user-friendly. The library will provide online access to supplement the collection held by the ECN.

### **9.1.3 E-Learning**

Related to the E-Library function is the development and delivery of E-Learning packages. Off-the-shelf software can be used to deliver sophisticated training modules that require minimal programming expertise. These programs are designed to accommodate a range of content material – text, film, audio, visuals - and then test the level of comprehension by the trainee of the material. An assessment and reporting function can also feedback the success (or otherwise) of the training. Once the software licenses have been purchased, this is a flexible and relatively inexpensive method of delivering training to a geographically scattered audience.

### **9.1.4 Archive/records management**

There are also important archiving and electronic records-management functions that will require professional services of the librarian/information manager. The retention of past records and memorabilia either in hard copy or digital format, and the conservation of historical objects enable them not only to be preserved for posterity, but also to be viewed and studied. The librarian will therefore have a curatorial role in managing this collection and preparing displays.

## **9.2 Audiences for Library/Research Centre**

The library will have appeal to a wide range of audiences including researchers, students, stakeholders and ECN staff, especially those involved in policy-making and developing training packages. The availability of free internet access to visitors will be a drawcard that the ECN will need to develop a policy to manage.

Extending the reach of the ECN's E-Library collection to all staff, regardless of their location, can be achieved through the establishment of an ECN intranet. In addition to giving full access to all digitised material, an intranet is a valuable medium for delivering communication and training packages to all staff in an efficient, timely and cost-effective way.

## **10.0 TRAINING ROOM**

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The training room is designed in a flexible format that caters for different audience needs. The room is divided by a solid partition which enables two independent training programs to be undertaken simultaneously. When the partition is opened the room offers a generous space for accommodating lecture-style training for larger audiences (up to 80 pax) or facilities for intensive workshop training (25-30 pax). The rooms are equipped with projection facilities in whichever configuration the space is used. Close access to a kitchen will make it convenient to offer hospitality to visitors using the training rooms.

Uses for the training room include:



- Orientation for new ECN staff
- Face-to-face training on electoral processes for ECN staff supplementing E-learning training packages)
- BRIDGE training (elections ) to ECN staff and stakeholders
- BRIDGE training (democracy and governance) to NGOs media, other stakeholders
- Forums/lectures/briefings by ECN to external stakeholders
- Professional development for teachers
- Capacity building for NGOs/CSOs/CBOs to support ECN outreach education activities
- Hiring out for independent use by external groups

Note that the Polling Place on the ground floor also offers training space for a similar number of participants, although priority for this space should be given to visitors to the information centre.



BRIDGE training



ECN staff training



Observer training

## 11.0 CALL CENTRE

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Provision is made in the design of the EEIC to accommodate a call centre with two operators. This an important aspect of customer service, where voters can have their inquiries answered immediately. It is important that scripts are developed to respond to frequently asked questions (FAQs) and that this information closely reflects in detail and language the messages being given out through all other ECN information and communication channels. The EEIC receptionist could take this role in times of low demand and could also supplement this function during peak demands.

As with all EEIC services, the existence of a call centre 'hotline' must be promoted to potential users. Provision of a toll-free number for this service will also make it more accessible to the population at large.

## 12.0 ACCESSIBILITY

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As participants in Nepal's democracy come from all walks of life, all geographic areas, education levels and the full range of ability/disability, it is important that through all stages of planning and implementation, consideration is given to being inclusive of all people.

Some considerations of actions to increase inclusiveness include:

- Wheelchair access to the building and to all floors within it (included in building plans)
- Closed captions on all multi-media material to assist the hearing-impaired
- Audio commentary on learning modules to assist those with low literacy/vision impairment
- Developing communication/information channels to suit a range of learning styles including radio broadcasts, plays
- Translating education/information material to reach minority language groups.

### **13.0 PROMOTION OF THE EEIC**

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With the opening of a new facility and a range of services within it, it is essential that a marketing strategy is developed and implemented to promote the facility. This will include high-level stakeholder engagement for awareness-raising e.g. with the Department of Education, the Ministry of Education, Higher Education Council, the private school sector, professional teacher groups, federations of NGOs, and teacher-training academics. Similarly, peak organisations in the media need to be engaged to highlight the relevance of the EEIC to their work.

The Centre also needs to be promoted directly to user groups from the general public either through traditional direct marketing channels such as radio and television and by harnessing the energies of civil society organisations that have an interest in promoting democracy. The website, suitably designed to reflect the inclusive, user-friendly approach of the EEIC, is also a valuable marketing tool.

### **14.0 ADVISORY PANNEL/PARTERSHIPS**

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As the EEIC is a new direction for the ECN, it is important that it takes advantage of other players that have experience in this field. It is suggested that an advisory panel be set up early in the design and development phase to guide the project. Players in Kathmandu who could be invited to join the advisory board include representatives from Kathmandu University, the Centre for Constitutional Design (CCD) and the American Library. Representatives of the main user groups – education sector, media, and donor agencies with an interest in this project or experience in similar initiatives elsewhere - could also be valuable contributors.

It is also important that the advisory panel comprises representatives of major user groups – education sector, media, ECN staff, both local and remote, and groups with special needs. It cannot be assumed that the specific needs of these groups are understood without ongoing consultation with them.

Finally, the government sector should also be represented on the advisory board. Many Ministries including those of Finance, Home, Information, Local Development, and Education are stakeholders, and both their input and their commitment to the project will be of great benefit.

## **15.0 ORGANISATIONAL, MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING FRAMEWORK**

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The envisioned establishment of EEICs throughout Nepal will take place over a period of approximately 5 years, commencing with the construction of the main centre in Kathmandu. Regional, federal and finally district centres will thereafter be developed. The following phases are suggested.

### **15.1 Phase 1: 2011 – Establishment of central EEIC at the ECN headquarters at Kantipath, Kathmandu.**

Many of the functions of the EEIC are already being undertaken in the ECN. With the establishment of the EEIC some of these functions will be moved to the new centre. Therefore some of the roles will only require re-deployment of existing staff, whereas others may be new positions. Even with existing staff, there may be need for skills development to face the new challenges presented by the EEIC.

The proposed staffing structure and roles for the initial phase of the EEIC's development and implementation:

Under Secretary

- High level management, policy review and stakeholder engagement

Centre manager

- Policy development, strategy development day-to-day management, staffing, contract management

Training/research officer/instructional designer

- Develop face-to-face training programs
- Develop E-Learning training packages
- Manage training centre

Administrative support/Reception

- Administrative support to centre manager in set-up phase
- Reception, meet and greet, switch-board, manage centre bookings, administrative support for the Centre, call centre back up

Education manager

- Responsible for education/information content development and delivery for Centre clients and outreach, manage contractors to develop content

Education program officer

- Support education manager, research, facilitate visit of formal groups

IT/web support

- Web design and publishing, web support for EEIC programs
- Maintenance of IT systems, interactive learning modules

Call Centre staff (1, 2 as demand requires)

- Respond to calls for information from the public

### **15.2 Phase 2: (2012/2013) Expansion to Regional Centres**

During the 2008 CA elections the ECN established resource centres in Dhangadhi, Nepalganj, Pokhara, and Biratnagar. These offices (previously known as Regional Resource Centres, or RRCs) served as convenient portals for communication and planning purposes, information dissemination and material

distribution during the election period. The office facilities and infrastructure established for the RRCs may therefore serve as suitable regional EEICs. While organizational, management and staffing requirements will need to be developed for these regional centres, it is recommended that the EEIC in Kathmandu acts as a focal point for coordination, information dissemination, programme planning and reporting. Once established, these regional centres could serve as hubs for planned expansion to EEICs in Nepal's future federal structure.

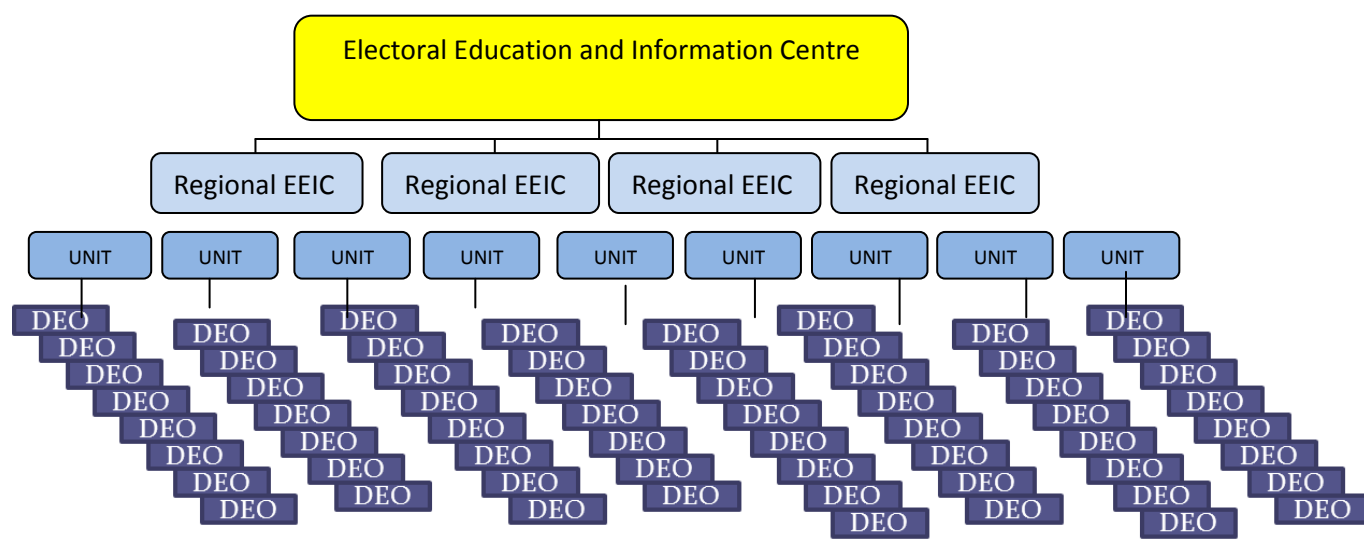
### 15.3 Phase 3: (2013/2014) Expansion to Federal Units

The number and location of additional EEICs will depend on Nepal's future federal boundaries and the availability of resources. While the delineation of new federal units will likely be determined in the coming year, the ECN envisions establishing EEICs in each of the future federal units of Nepal. While premature to determine the number and location, the ECN is planning to decentralize its activities for future electoral events, thus making strategically situated EEICs important hubs for information dissemination, outreach and voter education.

### 15.4 Phase Four: (2014 onwards)

The ECN may consider establishing "compact" EEICs in many of the District Electoral Offices throughout Nepal (currently numbering 75). While there may not be a requirement for such facilities in a number of remote, sparsely populated districts, the ECN envisions the majority of District Electoral Offices acquiring the necessary resources to establish a suitably equipped EEIC. The responsibility for managing the centre would lie primarily with the District Electoral Officer, who would facilitate voter education outreach to schools, community groups and associations.

#### Proposed EEIC Organizational Structure for Phase 2 to 4:



## 16.0 LINKAGES AND PARTNERSHIPS

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Through strategic linkages, the EEIC will have the potential to foster partnerships that the ECN has developed in recent years. This will include strengthening relations with UN agencies, bi-lateral donors, international and national organizations, including IFES – Democracy at Large<sup>3</sup>; the “International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance”<sup>4</sup> (IDEA); the “National Democratic Institute for International Affairs”<sup>5</sup> (NDI); the Australian Electoral Commission<sup>6</sup> (AEC); The Asia Foundation<sup>7</sup>; the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office” (IAPSO); and UNDP’s Oslo Governance Centre. To broaden the range of inputs and the availability of materials for the EEIC Information Centre and E-Library collection, assistance will be sought from the above mentioned organizations.

During the inception phase of the EEIC, developing and strengthening linkages with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is recommended. The National Electoral Education Centre, a purpose-built AEC facility in Canberra, presents an excellent model for the EEIC to emulate and can be a potential source of advice, resources and programme support<sup>8</sup>. A study tour/visit to the AEC in Canberra would provide the EEIC manager with a useful introduction to the centre and offer first-hand, beneficial exposure to activities and educational programmes suitable for developing the Nepali facility.



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<sup>3</sup> IFES is an international, non-profit organisation based in Washington DC that supports the building of democratic societies ([www.ifes.org](http://www.ifes.org)).

<sup>4</sup> International IDEA is an intergovernmental organization based in Sweden that supports sustainable democracy worldwide ([www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)).

<sup>5</sup> The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) is a non-profit organization working to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide ([www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org)).







<sup>6</sup> The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) provides a range of electoral information and education programs and activities ([www.aec.gov.au](http://www.aec.gov.au)).

<sup>7</sup> The Asia Foundation is a non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous, just, and open Asia-Pacific region ([www.asiafoundation.org](http://www.asiafoundation.org)).

<sup>8</sup> AEC Electoral Education Centre (Jenny.Pettigrove@aec.gov.au)

## 17.0 TIMELINE

Staff key: US – Under Secretary, CM – Centre Manager, AS- administrative assistant/reception, EM – Education Manager, EPO – Education Project Officer, WIT -Web/IT support, TO - Training Officer, IM – Information Manager

Activity		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Assign staff		US	CM AS		EM EPO	TO	WIT	IM					
High level stakeholder engagement, management , policy review, staff appointments	US												
Set up office, develop work plan/business plan for EEIC, establish databases of key players, develop promotional presentation, establish advisory board	CM AS												
Hold individual stakeholder workshops for different interest groups– govt policy makers, education sector, media, NGO networks, information managers, IT/Web Workshops will have different functions depending on audience – to seek input, professional advice, benefit of experience, to gain support, to establish working group, to promote EEIC etc.	US CM AS												
Strategy development for engagement with each major audience sector	CM												
Establish key messaging that ECN wishes to promote through EEIC programs – internal ECN liaison	US CM												
Education sector liaison: DoE, MoE, curriculum development centre Audit of existing materials/ resources	US EM EPO												

Develop scripts for 6 key content areas for information centre (finalising will depend on timing for Constitution process for some areas)	EM EPO												
Determine and develop formats/resources/outputs for key information to suit EEIC, media, outreach (schools), outreach (community), special audiences Engage, graphic design, web design, film specialist skill as needed	CM EM EPO WIT												

Activity		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Determine ECN training needs/ priorities, audit of existing materials and programs, delivery modalities	US TO												
Feasibility study for E-Training – identify software, networks for delivery of training packages	TO WIT												
Development of training modules - face to face and E- Training	TO												
Audit and cataloguing of physical library	IM												
Identify and manage documents for digitisation	IM												
Source and accession items for historical Display	IM												
Website design/development for E-library and E-Learning for external users	WIT												
Intranet design and development for internal users – E-library and E-Training	WIT												
Upload E-content	WIT												
Move in													



## **18.0 INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUILDING LAYOUT (KATHMANDU)**

- Proposed location: Election Commission of Nepal, Kantipath, Kathmandu:
- Construction Area: Approximately 1,100 m<sup>2</sup>
- Pedestrian and wheelchair access from Kantipath
- Complimentary architectural style to the Election Commission building
- Multi-purpose, versatile facility including:

Information centre

Permanent library collection (including E-library)

Election museum and mini-theatre

On-line research facility

Audi-visual production centre

Educational and interactive facility

Briefing rooms for donors, NGOs, election observers

Election results and/or operations centre

Telephone call centre and information hot-line

Media room and press facilities



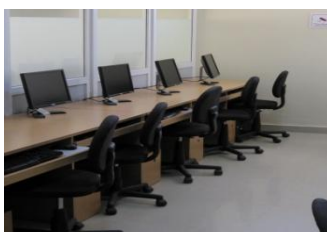
**Location: Kathmandu**



**Multi-purpose facility**



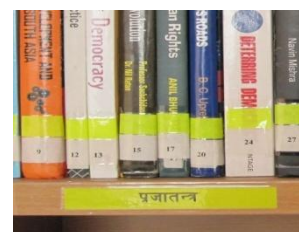
**Complementary style**



**Internet / E-Library**



**Research Centre**



**Library**

## 19.0 BUDGET

19.1 The following is the approved budget for the first phase of the EEIC in Kathmandu

SN	Project Activity	Donor/Partner Contribution		Total Cost (USD)
		AUSAID (USD)	UNDP (USD)	
	Building Construction of EEIC			
1	EEIC Building including UNOPS service charges for design, tendering, construction and commissioning	599,047	100,000	
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>599,047</b>		
	Establishment of EEIC			
1	Concept Design		18,715	
2	Feasibility Mission (UNOPS)		5,064	
3	Information Centre Coordinator		24,000	
4	Procurement of Equipment	70,000		
5	Procurement of Furniture and Fixtures	35,525		
6	Program Costs (Stakeholders, Consultation Workshop, Publications, Training, Voter/Civic Education etc.)	207,524		
7	AEC's programmatic assistance towards establishment and operationalization of EEIC including preparation of Interpretation Plan of EEIC	70,000		
8	Study Trip to AEC's National Electoral Education Centre (NEEC)	20,000		
9	UNDP GMS (7%)	75,803		
	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>478,852</b>	47,799	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,077,899</b>	147,799	<b>1,225,678</b>

19.2 The following is a cost estimate for the EEIC's in Regional Centres for the period 2012 – 2015

Description	2012	2013	2014
Building Costs (Regional EEIC's)	200,000	200,000	200,000
Equipment	15,000	15,000	15,000
Furniture and Fixtures	10,000	10,000	10,000
Staff Costs	10,000	20,000	30,000
Programme Costs	89,000	99,000	109,000
Running Costs	14,000	16,000	18,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>US\$338,000</b>	<b>\$360,000</b>	<b>\$382,000</b>

## 20.0 Advisory Panel

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The ECN may consider forming an advisory panel to assist with the establishment and development of the EEIC. A number of information centres and learning institutions in Kathmandu with valuable experience and knowledge in establishing and running similar facilities would make suitable panel representatives. Kathmandu University, the Centre for Constitutional Dialogue (a UNDP project) and the American Library are a number of examples.

## 21.0 Sustainability

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AusAID is the ECN's development partner financing the first stage of the EEIC. Provision of financial resources to cover long term running costs and expenses will require further discussions between the ECN, UNDP, development partners and the government of Nepal.

While the ECN has a provision in its current annual budget for phase one of the EEIC, it is suggested that long-term budgetary planning include resource allocation for a specified percentage of EEIC annual running costs, leading to incremental government budgetary provision over 5 years.

The financial and organizational sustainability of the EEIC will, to a large extent, depend on how effectively the ECN is able to leverage resources from various sources, including government, donor, international organizations and/or the private sector. A financing agreement between development partners and the ECN, with an annual declining donor contribution over a 5 year period, is envisioned.

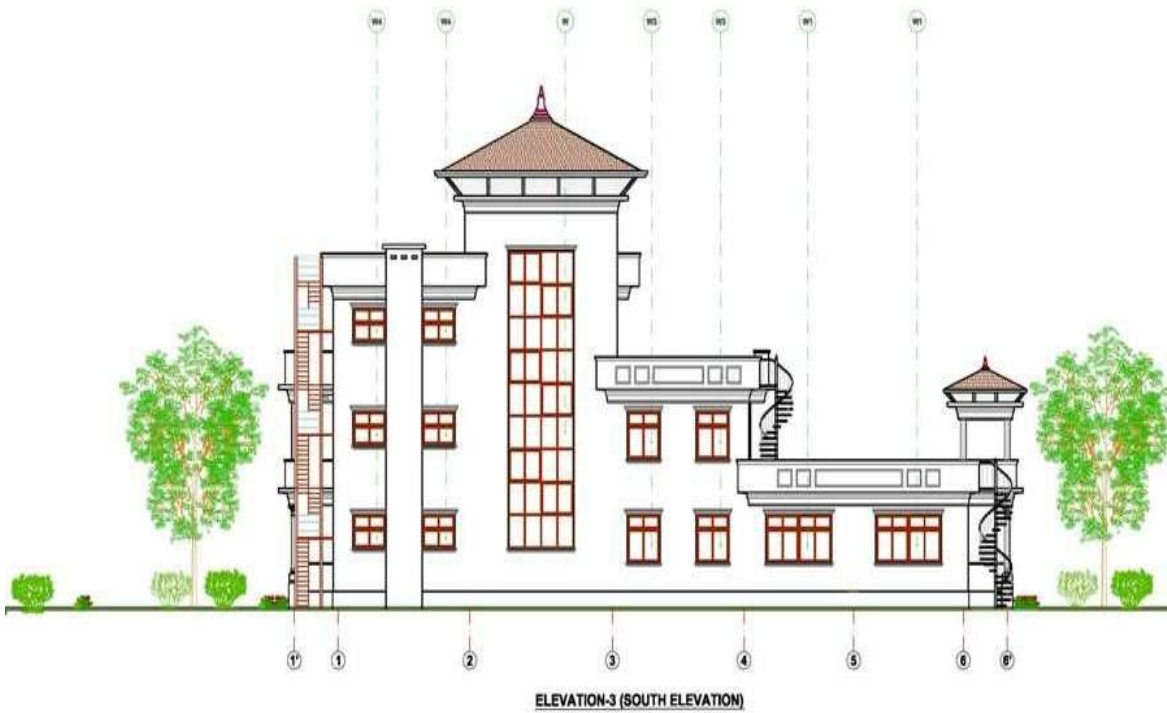
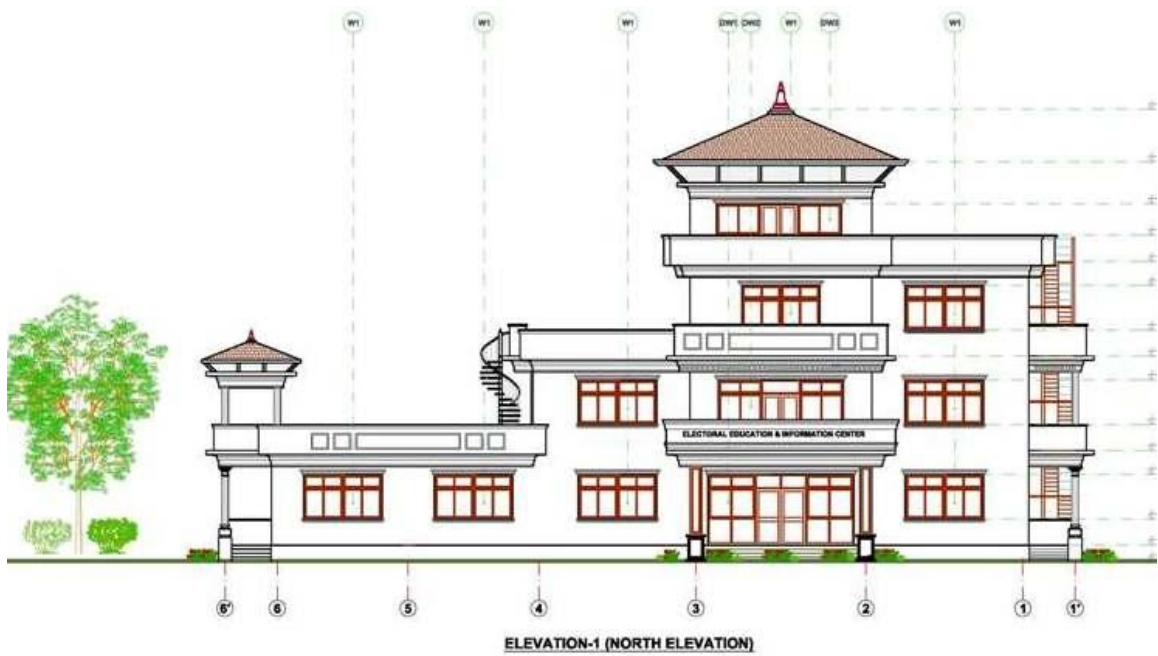
While the financial obligations of the respective parties and modalities of such an agreement will require discussion, it is anticipated that donors will finance all of the initial year start-up costs, programme and equipment costs, and some staff salaries. In future, the ECN may propose a cost-sharing agreement with donors and government, where state funding is allocated on a 5 year cycle for core running costs (salaries, overheads, utilities, etc), thus providing continuity and stability for staff development and programme planning. Concurrently, the EEIC would be able to pursue additional funding options for specific programme activities from donors and other development partners.

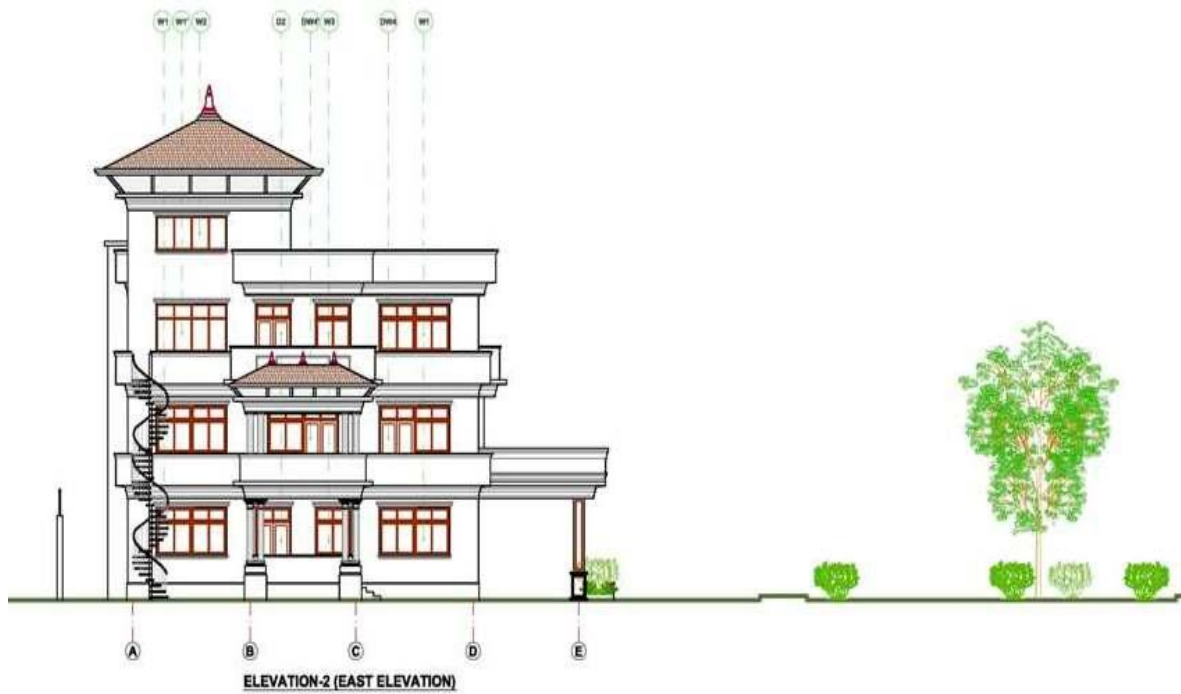
**Human Resource Sustainability:** A high turnover of election staff has been identified as a major challenge to the ECN's organizational sustainability, capacity and development (ECN Strategic Plan-2009). The ECN will face similar challenges with the establishment of the EEIC. As long as the ECN remains dependent on personnel seconded by the government the organization will continue to face challenges of retaining institutional capacity, memory and experienced officials. The ECN is therefore encouraged to explore alternative approaches to human resource sustainability, including the introduction of binding, fixed-term civil service contracts of up to 5 years, and/or proposing arrangements that would empower the ECN to recruit personnel from outside of the civil service and determine employment conditions and salaries. While front-loaded donor support of the EEIC may provide some flexibility in recruiting suitably qualified personnel (from outside of the civil service), such measures can only be considered temporary. A long-term ECN human resource development plan with flexibility, hiring independence and suitable financial resources is ultimately required.

# **ANNEX**

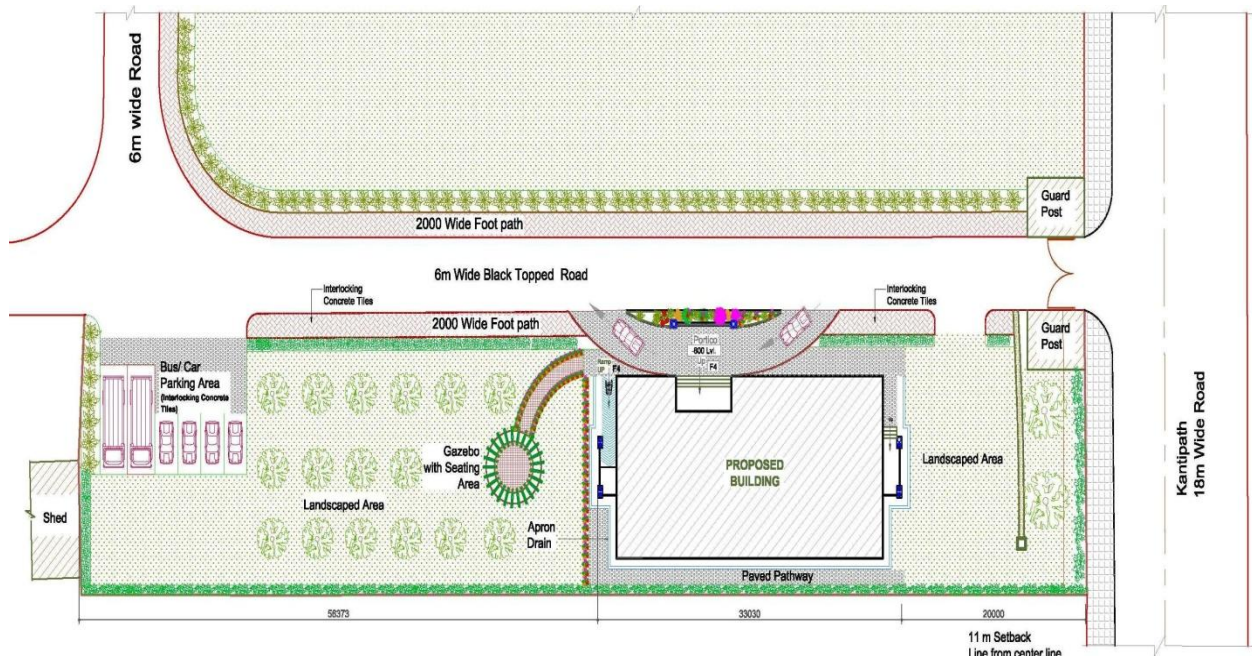
## **ELEVATION & FLOOR PLAN**

**A 3-D visualisation of the EEIC can be watched at [www.election.gov.np](http://www.election.gov.np)**

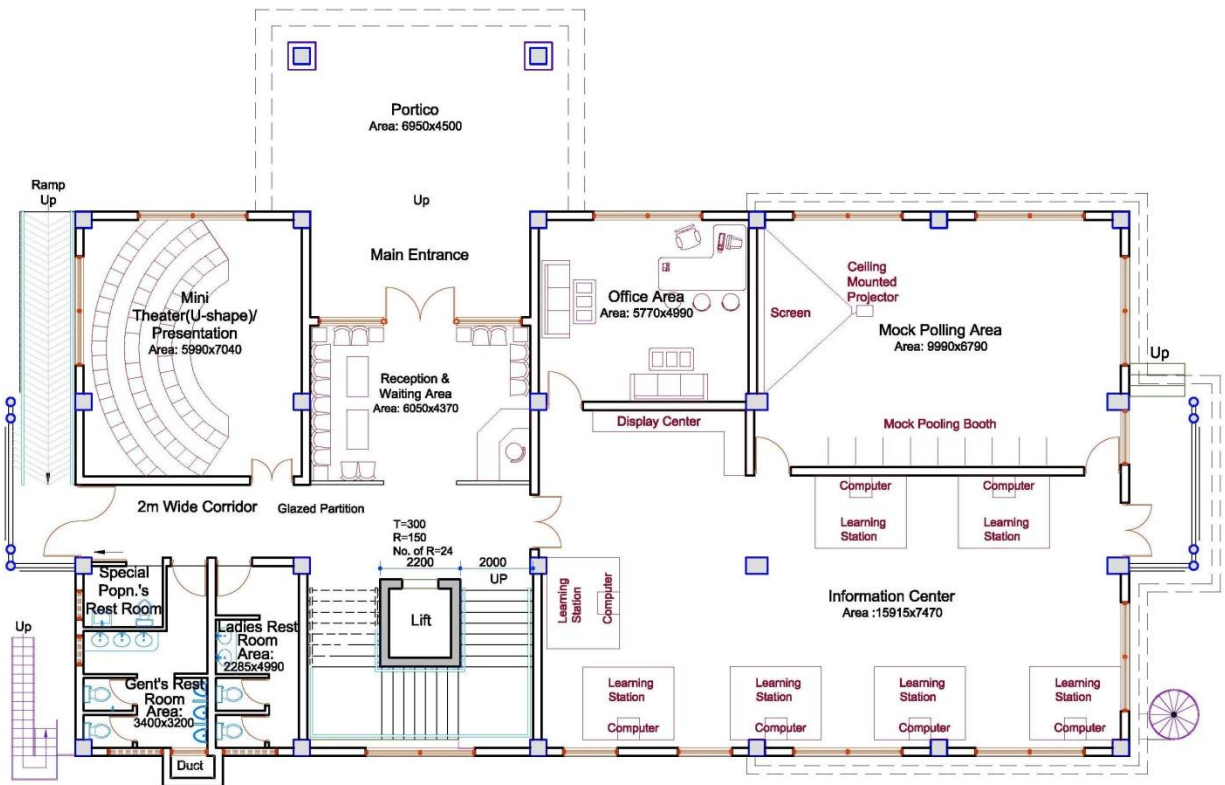




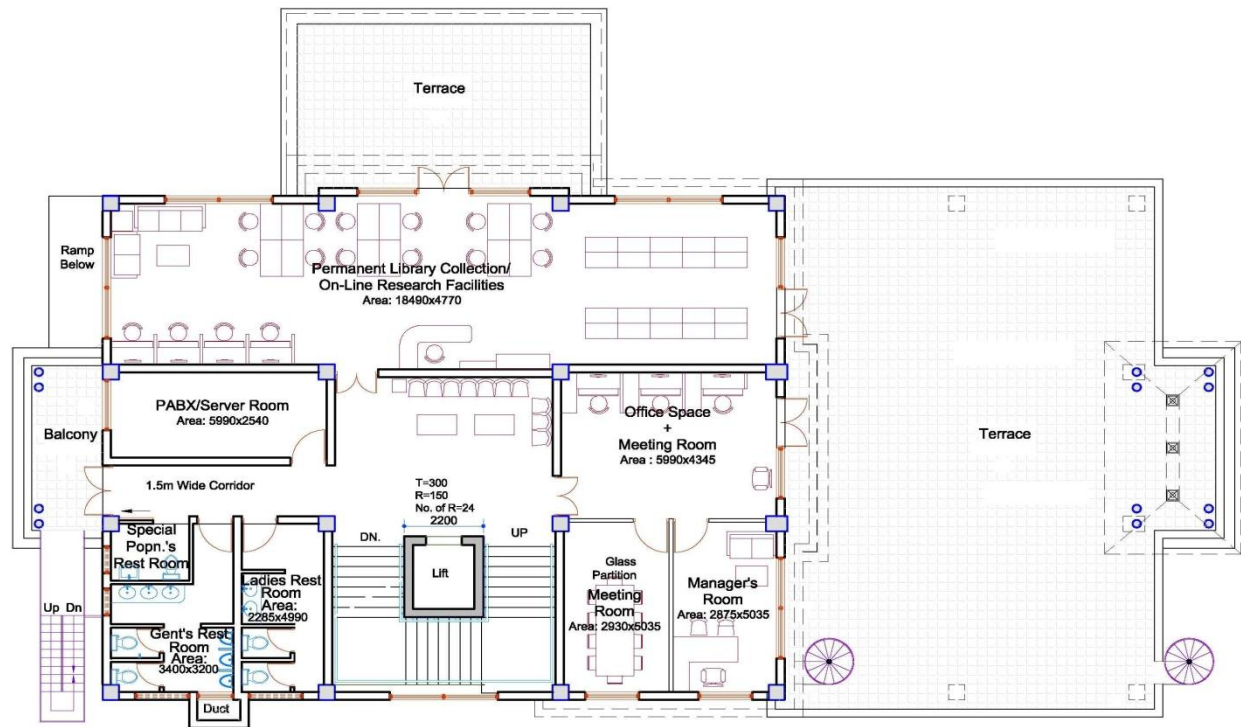




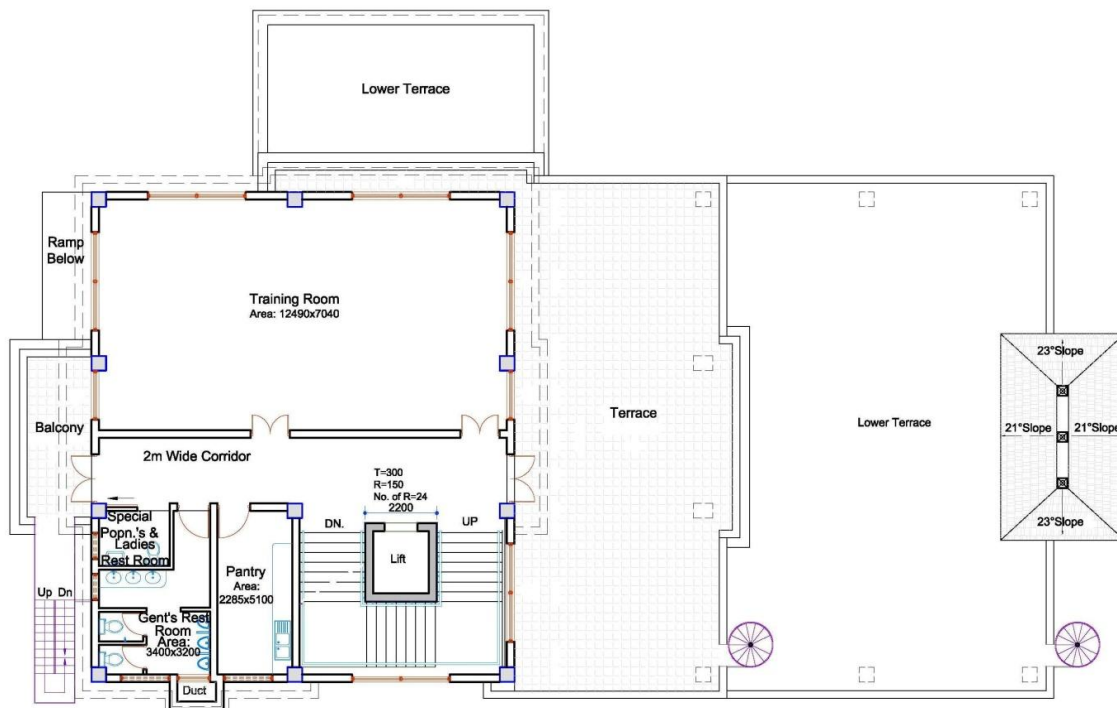
**Site Plan**



**Ground Floor Plan**



**First Floor Plan**



**Second Floor Plan**