



# ***European Commission United Nations Development Programme International IDEA***

*In collaboration with*

**International Organization for Migration  
Canadian International Development Agency  
Organization of American States**

## ***History and Focus on Effective Electoral Assistance***

***Brussels, 1-5 December 2008***

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# *Presentation*

**Why Electoral Assistance**

**Effective Electoral Assistance**

**Electoral Cycle Approach**

**UN Assistance Past and Present**

**Volume, Types, Trends**

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# Elections: a fundamental element of democratic governance



more countries than ever before are working to build or to strengthen democratic governance

electoral support is receiving increasing attention within democratic governance

a sharp increase worldwide in the number of elections of a pluralistic nature

only a few states in the world do not conduct elections



# *Elections: a fundamental element of democratic governance*

and more ...

an inadequate electoral framework

partisan administration of the electoral process

restrictions in political freedoms and participation

not all elections provide people with real opportunities to choose their representatives freely

an unequal access to the media

electoral violence and political intimidation

electoral fraud and violations

inadequate or untimely funding of elections

lack of professionalism in administration of elections

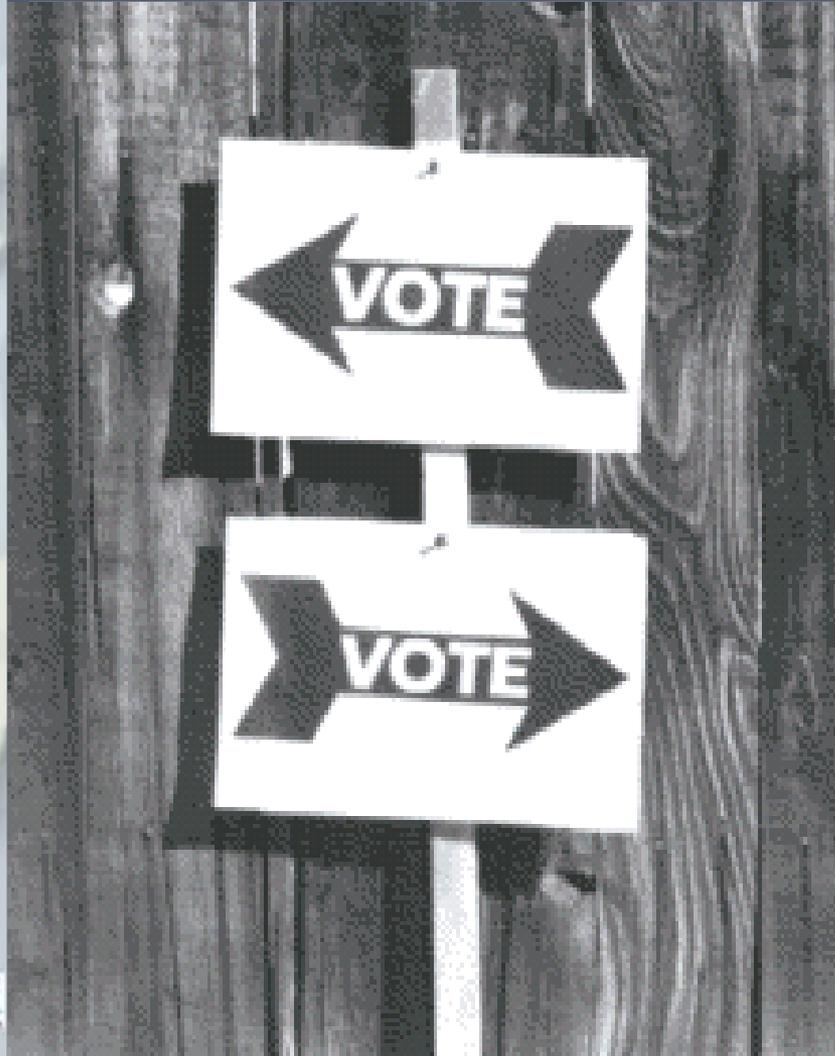


# Why Electoral Assistance?

some countries were largely **unprepared** to go through **major democratic transitions** that featured **crucial elections**

electoral practitioners had virtually no **access** to **comparative knowledge, best practices** and **lessons learned** in the field of elections

## THE KNOWLEDGE GAP



electoral institutions did not always possess the **necessary experience** and **knowledge** to **deliver** and **guarantee** credible elections

there was **no coherent electoral administration** methodology, the field lacked **common standards**



# Why Electoral Assistance?

electoral management bodies **confront** a new set of **challenges...**

## CREDIBILITY GAP



creating **transparent** and **sustainable** electoral **systems** and **processes**

reversing situations of **professional stagnation**

building the **trust** of the various **stakeholders** in the electoral process

addressing problems of **lack of retention** of **institutional memory**

solving **political**, **financial** and **logistical** constraints

undermining **their work** and the **credibility of elections**



# Why Electoral Assistance?

## CREDIBILITY GAP

loss of **credibility** and **mistrust** in the electoral process

voters' **apathy** and **low turnout**

electoral **disputes**, electoral **violence** or **civil strife**

an **elected government** that lacks of the **required legitimacy**





# Definitions

- ❑ What is Electoral Assistance?
- ❑ Why “Effective Electoral Assistance”?



# Definitions

- ❑ Electoral Assistance = support (legal, technical, logistic, etc.) provided to electoral laws, processes and institutions.
- ❑ “Effective Electoral Assistance” = initiatives and activities to improve the quality and impact of electoral assistance to partner country electoral institutions and processes.
- ❑ EEA is part of the wider democratic development of the partner country, in accordance with the five key principles of “ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability” that inform the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.
- ❑ EEA implies the management of a complex set of interactions among Government, EMBs, International Organizations, Political Parties, CSOs, Services Providers and Media...the electoral cycle approach.



# 'Election' Assistance VS 'Electoral' Assistance

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reform  
audits & evaluations  
development

constitution  
legislation  
electoral system  
electoral bodies

budgeting

calendar/timeline

funding & financing

resource planning & implementation

security

election officials

civic and voter education

parties & candidates

voters

observers  
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# The Electoral Cycle

Legal Framework

Planning & Implementation

Training and Education

Voter Registration

Electoral Campaign

Voting Operations and Election Day

Verification of Results

Post-Election

tabulation of results

complaints and appeals

official results

voting

vote counting

pre-voting and out-of-country voting

party liaison

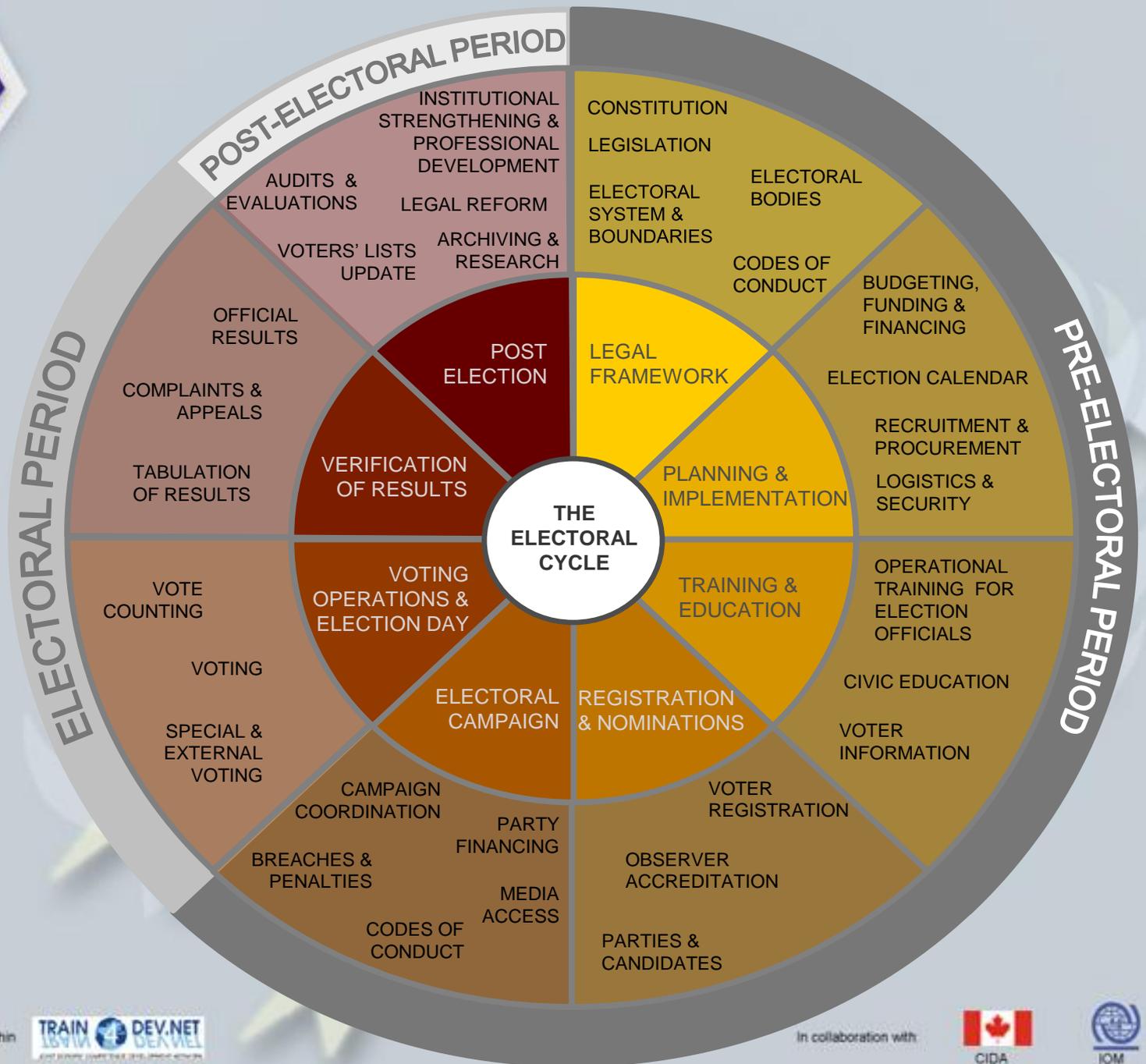
financing

media

complaints

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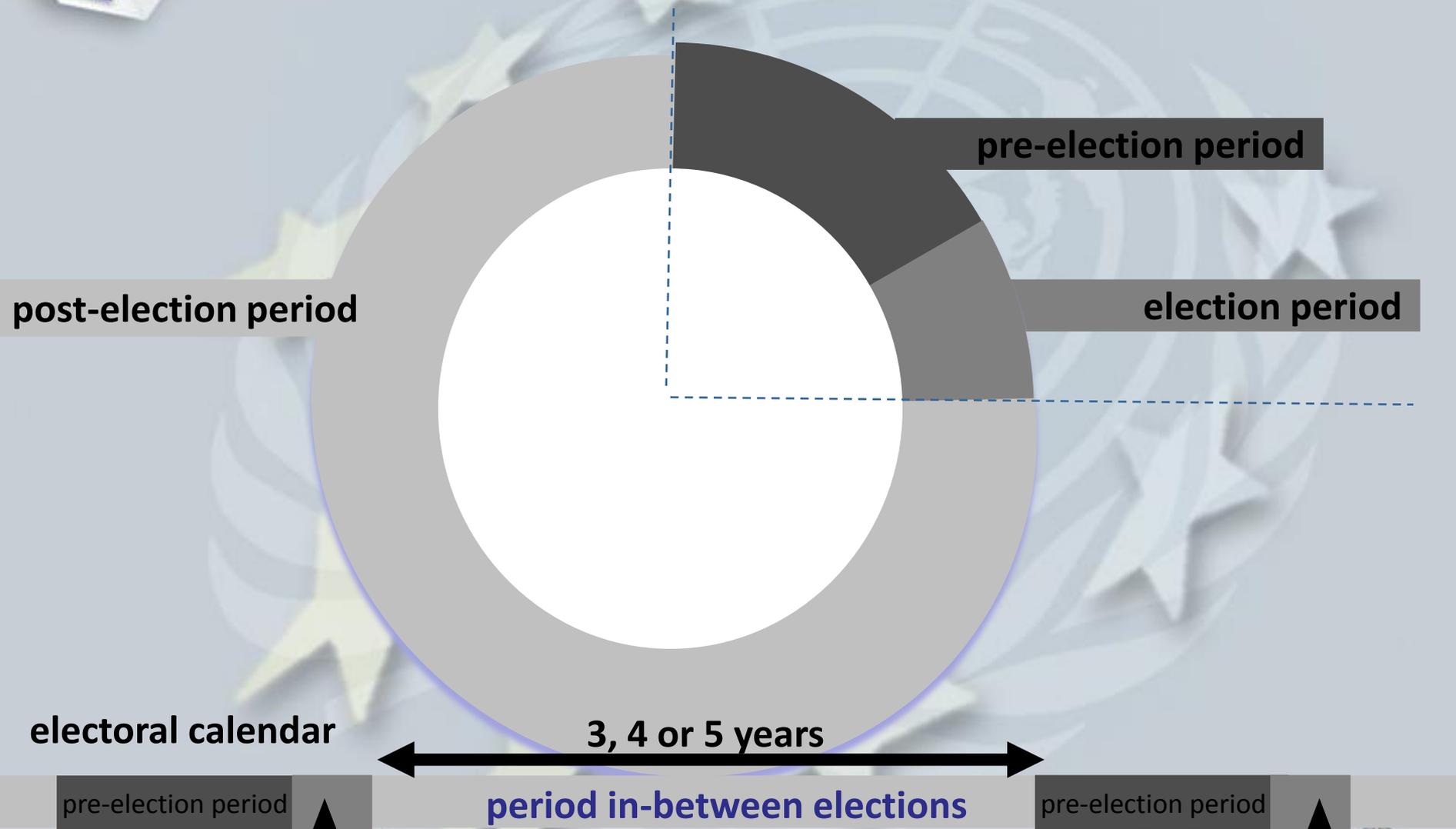






# Inter-election Period

sustainable electoral support



electoral calendar

3, 4 or 5 years

period in-between elections

pre-election period

pre-election period

electoral event

electoral event

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# Electoral Cycle Approach

## Is...

- Focused on the long term
- About developing capacities
- A way to engage with a wide variety of stakeholders
- A way to promote more exchanges, networking and south-south cooperation

## Is *not*...

- A replacement of elections or indication that election events are unimportant
- A means to provide quick support before an election
- An excuse to provide indefinite support to electoral processes



## ***Q: When did the UN first get involved in elections?***

**A: From the late 1940s through the 1970s, the UN was involved in observation/verification of elections. Rise in technical assistance began in the early 1990s.**



# UN Electoral Assistance Today

2004-2007 UNDP Exp. in Democratic Governance=US\$5.3bil

Electoral Systems and Processes=18% of this (1/5)

In 2007, ½ of countries worked on cycle approach

# of countries/regional programmes by region	2004	2005	2006	2007
Africa	20	17	17	14
Arab States	7	5	3	3
Asia/Pacific	4	8	8	7
Europe/CIS	2	3	2	2
LAC/Caribbean	8	5	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>



# Trends in Types of Assistance

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## **Traditional** areas:

- Electoral administration
- Civic and voter education
- Support to international and domestic observers
- Mobilization and coordination of resources/partnerships for electoral support

## **Newer** areas:

- Electoral reform, sustainable electoral processes
- Working with political parties
- Reduction of election-related violence and electoral dispute resolution
- Media and elections



**Thank you!**

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