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Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance

INTERNATIONAL
IDEA
INSTITUTE FOR
DEMOCRACY AND
ELECTORAL
ASSISTANCE

Workshop on Effective Electoral Assistance

PARTICIPANTS' GUIDEBOOK

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This slimmed down 2011 version of the guidebook updates previous versions prepared since 2005 by electoral specialists, advisors and staff of the EC, UNDP and International IDEA. Input for earlier versions was also provided by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Organisation of American States (OAS) and the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) — all part of the Train4Dev Subgroup on Effective Electoral Assistance.1 Some content previously included has been removed and expanded upon in the JTF Operational Paper series, including much of the detailed sections on EC-UNDP project identification, formulation and project budgeting (now part of the forthcoming **JTF Operational Paper II on Formulating and Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC-UNDP Partnership in Electoral Assistance**) and much of the section on procurement and the expanding role of information and communication technologies in electoral assistance (now part of the **JTF Operational Paper on Procurement Aspects of Introducing ICT Solutions in Electoral Processes – The Specific Case of Voter Registration**).

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1   Train4Dev is a network aiming to promote improved aid effectiveness for poverty reduction through enhanced donor cooperation in the field of competence development and training. The principle focal areas of the network are: i) efficient networking in the field of competence development and training for all staff categories (including local staff); ii) enhanced and efficient joint training of donor staff at headquarters and country level, including information sharing and access to such trainings for participating donors; and iii) enhanced and efficient cooperation in the field of e-learning and IT-based knowledge sharing. Train4Dev currently has 25 member organizations and sub-groups have been established in 11 thematic areas. More information is available at http:/www.train4dev.net/.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BDP	Bureau for Development Policy
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CSO	Civil society organisation
DevCo	Directorate-General Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
EAD	Electoral Assistance Division
EC	European Commission
EOM	Election observation mission
EU	European Union
EMB	Electoral management body
HQ	Headquarters
ICT	Information and communications technology
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IT	Information technology
JTF	Joint EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
MP	Member of parliament
NAM	Needs assessment mission
NEEDS	Network for Enhanced Electoral and Democratic Support
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PSO	Procurement Support Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE JOINT EC-UNDP-INTERNATIONAL IDEA
TRAINING WORKSHOPS ON EFFECTIVE ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

The Joint EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance (JTF) was informally established in January 2007 as a means to further synergise the efforts of the European Commission (EC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the area of electoral assistance. Since 2004 the EC and UNDP have collaborated in over 100 electoral assistance projects in developing partner countries. The Joint Task Force is formed by EC and UNDP staff dealing with electoral assistance at headquarters (HQ) levels in Brussels. The coordinator of the JTF is based in the UN/UNDP Brussels Office.

The overall purpose of the JTF is to further strengthen and facilitate the EC-UNDP partnership in the electoral assistance field and to improve the overall efficiency and adherence of the projects to the common EC-UNDP strategic approach. One of the main ways the JTF seeks to achieve that goal is through the preparation and delivery of training sessions on effective electoral assistance.

In close collaboration with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), the **EC-UNDP-IDEA Joint Training on Effective Electoral Assistance**, for which this participants' guidebook was developed, was built around the accumulated knowledge, experience and identified best practices of the EC, UNDP and IDEA's experience in delivering electoral assistance. The Joint Training on Effective Electoral Assistance has been organised eight times (Brussels and Dar es Salaam in 2006; Brussels in 2007; Milan, Maputo and Brussels in 2008; and Accra and Milan in 2009). An additional three thematic workshops have been organised on the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in electoral processes (Brussels, 2009); on elections, violence and conflict prevention (Barcelona, 2010); and on formulating EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects (Brussels, 2011).

The target audience and beneficiaries of the trainings on effective electoral assistance are:

- EC, UNDP and IDEA desk officers and staff working at HQ and in the field;
- staff of European Union (EU) Member States dealing with electoral assistance;
- staff from bilateral donor agencies and international organisations;
- representatives and officials of partner country electoral management bodies (EMBs);
- other partner country national authorities with electoral-related responsibilities;
- civil society organisations (CSOs) and political parties; and
- electoral experts and practitioners.

As of April 2011, more than 600 persons had been trained on the principles of effective electoral assistance and on the institutional aspects of electoral assistance projects managed by UNDP with EC and other development partners' contributions.

The experience acquired through this initiative represents an achievement that the EC, UNDP and IDEA want to further invest in and expand to include other partners and stakeholders. The training on effective electoral assistance has, for example, also been packaged into an online, off-the-shelf, e-learning course — and further courses are under development — that interested trainees can access on the internet and take in a self-paced fashion.[2]

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2   See www.elearning-ec-undp-electoralassistance.org

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

Training in Brussels 2007

The general objectives of the joint training are to share experiences and to provide an overview of the policy and strategy framework that governs both EU and UN involvement in elections to EC, UNDP and IDEA staff, staff of international and regional organisations, beneficiary EMBs, practitioners and other development agencies dealing with electoral assistance. The overall objective is to build capacity for the formulation and implementation of future electoral assistance projects.

The **specific objectives** are to provide more in-depth information on:

- key policies and strategic frameworks of EU/EC and UN/UNDP in electoral assistance;
- the election contexts in which electoral assistance takes place;
- the links between elections and democratic governance;
- the use of ICTs in electoral processes;
- best practices of electoral assistance implementation via EC and UNDP;
- including gender and minority components in electoral assistance projects;
- the challenges of programming operational planning;
- procurement of electoral material and services;
- support to political parties and parliaments; and
- current challenges and trends in the field of electoral assistance and the implementation of the electoral cycle approach.

CONTENT OF THE TRAINING

This participants' guidebook consists of an overview of the work that the EC and UNDP collaborate on in the field of electoral assistance.

1 THE CONTEXT OF ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE, INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE
The first section places electoral assistance in the context of partner countries' international commitments for democratic elections, as well as introducing the complex issue of electoral violence.

2 UN AND EU INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ELECTIONS, AND THE EC AND UNDP POLICY AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
Section 2 starts with a brief introduction of the overall work of both the EU and the UN in international elections, including in international election observation, and then addresses the issue of how the EC and UNDP work together in providing electoral assistance. The section presents the broad framework of EC and UNDP electoral support, its main objectives and strategies, and evidence of its activities in the field. It provides an overview[3] of who does what in the field of electoral assistance in the two organisations, and the deepening of EC-UNDP collaboration through the EC-UNDP Strategic Partnership Agreement, the operational guidelines and the creation of the Joint EC-UNDP Task Force in Electoral Assistance. It then draws on some lessons learned by the EC and UNDP in the field over the last decade that have influenced policy on the electoral cycle approach.

3 EC-UNDP ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES
Section 3 introduces the stakeholders of electoral processes, and then proceeds to identify the range of activities that EC-UNDP electoral assistance provides. These activities include, among others, support in: reforming the electoral legal framework; electoral management design; assistance often provided to EMBs in cooperation with civil society (including civic and voter education and media monitoring); and support in the other area of electoral assistance carried out exclusively by civil society: domestic observation. It finishes with a large section on what is often the most significant area of support: direct support provided to EMBs. This includes support regarding such internal matters as the professional development of an EMB's staff and its strategic planning as well as what is traditionally the most common area of support - electoral operations support (voter registration, voting operations, out of country voting, management of results, etc.), procurement support, etc.

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3   The forthcoming JTF Operational Paper II on Formulating and Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance goes into much more detail on the issue of EC-UNDP electoral assistance project programming. It will be found at the EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance Web site: www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/, sometime in late summer 2011.

4 GLOBAL TOOLS AND NETWORKS

Finally, Section 4 offers a general overview of the global tools for effective electoral assistance, including the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network and the BRIDGE project, both of which aim to build capacities in the field of elections through knowledge sharing, networking and training. It discusses support in two areas closely related to elections, assistance provided to political parties and parliaments, and finishes by introducing the UNDP Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support.

Throughout the guidebook, text boxes are used to identify key concepts and ideas. At the end of each section, the participant will find a summary and a quiz. These are indicated with the following icons:

KEY CONCEPTS & IDEAS

Important concepts, ideas and advice relating to the different stages of the electoral cycle.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Additional or detailed information on specific issues.

SUMMARY

Summary of the most important issues.

QUIZ

A set of quiz questions allow the participants to test their knowledge level.

To complement the training guidebook, a specific Web site dedicated to the EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance (**www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org)** mirrors the content and structure of this participants' guidebook and is continuously updated with important information and relevant materials in order to complement the learning paths provided with the guidebook.

SOURCES OF THE TRAINING

The training is based on the structure and content of the *EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance***,** the *UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide*, the *International IDEA Handbook on Electoral Management Design* and the *ACE Focus on Effective Electoral Assistance*. Throughout the training references will be made not only to these four main sources, but also to other additional and related sources important in the field of electoral assistance, including:

- **the 2005 UNDP/IFES** *Getting to the CORE: A Global Survey on the Cost of Registration and Elections*;
- **the 2007** *Handbook for European Union Election Observation*;
- **the Network for Enhanced Electoral and Democratic Support (NEEDS)** *project's Compendium of International Standards for Elections;*
- **the NEEDS project's** *Work of Domestic Election Observer Groups Around the World*;
- **International IDEA's** *Electoral System Design handbook*; **and**
- **International IDEA's** *Designing for Equality handbook*.

A bibliography of all relevant documents is included at the end of the guidebook. As noted already, much of the content included in previous versions of the guidebook has been expanded upon in both the 2010 JTF/International IDEA/ACE Electoral Knowledge Network's *Operational Paper on Procurement Aspects of Introducing ICTs Solutions in Electoral Processes* and the forthcoming *JTF Operational Paper II on Formulating and Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC-UNDP Partnership in Electoral Assistance.*

The e-learning course on effective electoral assistance complements this participants' guidebook (in more detail) **and was** launched during the Accra workshop in 2009. The course spans a broad spectrum, ranging from text and audio, video clips, textboxes, images, figures and animations. Games, review points and quizzes have been inserted to facilitate learning outcomes, and substantial numbers of additional interactive tools have been added to engage the participants throughout the course. Trainees that wish to take the e-learning course can do so in a self-paced fashion.[4]

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4   See www.elearning-ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/.

UN Photo/P. Sudhankaran

1   Context of EC-UNDP electoral assistance, international commitments on elections and electoral violence

Electoral assistance can be defined as the legal, technical, operational and logistic support provided to electoral laws, processes and institutions. Electoral assistance activities can include assistance in areas such as:

- designing both an electoral system and a legal framework for the administration of elections;
- providing operational, technical and logistical support to the institutions called to administer and adjudicate upon electoral processes, including in the areas of operational planning, voter registration, polling operations and results management;
- financial resources for the procurement of electoral equipment;
- technical and financial support to civil society engaged in civic and voter education, election observation and media monitoring; and
- technical assistance to political parties.

> *Electoral assistance is the legal, technical and logistic support provided to electoral laws, processes and institutions.*

Electoral assistance takes place in a variety of different contexts. The scope of technical and financial assistance to developing partner countries depends on the type of election (e.g., national or sub-national, presidential, parliamentary or local); the environment in which the election takes place (e.g., post-conflict, transition, third or fourth post-transition/post-independence election); and other prevailing conditions (size of electorate, health of the national economy and national funding available for elections, state of the voter register and electoral institutions, physical constraints, etc.)

The EC and UNDP define effective electoral assistance as all the initiatives and activities that are intended to improve the quality and impact of electoral assistance to partner country electoral institutions, as well as to effectively manage all the interactions among donors, EMBs, governments, international organisations, CSOs, political parties and service providers. Electoral assistance is part of the wider democratic development of the partner country.

The EC and UN's strategy for effective electoral assistance adheres to the principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action. The Paris Declaration committed signatories (more than 100 donors, recipient governments and multilateral aid organisations) to five principles:

Ownership: Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies and coordinate development actions.

Alignment: Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures.

Harmonisation: Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective.

Managing for results: Managing resources and improving decision-making for results.

Mutual accountability: Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

The Accra Agenda for Action called for developing countries to commit themselves to take control over their own futures and donors to manage and coordinate their efforts more efficiently. It also highlighted the importance of both parties to account to each other and to citizens.

Photo 2: Poll Workers Count Ballots in El Fasher, Sudan
After a five-day voting period in Sudan's general elections, officials with the National Elections Committee begin to count ballots at a polling station, April 2010, El Fasher, Sudan

The EC and UNDP notion of effective electoral assistance thus aims to increase respect for partner country leadership and to strengthen their capacities in managing their electoral processes; to provide support based on partner countries' national strategies, institutions and procedures; to promote donor coordination and contribute to a division of labour between donors and partner countries in the electoral assistance field to avoid duplication of efforts and to rationalise activities; and to strengthen linkages between electoral support and assistance to broader democratic development. Section 2 provides an overview of how the EC and UNDP go about working together to realise those objectives.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS ON DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

One of the fundamental goals of the EC and UN's electoral assistance is to assist partner countries to meet the commitments on democratic elections contained in universal and regional treaties that they have committed to. These commitments provide the legal basis for the provision of electoral assistance in a spirit of partnership. At the same time, these commitments represent the principles upon which independent assessments of electoral processes by both international and domestic election observers are made, thus reinforcing the conclusion that electoral assistance and electoral observation activities both serve the same overarching objective – to promote sustainable and continued democratic development in the partner countries.

Article 21 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948:

- Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- Everyone has the right of equal access to public services in his country.
- The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

The main universal legal instruments that contain clear commitments for democratic elections are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948, much of which has the force of international customary law, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966, which has been signed and ratified by over 160 states and is legally binding on all ratifying countries. In addition to having legal force, these instruments have strong political and moral force.

The UDHR and ICCPR consider the holding of genuine elections to be a human right:

...the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections...[15]

Other universal treaties also provide standards for the conduct of elections. These include the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) of 1966, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPWD) of 2006.

In this context, the main objective of EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects is to provide requested and agreed support to partner countries to carry out electoral processes that are aligned to the commitment and obligations signed by the specific partner country.[6] These commitments include:

- the right and opportunity, without any distinction or unreasonable restrictions, for citizens to participate in government and public affairs through periodic and genuine elections;
- universal suffrage;
- equal suffrage;
- the right to stand for election;
- the right to vote;
- the right to a secret ballot;
- the freedom of expression;
- the freedom of association;
- the freedom of assembly;
- the freedom of movement;
- the freedom from discrimination; and
- the right to an effective legal remedy.

Some of these commitments have been adopted at international (universal) level, others at regional level. The binding nature varies from that of legal obligation to political commitment.

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5   Art. 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: www.un.org/Overview/rights.html.

6   See also the European Commission's Handbook for European Union Election Observation http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/election_observation/docs /handbook_en.pdf

Regional instruments

Regional instruments, agreed to by states within a geographic region or as members of an international regional organisation, include both treaties and political commitments. In addition to the individual member states, the regional organisations that have agreed such instruments include:

- the African Union (AU) — e.g., the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981;
- the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peace and Security of 2001;
- the Southern African Development Community (SADC) — the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections of 2004;
- the Organization of American States (OAS) — e.g., the American Convention on Human Rights of 1969;
- the Council of Europe (CoE) — e.g., the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950;
- the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) — e.g., the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the OSCE of 1990;
- the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) — the Convention of the Commonwealth of Independent States on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1995;
- the League of Arab States (LAS) — the Arab Charter on Human Rights of 1994;
- the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) — the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam of 1990; and
- the Commonwealth — the Harare Commonwealth Declaration of 1991.[7]

More recently, the Carter Center, in collaboration with other organisations in the field (including, among others, the UN Department of Political Affairs' Electoral Assistance Division [EAD], the EU and International IDEA) has made efforts to identify and articulate obligations and commitments for democratic elections arising out of existing public international law sources. The primary aim of this work has been to establish consistent and objective criteria for the assessment of elections, as well as to provide guidance to national election administrators in their work on meeting the international commitments and obligations their respective states have signed up to.[8]

Electoral best practices identify good methods for implementing principles for democratic elections

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7   See EC Compendium of International Standards for Elections: http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/election_observation/docs/compendium_en.pdf.
8   The database of obligations can be found at www.cartercenter.org/des-search/des/.

In the provision of assistance, EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects attempt to take into account what are considered to be the 'best practices' for ensuring democratic elections. While international commitments seek to establish the principles by which elections should be conducted (for example periodically, in a free and fair manner, etc.), 'best practice' attempts to identify good methods for implementing these principles. Best practice is a much more fluid concept that is constantly evolving depending on experiences in partner countries.[9]

ELECTIONS, VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Electoral processes can contribute to peace - or they can be catalysts of conflict

When successful, electoral processes offer means of channelling social conflict into debate, persuasion and common rules for choosing authoritative representatives of the people who can serve in executive, legislative and other institutions.

Elections not only aim to confer power to a democratic government chosen by the people, thus ensuring internal and international legitimacy, but should also consolidate a democratic process, and, in post-conflict scenarios, foster reconciliation between aggrieved parties.

However, elections can fuel underlying societal divisions and thus contribute to the escalation of conflict into violence. This occurs precisely because electoral processes are contests through which political power is exercised, and social differences are highlighted by candidates and parties in campaigns for popular support. Indeed, it is quite clear that electoral processes in recent years (such as in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Côte d'Ivoire) sometimes catalysed conflict before, during, and after voting day.

Election-related violence can be defined as:

Acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or that arises in the context of electoral competition. When perpetrated to affect an electoral process, violence may be employed to influence the process of elections, such as efforts to delay, disrupt, or derail a poll ó and to influence the outcomes: the determining of winners in competitive races for political office or to secure approval or disapproval of referendum questions.[10]

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9   The Web site of ACE Electoral Knowledge Network (www.aceproject.org) offers a great collection of best practices for democratic elections. ACE regional centres are
        mandated to bring the regional best practices and demand-driven needs to the attention of assistance providers.
10   Elections and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming, UNDP, Bureau for Development Policy, Democratic Governance Group
        (forthcoming).

The UNDP and the EU sometimes provide electoral assistance to partner countries whose electoral processes (for example in Kenya in 2007), spark episodes of electoral violence. From lessons learned in the last decade, it is possible to identify some common patterns in electoral-related violence episodes. Firstly, violent situations are more common when countries are in transition, in post-conflict countries, or in countries that have ratified a peace agreement. At the same time, difficult situations can emerge in cases where electoral system reforms have not resulted in a representative translation of votes into seats.

The decision to organise premature elections (in a peacekeeping and peace-building operation) can lead to the explosion of acts of violence. The fall of the Berlin Wall led many western countries to look at elections as the most natural and easy way to end a conflict and to consider them as an exit strategy to military operations, without taking into consideration whether the counties were ready to face all the challenges that originate from electoral processes.

Rarely are the perpetrators of electoral violence just individuals. More often they are loosely organised groups encouraged by political parties excluded from electoral competition or people from the political opposition who suspect fraud during the electoral process or who contest the results for other reasons. They can also be organisations or institutions with ethnic or religious roots that want to take power or that do not have equal representation. Actors can also be militants related to political parties or to other organised groups able to able to build relations between political officials and militias.

To fulfil their aims, these actors usually have access to different kinds of resources, including material (such as weapons and drugs) or human, such as dissatisfied, unemployed or poor young people.

Finally, electoral violence is more likely to develop in a governance context where there are zero tangible rewards for electoral 'losers', or where even a tiny electoral majority results in a 'winner takes all' scenario in the control of political power. In many western democracies, for example, opposition parties in parliament may still wield considerable political influence through chairing or otherwise participating in powerful parliamentary committees, etc. Similarly, parliamentary committees or parliament itself may be able to exercise strong oversight control over other public agencies. Both of these developments may be regularly missing in a post-conflict scenario, where state institutions are not inclusive towards electoral losers and electoral losers can be completely excluded to the point where the only point of participating in an election is to attempt to go from zero power to absolute power.

Election-related violence across the electoral cycle, from the long run-up to election day to the post-results environment

Phase I - The long run-up to electoral events (approx. 18 months to 3 months before election day): During this phase, targets of electoral violence are usually incumbent state officials and party members. The objective of violent acts is to weaken or eliminate opponents across parties or within parties (e.g., between hard-liners and moderates).

Phase II - The campaign's final lap (approx. 3 months before election day): Violence during the campaigning period often results from rivalry between parties/candidates and between groups of supporters, and may also be instigated to influence voters and/or affect participation by creating insecurity. Violence tends to increase towards election day (examples include Taiwan in 2004 and Pakistan in 2007).

Phase III - Polling day(s): Common types of violence on polling day include attacks to disrupt polling and to intimidate voters and limit turnout. These include attacks on election administrators as well as physical attacks on polling material such as ballot papers and boxes (examples include Egypt in 2005).

Phase IV - Between polling and proclamation: The period between election day and results' proclamation can increase tensions among groups, especially when a second round of voting needs to take place, thus extending the period of time. Clashes among political parties and rival groups of supporters as well as vandalism/physical attacks on the property of opponents are typical types of violence during this period (examples include the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2005).

Phase V - Post-election outcome and the aftermath: The post-electoral period is susceptible to violence, in particular if the election is perceived as fraudulent or 'stolen'. At the same time, losses in the election may result in street protests by vehement groups supporting those who did not win. Governments often face the classic dilemma between allowing mass action and repressing in the name of security (examples include Timor-Leste in 1999 and Kenya in 2007).

Programming

International electoral assistance can 'mainstream' conflict prevention efforts carried out by an increasing number of actors and programmes. By focusing on the core principles of procedural fairness, it can also do its utmost to ensure as legitimate a process as possible and reduce aggrieved persons' suspicions of malpractice.

Translating strategy and principles into programming involves thinking through various ways in which international assistance can be targeted to address the underlying root causes of conflict; improve the institutional framework under which electoral processes are implemented; encourage the process of political competition; and manage the relationships among the key protagonists. It is also important to consider developing crisis management methods to deal with potential situations of conflict when they occur.

While programming needs to be tailored to contextual surroundings, there are some general ways in which external assistance has been used to promote conflict prevention in electoral processes. Some are described below.

PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION: Fostering social cohesion is one of the most effective safeguards against outbreaks of violence during times of high tension. Examples of electoral assistance programmes promoting social cohesion include support to civic education programmes raising public awareness of human rights and freedoms, political party workshops promoting negotiations, and the development of mutual acceptance of results pacts and codes of conduct among electoral rivals.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES: The engagement of civil society is likely to enhance conflict mitigation and decrease election-related violence. Assistance to the establishment of multi-stakeholder forums, peace campaigns, religious/traditional leaders' forums as well as efforts in building capacities among the strategic leadership of CSOs through training initiatives are typical activities under such initiatives.

FACILITATING CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL REFORM: Assistance with the design and implementation of the constitutional and legal framework presents a crucial, structural approach to conflict prevention. Choices made in the legal framework may prove critical to the subsequent unfolding of the electoral process. Assistance can be provided to support, for example, party and campaigning rules and regulations and the electoral system.

WORKING WITH EMBs: The structure, balance, composition and degree of professionalism of EMBs are usually crucial to the legitimacy of the electoral process, which is vital to the level of conflict experienced before, during and after election day. Support to EMBs can take various forms; among others, it includes the facilitation of a good working relationship between EMBs and other stakeholders in the election (see Module 2 of the BRIDGE course).

Security sector engagement and election-related security: Determining the proper role of security forces (primarily the police but in some instances also the military) is critical to free and fair elections. Security forces have a complex mission with multiple objectives: to secure the electoral process (such as protecting voting places, officials, and the secure delivery of ballots and boxes); to protect candidates and prevent the intimidation of voters; and to work carefully with other rule-of-law actors including investigators and prosecutors as well as judges and other dispute resolvers. The key to effective security sector engagement is the focus on i) professionalism and standards, ii) clear rules of engagement for officers and other security personnel, and iii) emphasis on upholding human rights.

Election observation, monitoring or verification: The observation of elections by neutral organisations, national and/or international, has come to be seen as essential to transitional and post-war elections. Observers report impartially on incidences of violence, and also the mere presence of international observers can sometimes deter violence or fraud. Building on the experiences and recommendations of election observation reports, conflict prevention strategies can be effectively fed into assistance programmes in support of the subsequent electoral cycle.

Electoral dispute resolution (EDR): Judicial processes are often the most important formal method for resolving election-related violence. Procedures for handling electoral disputes through impartial, efficient, and legally valid and widely accepted mechanisms are crucial in all democracies.[11]

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11   Additional information about elections-related violence and conflict is available in UNDP's Elections, Violence and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming, available at http://content.undp.org/go/cms-service/download/publication/?version=live&id=2431678.

SUMMARY

- Electoral assistance can be defined as the legal, technical and logistical support provided to electoral laws, processes and institutions.

- The EC and UNDP define effective electoral assistance as all initiatives and activities intended to improve the quality and impact of electoral assistance to partner country electoral institutions so that they may implement credible elections, and to effectively manage all the interactions among donors, EMBs, governments, international organisations, CSOs, political parties and service providers.

- The Paris Declaration (2005) committed the signatories to the five principles of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability. During the third High-Level Forum meeting in Accra (2008), signatories renewed their commitments to the Paris Declaration.

- International commitments for democratic elections stem from political rights and fundamental freedoms established by universal and regional treaties and political commitments.

- Elections *per se* do not cause conflict, but the space for political activity that is created before, during and after an election can exacerbate existing tensions and underlying societal divisions and can, in particularly sensitive cases, provoke the escalation to violence.

QUIZ

1. What is the essence of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness?

    a. A commitment by donors to help developing countries' governments formulate and implement their own national development plans, using their own prioritisation, planning and implementation systems whenever possible
    b. Increased aid efficiency by providing a framework for the coordination of joint basket funds for electoral assistance projects
    c. A commitment by the donor community to double the contributions to developing countries electoral processes in the sub-Saharan African region by 2020

2. The notion of electoral assistance has undergone various evolutions and been interpreted in different ways. How is electoral assistance defined today?

    a. As support to the technical operation and infrastructure on election day
    b. As support during the pre-electoral period that aims to ease the running of election day on part of the partner country
    c. As the legal, technical and logistical support provided to electoral laws, processes and institutions

3. What is meant by 'effective' electoral assistance?

    a. All initiatives and activities intended to improve the quality and impact of electoral assistance
    b. All initiatives and activities aimed at effectively managing all the interactions among donors, EMBs, governments, international organisations, CSOs, political parties and service providers
    c. Both of the above

4. Which of the following is NOT correct?

   a. International standards for elections stem from political rights and fundamental freedoms established by universal and regional treaties and political commitments
   b. International standards provide a basis for the assessment of election processes by both international and domestic election observers
   c. The principal universal legal instruments are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
   d. In addition to having legal force, international standards have strong political and moral force
   e. International standards identify good methods for implementing the above principles

5. Which of the following principles is NOT among the five principles agreed to in the Paris/Accra Declarations?
   a. Ownership
   b. Harmonisation
   c. Independence
   d. Alignment
   e. Results
   f. Mutual accountability

CORRECT ANSWERS:

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NOTES

UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

2 The UN and EU involvement in international elections, and the EC and UNDP policy and strategic framework

The UN and the EU have been heavily involved in international elections, in either an assistance, certification or observation capacity, for many years. The bi-annual Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the UN's electoral assistance work in August 2009, for example, states that the UN engaged in electoral assistance work in 52 countries from August 2007-August 2009, either via the work of large-scale UN peacekeeping missions deployed as a result of Security Council resolutions or, more usually, via UNDP country offices. Meanwhile, as of May 2011, the EC and UNDP are in partnership in over 20 electoral assistance projects worldwide, and the EU continues to deploy election observation missions (EOMs) to up to 12 countries every year. That group includes Sudan for the January 2011 referendum for South Sudan, where the EU deployed an EOM, contributed financially to a UNDP-managed assistance project to the referendum management body, and directly implemented a technical assistance project to the referendum management body.

This section provides an overview of the steps involved in securing UNDP and/or EU assistance in implementing an electoral process, and the electoral cycle approach policy that attempts to focus less on support to individual electoral events and more on the long-term capacity-building of the partner country EMBs. It briefly documents how the UNDP and EU work together in implementing electoral assistance. It also discusses how and in what circumstances both the EU and the UN engage in election observation; from the EU's perspective, this is a complementary and parallel activity to electoral assistance, and an activity that aims to provide the entry points for EU engagement in electoral assistance.[12]

ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE AND THE UN

In 1989 and 1990, the UN successfully provided large-scale electoral assistance, including electoral supervision, to Namibia (UNTAG[13]), Nicaragua (ONUVEN[14]) and Haiti (ONUVEH[15]). ONUVEN and ONUVEH were the first electoral missions undertaken in sovereign states at their request.

General Assembly (GA) Resolution 44/146, titled 'Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections', was passed in 1989. Since then, the Secretary-General has reported biannually to the GA on "appropriate ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections, in the context of full respect of the sovereignty of Member States." The last report was in August 2009.

Also, since 1992, the UN Department of Political Affairs' Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) has supported the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the designated UN focal point for electoral assistance activities, in: ensuring consistency in the handling of electoral assistance requests; channelling requests to the appropriate office or programme; developing and maintaining a roster of international electoral experts; maintaining contact with regional and intergovernmental organisations; and maintaining the organisation's institutional memory.

Before the UN can provide electoral assistance, EAD must first assess the political conditions in the requesting country to ensure that the UN is involved only in settings in which there is a genuine commitment to organise and conduct credible elections.[16] EAD is also responsible for determining the political factors that affect UN electoral assistance, and the political ramifications of that assistance.

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12   A more detailed description of the identification, formulation and implementation mechanisms for UNDP-managed electoral assistance projects with EC financial contribution can be found in the forthcoming JTF Operational Paper II on Formulating and Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC-UNDP Partnership in Electoral Assistance.

13   United Nations Transition Assistance Group.

14   United Nations Observers for the Verification of the Elections in Nicaragua.

15   United Nations Observer Group for the Verification of the Elections in Haiti.

16   Even when the request for assistance is channelled through UNDP, as it is in many cases, it must be forwarded to the focal point and EAD for the official UN response. A copy of the request should also be sent to the relevant regional bureau and the Democratic Governance Group (DGG) of the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP).

In order to make these assessments, EAD consults with the UN/UNDP Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and the relevant divisions of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and UNDP Headquarters about the pre-electoral conditions in the requesting country. EAD usually (but not always) then undertakes needs assessment missions to the country in order to carry out further assessments and discuss the electoral environment with various stakeholders , often in close consultation with the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative. These needs assessment missions (NAMs) cannot be dispatched in the absence of either a Security Council or General Assembly mandate or a request for electoral assistance from an appropriate national authority (including, for example, UNDP Country Programme Action Plans [CPAPs] that raise the possibility of electoral assistance).

Recommendations based on the assessments are submitted to the UN focal point for electoral assistance activities, who then determines whether UN assistance is justified and appropriate. In those cases where EAD determines that the UN should be involved, this decision is conveyed in writing by the focal point directly to the initial requestor for assistance, with a copy to the UNDP country office. These decisions take into account whether:

- there is a clear need for UN assistance;
- the proposed assistance can improve electoral practices;
- political actors support international assistance; and
- UN norms will be respected through the provision of such assistance.

The political/electoral assessment mission fielded by EAD may be accompanied by a UNDP representative who would then be responsible for formulating an electoral support programme based on the findings and recommendations of the political and technical assessment team. The collaboration between EAD and UNDP in these circumstances, and the ability of the project designer to hear first-hand the concerns of all stakeholders, can expedite the project design stage and help to ensure that the content and scope of the eventual programme reflects as thoroughly and clearly as possible the political and technical priorities as identified in the needs assessment.

NAMs are an internal UN mechanism, carried out exclusively by UN staff members and/or experts drawn from the UN electoral roster. If electoral missions deployed by other international organisations coincide with a NAM, members of the NAM may liaise with them as appropriate, as long as they safeguard the reality and perception of UN impartiality.[17]

The recommendations from NAMs should provide overall strategic guidance, address political considerations and outline technical, material and financial requirements. They may also include guidance on assistance that should not be provided because, for example, it may not be sustainable, cost-effective, politically

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17   Sometimes a project formulation mission conducted by relevant UN agencies (normally UNDP) will take place at the same time as the NAM. In such cases, EAD and UNDP will clarify to national and international stakeholders that these are two separate missions with different compositions that are taking place simultaneously. Any project formulated by a UNDP mission will be contingent on the findings and recommendations of the NAM.

appropriate or essential in addressing the real needs of the country/territory. The five key areas discussed below should be considered.

1. **Assistance priorities:** The most important recommendation is whether electoral assistance should be provided by the UN, and if so, what form it should take. Areas that could be covered include:

   - electoral laws and regulation reform
   - electoral system design/redesign
   - electoral administration and planning
   - electoral budgeting
   - voter registration
   - constituency delimitation
   - professional development of the election management bodies
   - training of election officials
   - civic and voter education
   - inclusive participation (with a focus on greater participation by women and other underrepresented groups)
   - public outreach

   - working with political parties
   - electoral dispute resolution
   - training of judiciary on electoral justice
   - training of security forces on electoral security
   - domestic observation
   - election logistics and operations
   - procurement of election materials
   - electoral security
   - media training/monitoring
   - capacity-building of civil society organisations.

2. **Coherence and coordination:** This should include general direction concerning UN coherence in the delivery of assistance (who does what in the UN system), with the aim of ensuring timely and effective 'delivery as one'; guidance on the form, substance and implications of proposed UN partnerships with non-UN providers/donors; and direction on the overall coordination and coherence of assistance, including proposals for international community coordination mechanisms.

3. **Sustainability and cost-effectiveness:** A number of important points regarding costs and sustainability should be addressed, including i) implications for programming of current and future fiscal and human resource capabilities; and ii) to the extent possible, long-term targets for the full implementation capacity of the project or constituent elements.

4. **Risk mitigation strategy:** This should outline steps that could be taken to mitigate or remove any risks that have been identified should the UN provide electoral assistance.

5. **Potential for election-related violence:** This should cover electoral assistance or political interventions that could be implemented to reduce or mitigate the potential for election-related violence.

Figure 1: UN election assistance procedure (standard technical assistance)

REQUEST
REQUEST EVALUATION
NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION
FOCAL POINT DECISION
PROJECT DESIGN ASSISTANCE
IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT
EVALUATION REPORTING & INSTITUTION MEMORY

UN electoral assistance has three primary goals:

- to assist Member States in their efforts to hold credible and legitimate elections in accordance with their electoral commitments in international and regional legal and political instruments;
- to contribute to building, in the recipient country, a sustainable institutional capacity to organise democratic elections that are genuine and periodic and have the full confidence of the contending parties and the electorate; and
- to reduce the potential for election-related violence.

The majority of the UN's electoral assistance missions are implemented via UNDP. The Note of Guidance, signed by the DPA and UNDP in 2001, and reviewed in 2010,[18] provides an overview over roles and responsibilities of the different UN institutions — with particular reference to the UN focal point, EAD and UNDP — as well as procedures for UN involvement in electoral assistance. Where UNDP country offices implement electoral assistance, they are also supported by relevant expertise from UNDP bureaus, such as the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), in New York, and the UN/UNDP office in Brussels.

In cases where UN support to an electoral process is specifically mandated by the General Assembly or the Security Council, the electoral component is typically established within the context of either a Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) mission or a DPA mission, supported by EAD. Recent examples in the last six years include the large-scale missions in Liberia (UNMIL[19]), Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL/UNIOSIL[20]), the

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18   Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nation Development Programme: Revised Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance (2010). Available online at www.undp.org/governance/library.shtml
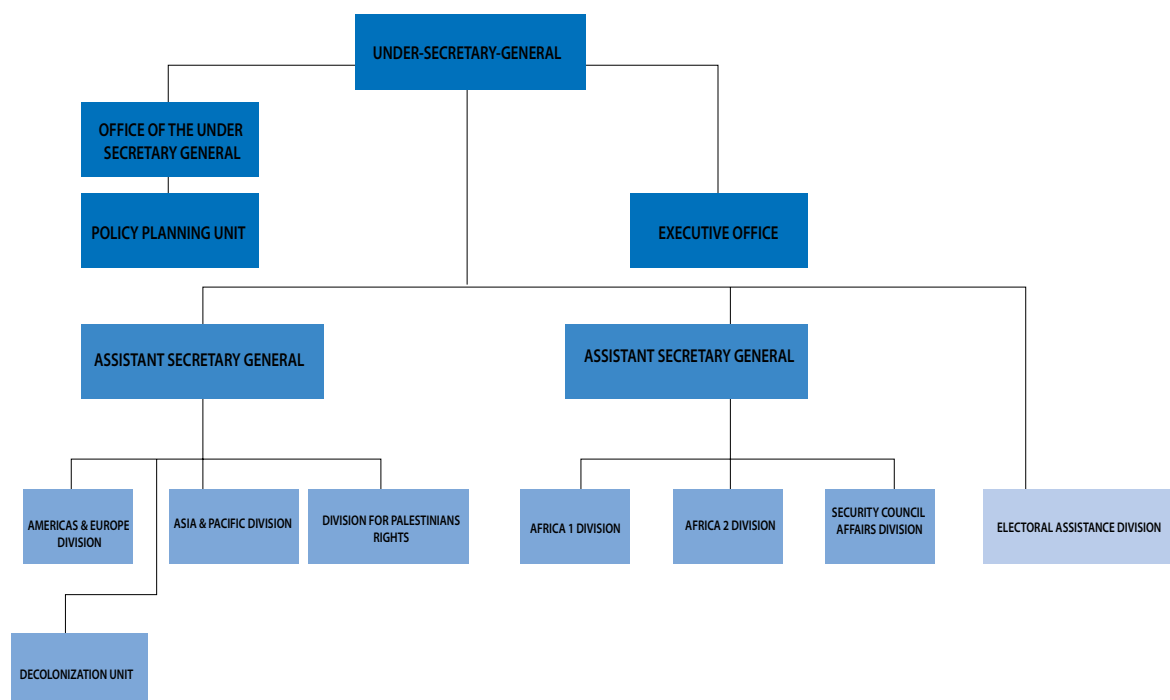
19   United Nations Mission in Liberia.

20   UNAMSIL = United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone; UNIOSIL = United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC[21]) and Nepal (UNMIN[22]). In these specific contexts, UNDP has worked in close collaboration with the DPKO or DPA mission to ensure that UNDP assistance is designed to support the overall UN electoral mandate and that adequate measures are put in place to guarantee the sustainability of UN support. Normally, this support is provided through the UNDP country office and/or UNDP election-support project upon the termination of the mandate of the peacekeeping or political mission. Increasingly, these larger missions are implemented as part of an integrated 'One UN' model that draws on the mandates and expertise of different parts of the UN family in a given country.

Another UN body occasionally involved in the provision of electoral assistance (and in particular as part of large missions with DPKO involvement, such as the missions mentioned above) is the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme. Since 1992, more than 8,000 UN Volunteers have worked in more than 50 UN or other internationally supported electoral processes. In 2007-2008, for example, UNVs worked in electoral assistance projects in 23 different countries, with an average of 800 UNV volunteers serving at any given point of time.

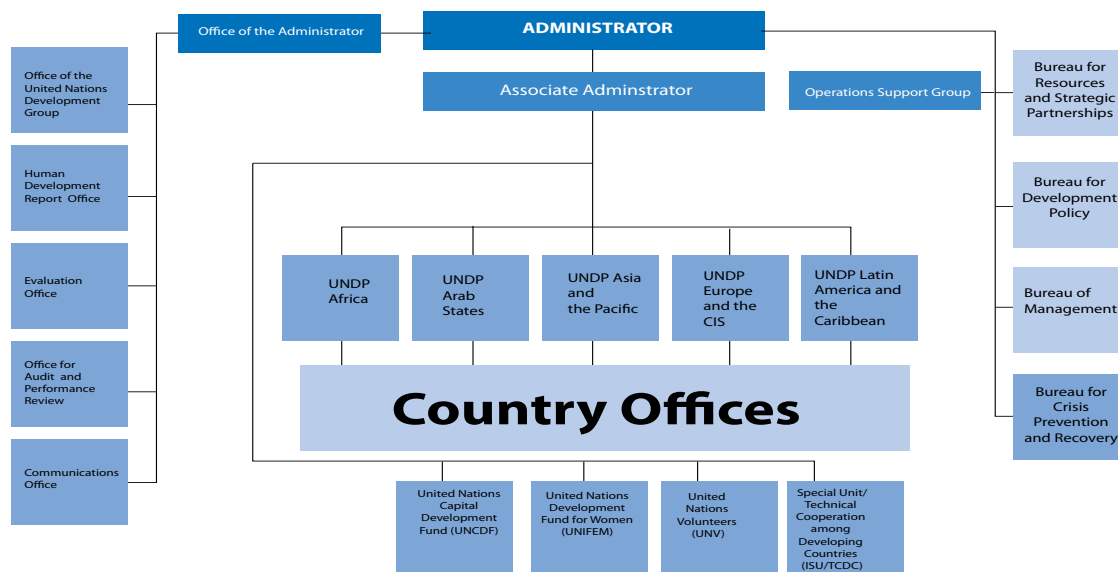**Figure 2:** UN Department of Political Affairs, organisational chart

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21   United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
22   United Nations Mission in Nepal

Figure 3: UNDP organisational chart

For the January 2011 referendum in South Sudan, 214 UN Volunteers from 70 different countries were deployed in Sudan as part of the UN Integrated Referendum and Electoral Division (UNIRED), a joint UN mission of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and UNDP. UNVs, who comprised the vast majority of UNIRED's staff at the field level, were often the only local face of the UN. They provided assistance in all areas of preparation of the referendum, including in public outreach, voter information, operational planning, logistics, procedures, field coordination and training. The UNVs were deployed throughout the country, including all 10 state capitals and several of the 79 counties of South Sudan as well as in five locations in the northern states of Sudan.

ELECTION OBSERVATION AND THE UN

Election observation offers a mechanism to professionally, objectively and independently assess and report on the integrity of the various elements of an electoral process. Election observation entails i) the purposeful gathering of information of an electoral process and ii) the making of informed judgments on the conduct of such process on the basis of information collected by persons who are not inherently authorised to intervene in the process and whose involvement in mediation and technical assistance activities should not jeopardise their main observation responsibilities.[23]

23   Note especially the UN Declaration of Principles for International Election Observers and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers; available online at: www.ndi.org/node/13494.

The UN does not observe elections unless specifically mandated by the General Assembly or Security Council.

The UN does not observe elections unless specifically mandated by the General Assembly or Security Council. If observation is mandated, it does not generally observe elections to which it has also provided technical assistance. It may, however, be requested to appoint an independent Electoral Certification Team or Electoral Expert Monitoring Team, as has been done recently in Côte d'Ivoire, Nepal and Timor-Leste. In such cases where the UN is requested to observe, monitor or certify elections, EAD would respond to the request and lead any ensuing effort. In Namibia in 1978, for example, Resolution 435 (1978) established UNTAG "to ensure the early independence of Namibia through free elections under the supervision and control of the United Nations." In other words, certification was recognised as a legal process and the UN was given the practical means and the legal power — including the power to block administrative processes if it was not satisfied with their appropriateness — to credibly carry out certification.

UNDP does at times help to coordinate and provide logistical support (normally through the establishment of a secretariat) to other international election observers. During the electoral process in 2006 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, UNDP provided a financial pass-through mechanism for an elections observers' project implemented by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and directly overseen by the national elections steering committee. At the request of the EC, UNDP also provides support to the implementation of some EU election observation missions (EOMs) such as in Liberia in 2005.

ELECTORAL SUPPORT AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

EC defines electoral assistance as the technical/ material support to electoral processes.

Electoral support is a central feature of the EU democratic governance strategy, and promoting democratic governance is a key concern in all EC development cooperation programmes. This is primarily done through:

- political dialogue and diplomatic process and demarches;
- mainstreaming of democratic principles;
- Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) based on participatory decision making, involving civil society, parliamentary oversight and independent control mechanisms;
- financial and technical cooperation programmes;
- democratic institution building; and
- civil society programmes.

The EC started to fund electoral support missions in 1993 with the observation of the first multi-party elections in the Russian Federation, and in 1994, with the first multi-racial elections in South Africa. In 1994,

the EC also provided large financial and technical support to the legislative and presidential elections in Mozambique and two years later it supported the Palestinian elections, in both assistance and observation. Since then, EC electoral support activities have grown considerably in both number and scope.

The EC Regulation 976 of 1999 and the EC Communication 191 of April 2000 on 'Election Assistance and Observation' marked significant steps towards the conceptualisation of electoral assistance and observation as complementary activities and the harmonisation of interventions. These key legal instruments responded to a specific request by the European Parliament to the Commission to assess and take stock of the lessons learned through EU participation in EOMs in the 1990s, and contributed to the definition of a coherent European policy line in electoral support activities through a proper approach involving a strategy and methodology:

> *Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) clearly states that the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law are fundamental European values. Human rights field missions and election missions are accepted as part of the mandate of the EU whose Treaty considers the protection and promotion of human rights as well as support for democratisation as corner stones of EU foreign policy and EU development cooperation.*[24]

EU electoral support has two components: electoral assistance and election observation, and there is a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities associated with each of these activities (as set out in the Working Paper on the Implementation of the EC Communication 181/2000 and the EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance.)[25]

ELECTORAL OBSERVATION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Following EC communication 181/2000, the Commission developed a standard methodology for election observation. This covers all phases of the election cycle: pre-election, election day, and immediate post-election. Since then, and with a total budget of over €100 million (US$142 million), over 80 EU EOMs and special support missions have been deployed to countries in Africa, the Middle East, Central and South America and Asia involving the participation of over 5,000 experts and observers.

EU election observation, in line with electoral commitments in international and regional instruments, is based on the principles of full coverage, impartiality, transparency and professionalism. EU election observers are active not only on polling day; they observe the entire process and thus also assess the state of democratic development in a given country at a particular point in time.

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24   COM(00)191 EC Communication on EU Electoral Assistance and Observation: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2000:0191:FIN:EN:PDF
25   See also the EC Handbook for EU European Union Election Observation: http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/election_observation/docs/handbook_en.pdf

The aims of the EU EOMs are the following:

- provide independent, neutral and professional assessment of the election process,
- enhance public confidence,
- deter fraud, irregularities and intimidation,
- contribute to conflict prevention and resolution, and
- recommend possible improvements.

In order for the EU to set up an observation mission there first must be an invitation by the government or the election authorities of the country. Secondly, a number of conditions should be met to assess whether deploying an EU EOM is advisable, useful and feasible. The minimum conditions that must be taken into consideration can be summarised as follows:

EU election observation is based on the principles of full coverage, impartiality, transparency and professionalism.

- the franchise is generally universal,
- political parties and individual candidates are able to freely participate in the elections,
- there is freedom of expression and movement,
- there is reasonable access to the media for all, and
- local conditions (logistics, security, etc.) do not hamper EU EOM accessibility.

These conditions are usually assessed during an exploratory mission deployed to the country a number of months prior to the planned election date. The final decision on whether to deploy an EOM is taken by the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Once an EU EOM has been approved and the invitation to observe accepted, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) detailing the rights of observers and the host government and the adequate cooperation between both parties has to be signed between the EU delegation and the foreign ministry of the host country.

Implementation arrangements

The number of observers in each mission largely depends on the country size and the number of polling stations to be covered. The following are the main components of an EU EOM:

- the chief observer is present in the country during all key moments of the mission;
- the core team of experts, including the deputy chief observer, are usually present in the country for approximately two months to assess the election process;
- long-term observers are usually deployed approximately four weeks before election day and should ideally remain after the election results are official to observe the resolution of electoral disputes; and
- short-term observers are usually deployed to observe polling day and the early counting of ballots and remain in the country only for a few days.

The elections are assessed against the host country's electoral commitments in international and regional instruments and the relevant national legislation.

When assessing the validity of an election, EU EOM observers consider all the relevant factors that affect the electoral process, including, but not limited to:

- the administration of the election and the degree of impartiality shown by the EMB;
- the campaign, in particular the fairness of access to state resources made available for the election and the degree of freedom of political parties, alliances and candidates to organise, move, assemble and express their views publicly;
- the media, in particular the degree of media independence and fairness of access for political parties, alliances and candidates to the (state) media;
- the registration of voters, its comprehensiveness in terms of coverage of the proportion of eligible voters captured, their accessibility to polling locations, and without discrimination on the basis of gender and racial or ethnic origin;
- the conduct of polling and counting of votes;
- the compliance of the electoral process with the legal framework; and
- complaints and appeals.

An initial assessment of the pre-election period and the election(s) is presented by the chief observer in a press conference shortly after election day (usually within 48 hours). The final report contains the EU EOM's final conclusions and recommendations regarding the whole electoral process. It is delivered after the EU EOM has closed its activities on the ground. This report gives guidance for electoral reform and possible future assistance.

One important point to emphasise is that the observers' recommendations often represent the basis for the EU to programme the next series of electoral reform interventions to be discussed with the national authorities (some or all of which may become part of the EU's priorities for any project of electoral assistance agreed with UNDP for the next electoral cycle). Within EU electoral support, electoral assistance and election observation are always clearly distinguished and managed by different services so as to fully guarantee that no conflicts of interest arise between assistance projects and the work of the EU EOMs. It is important, however, to establish stronger synergies between the EU-funded electoral assistance and EU EOMs to ensure that the EU delegations and national authorities are equipped to follow up and formulate their intervention by taking those recommendations into account.

Figure 4: EU EOM Implementation timeline
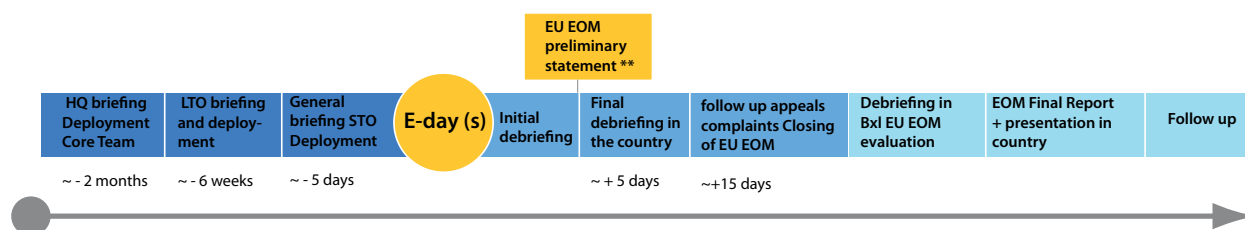
* During which:
      1. Circulation of regular reports from the Mission to the Commission, Council, EP
      2. Regular Consultations between CO and Commission's Service (Del+HQ) and EU M States

** The EU Presidency may also make a Declaration subsequent to the EOM's statement

Network for Enhanced Electoral and Democratic Support

The Network for Enhanced Electoral and Democratic Support (NEEDS) project — the latest version of which is known as NEEDS III — is led by International IDEA and serves as the primary resource for the training and skills enhancing of EU observers from all 27 EU Member States. It brings consistency to the overall selection and recruitment criteria for EU observers.

The NEEDS III project intends, among other things, to:

- contribute to the consolidation of a consistent methodology used by EU EOMs, in line with international and regional obligations and commitments for democratic elections (including links with electoral assistance);
- contribute to the development and promotion of strategies for the implementation of EU EOM recommendations and link them to electoral assistance activities of the post-electoral period in beneficiary countries;
- contribute to the democratic dialogue in third countries, through targeted support provided to domestic observers groups and other relevant CSOs, in particular in regards to their enhanced capacity to monitor elections and post-elections institutional developments, and their possibilities to ensure effective follow-up and implementation of EU EOM recommendations in targeted countries; and
- improve EU observers' capabilities, through development of a common EU approach in recruitment and training of observers.

ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

In the area of electoral assistance, EU delegations worldwide have the leading role, together with the relevant national authorities, regarding the identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation phases of electoral assistance programming that the EU supports. At HQ level in Brussels, the support to delegations and national authorities is handled by a number of different services according to the different phases of the electoral cycle.

PROGRAMMING: Each EU delegation, together with the specific geographical/country desks in both the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Directorate-General Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DevCo) are responsible for the programming (identification and formulation) of electoral assistance within each country strategy paper.

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION: DevCo geographical services are responsible for providing support to the EU delegations over the operational phases under the various financial instruments (see below). The exception is the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), centrally managed by DevCo in cooperation with the EU delegations, which funds the EU EOMs and small scale projects related to electoral assistance implemented by CSOs (often on domestic observation and voter education).

QUALITY SUPPORT OPERATIONS: The DevCo Unit for Governance, Human Rights, Democratisation and Gender within the Directorate for Operations Quality Control has expanded internal expertise in the field of electoral assistance. The unit anticipates the needs of and facilitates the tasks of EU delegations, geographical

coordinators and country desks at HQ when dealing with electoral assistance issues. The unit focuses on four types of support:

- operational guidance and implementation strategies for the management of projects and programmes. This guidance provides quality standards for projects and programmes, templates for key documents and reviews of best practice (including those concerning approaches, procedural matters and training) for HQ staff and delegations;
- Quality support, upon demand, at all stages of the programming cycle in order to provide assurance in the application of the recommended quality standards;
- support upon demand in all phases of the operational cycle; and
- monitoring of activities.

Since the adoption of the 2000 Communication, the EC has raised its profile as a worldwide provider of electoral support. As shown in Figures 6 and 7, EC electoral assistance has increased significantly since its start in 1992 and extends across the world with the majority of funding finding its way to the sub-Saharan African region (74 percent from 2003-2010).

The EU criteria for involvement in electoral support are:

- a request from the host government;
- general agreement of the main political parties and other stakeholders to an electoral assistance project;
- previous EU political monitoring or EU development programmes in the host country;
- adequate time-frame for preparation;
- freedom of movement and access to electoral actors;
- access to information;
- safety of the technical assistance team;
- the existence of complementary national funds and coordination with other donors and Members States (exception for post conflict elections);
- respect of the ultimate objective, namely improvement in the expression of popular will through a transparent electoral process;
- an indication that assistance may have a useful impact as a conflict prevention tool; and
- requesting countries demonstrating a minimum level of democratic space and political will to allow genuine elections to take place.

Figure 5: EC electoral assistance funds per region, 2003-2010

Latin America
12.960.000,00 €

Global
1.024.835,00 €

Mediterranean and Middle East
18.877.875,20 €

Asia
119.699.327,00 €

Caribbean, Pacific
31.647.424,00 €

Central Asia
2.365.377,00 €

Eastern Europe and
Southern Caucasus
17.310.917,00 €

Sub-Saharan Africa
558.077.125,00 €
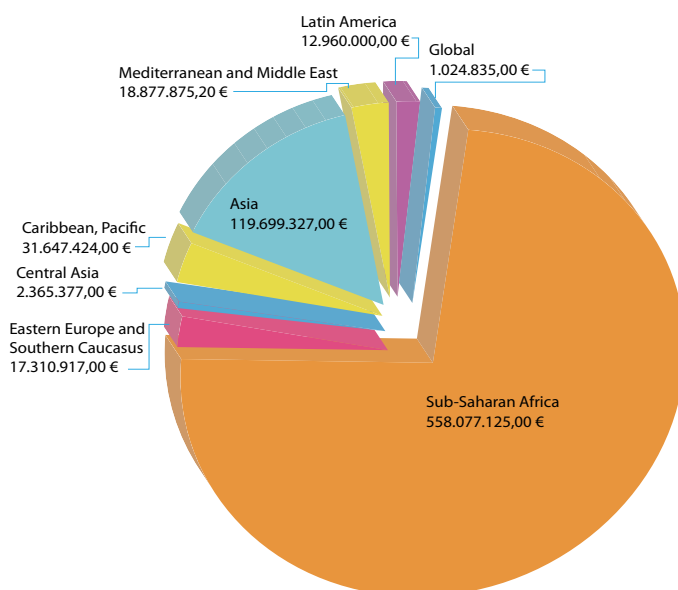
Figure 6: EC electoral assistance funds per year, 2003-2010

138.601.634,00 €

112.255.370,20 €

166.700.000,00 €

127.550.000,00 €

47.580.661,00 €

65.588.183,00 €

59.522.750,00 €

44.164.282,00 €

2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010
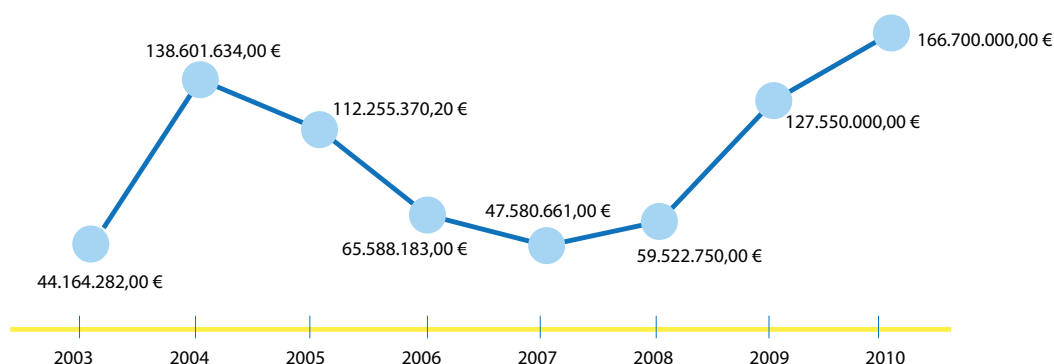
The figures shown in Figure 7 highlight the extensive support channelled to electoral processes in 2004 and 2005, with the majority of EU investment in those years, some €165 million (US$233 million), going towards electoral assistance support in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The collaboration between the EC and UNDP in the DRC was among the factors that spurred the formalisation of the Partnership on Electoral Assistance between the two organisations. In 2009 and 2010, the EU stepped up its support to electoral processes significantly through the channelling of more than €127m (US$180m) and €166m (US$235m), respectively.

EC FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

As part of its 2007-2013 multi-year funding strategy for development, the EU adopted a package of five new instruments (three geographic, one thematic and one crisis fund) for the implementation of external assistance including in the field of governance/democratisation, which includes electoral assistance support. Each is summarised below.

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) provides EU assistance to 17 countries: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, the Russian Federation, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. It includes a specific cross-border cooperation component covering the border regions of the EU Member States.

Based on the Cotonou agreement, which provides the bedrock of EU cooperation with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, the European Development Fund (EDF) supports assistance to the EU's 78 ACP partner countries and the overseas countries and territories of Member States. Cotonou has three essential elements (human rights, rule of law and democracy) and one fundamental element (good governance).

The Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) has three main components. The first is the provision of assistance to South Africa and 47 developing countries in Latin America, Asia and Central Asia, and the Middle East (but only those countries not covered by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument or the European Development Fund). Secondly, it supports the restructuring of sugar production in 18 ACP countries. Thirdly, it runs five thematic programmes: investing in people; environment and sustainable management of natural resources, including energy; non-state actors and local authorities in development; food security; and migration and asylum. The five DCI thematic programmes support actions in all developing countries (including those covered by ENPI and EDF) as well as global actions.

> **The key features of EDF, ENPI and DCI (for its geographical dimension) are:**
>
> - joint management,
> - mutual obligation, and
> - security of funds.

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) contributes to the development of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It has been designed to complement the various other tools for implementation of EU policies in this area, which range from political dialogue and diplomatic demarches to various instruments of financial and technical cooperation, including both geographic and thematic programmes. The EIDHR is managed at central level by DevCo and includes all the funds for EU EOMs and for small-scale electoral assistance activities implemented by CSOs.

The Instrument for Stability (IfS) aims to contribute to stability in countries in crisis by providing an effective response to help preserve, establish or re-establish the conditions essential to the proper implementation of the EU's development and cooperation policies. In the context of stable conditions for the implementation of EU cooperation policies in third countries, the IfS helps to build capacity both to address specific global and trans-regional threats having a destabilising effect and to ensure preparedness to address pre- and post-crisis situations (the 'global and regional trans-border challenges' component). In recent years, the IfS has directly funded EU electoral assistance projects in, among other places, Bolivia, Lebanon and Sudan.

EC AND UNDP COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP IN THE FIELD OF ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

The EU and UNDP are united by the core values laid out in the 1945 Charter United Nations and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. EU Member and the EC are the largest contributors to the UN system. A total of €1.3 (US$1.84 billion) was channelled by the EC to the UN in 2006. As expressed in Commission's communication of 2001 on 'Building an effective partnership with UN', reinforced in 2003 by a further Communication entitled 'EU-UN relations: choice of multilateralism', the EU has established itself as a major partner of the UN.

To facilitate programmatic cooperation between the EC and the UN, an updated **Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA)** was agreed in 2003. The FAFA applies to all contribution-specific agreements between both organisations after that date. The agreement provides for a single shared legal, financial and administrative framework for programmatic cooperation between the Commission and the UN. Since its into force, the FAFA has made cooperation more efficient, ensuring faster start-activities and ensuring administrative consistency across operations.

In 2004, UNDP and the EC entered into a **Strategic Partnership Agreement** through the signature of an MoU to set out and better define how the institutions interact. The objective of the SPA is to facilitate policy dialogue specific collaboration at global, regional and country level, with appropriate involvement of partner countries, and has brought harmonisation complementarity as well as financial cooperation between the two institutions. MoU focuses on governance (including elections, parliament and governance indicators); conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction through regular dialogue; and enhanced programme collaboration at all levels including financial cooperation.

The Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) provides a single shared legal, financial and administrative framework for all programmatic cooperation between the Commission and the UN.

The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) sets out and defines the relational focus between EC and UNDP.

In 2006, EuropeAid (which has since been merged with the former DG Development to form the Directorate General Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid [DevCo]) and UNDP signed the **EC-UNDP Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects**. The guidelines outlined practical measures for the strengthening and the facilitation of the already established cooperation between the EC and the UNDP in the domain of electoral assistance (in full respect of the provisions laid out in the FAFA between the EC and the UN). They clarified implementation aspects and rationalised the *de facto* partnership that existed at country level. They also provided for more concrete involvement and influence of the EC in the preparation and implementation phases of electoral assistance projects.

The operational guidelines, in particular, rebalanced the position of EU delegations vis-à-vis UNDP country offices by addressing concerns that had surfaced in the early years of the partnership. Among those concerns were the following:

- difficulties in the appraisal process (not enough involvement of the EU delegation);
- discrepancies between the UNDP project document and EC financing proposal leading to uncertainties regarding the EC-UNDP contribution agreement;
- misunderstandings in the use of the UNDP pre-financing modality linked with the use of the EC retroactivity clause;
- difficulties in the selection process of the required electoral expertise;
- difficulties in securing adequate participation and the voice of the EU delegation in the steering committee of the project; and
- difficulties in ensuring the visibility of EU funding.

There are many reasons why the EC and UNDP choose to work with each other, and several high level EC and UNDP gatherings and studies have highlighted the success of the EC-UNDP partnership in electoral assistance. Among them are the following:

- A joint EC-UNDP meeting of the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) review in 2007 endorsed electoral assistance as a best practice of the strategic partnership that should be further supported and replicated in other areas where the EC and UNDP agree on approaches,

including in other closely related governance areas such as parliamentary strengthening, justice, and security sector reform.

- A director level dialogue between the EC and the UNDP on Africa in 2008 again found that the EC-UNDP partnership in electoral assistance represented a governance best practice. It also concluded that integration into a broader governance strategy, where electoral assistance is a component of broader democratisation assistance, should be supported.

- A 2007 EC evaluation assessment of the EC's external cooperation with the UN family from 1999-2006 recommended that in areas where cooperation is considered by both parties to be worth extending, repeating or strengthening in the future, it is suggested to use a 'bottom-up' approach and avoid a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects were highlighted as an example of best practice. The evaluation study stated that "this agreement, which emerged from practice and was set up jointly by the two partners, capitalises on joint experience to date in this area." In cases where the EC wished to intervene in areas in which the UN had the leading expertise developed over time in accordance with the objectives assigned to it by the international community, the evaluation noted that the Commission had benefited from that leading UN expertise.
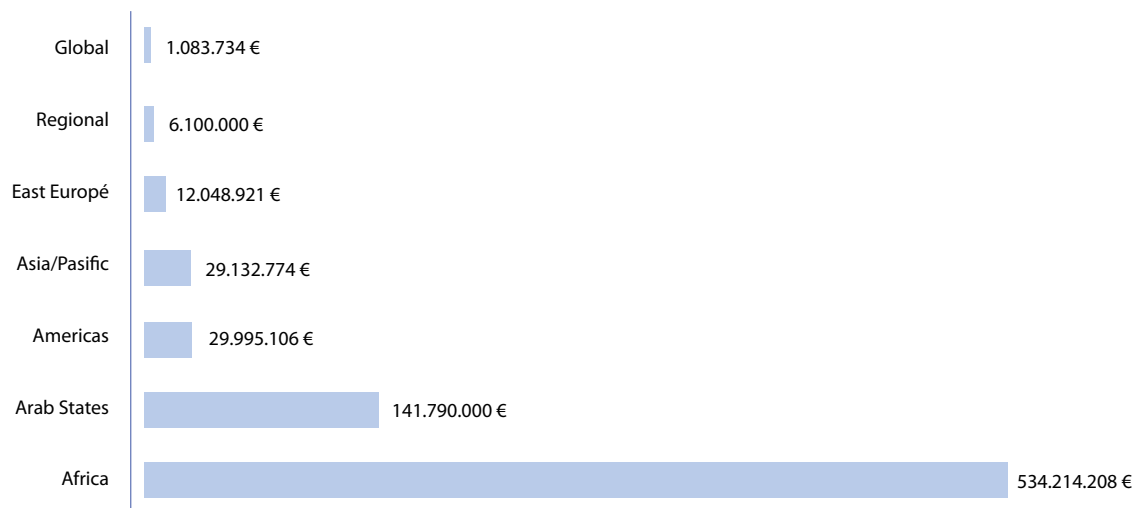
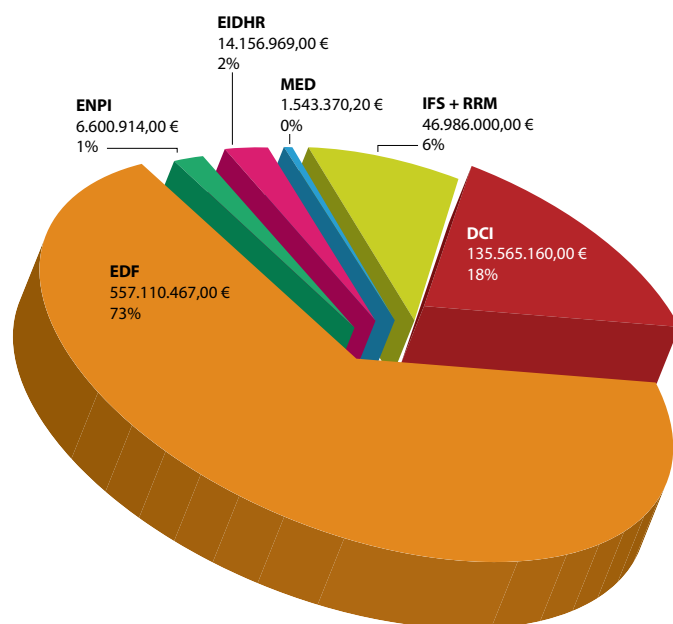**The UNDP has a competitive advantage because:**

- it has the longest experience in providing electoral assistance of all the international organisations, private and non-profit agencies;
- it has the largest production of guidelines, handbooks and tools on electoral assistance;
- it has flexible procedures in procurement of services and material;
- its general management services are of low cost in comparison with other implementing agencies;
- it regularly demonstrates its capacity to establish good working relationships with local authorities;
- it has long participated in global network initiatives aiming to improve the way electoral assistance is implemented on the ground (ACE, BRIDGE, Global Training Platform on Electoral Assistance, EC-UNDP partnership, etc.);
- its mandate for donor coordination is regularly invoked, as exemplified by frequent requests for UNDP services by the partner country; and
- it has a proven ability to advance funds once the contribution agreement with the EC is signed.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Figures 8 and 9 show the extent to which UNDP remains the EC's primary partner by far when it comes to implementing electoral assistance projects.

Figure 7: EC contributions to UNDP-managed basket funds per region, 1995-2010

Region	Amount
Global	1.083.734 €
Regional	6.100.000 €
East Europé	12.048.921 €
Asia/Pasific	29.132.774 €
Americas	29.995.106 €
Arab States	141.790.000 €
Africa	534.214.208 €

Figure 8: EU electoral assistance funds allocated per financial instrument, 2003-2010

EIDHR
14.156.969,00 €
2%

MED
1.543.370,20 €
0%

IFS + RRM
46.986.000,00 €
6%

ENPI
6.600.914,00 €
1%

DCI
135.565.160,00 €
18%

EDF
557.110.467,00 €
73%

KEY COMPONENTS OF EC-UNDP PARTNERSHIP ON ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

EC and UNDP agreed to monitor, assess and take the necessary corrective measures on the implementation of the operational guidelines every calendar year, and subsequently the guidelines were reviewed and updated in 2008. The revised operational guidelines describe the key components of the partnership; extracts from them are quoted directly here:

A. Joint Formulation Missions

The parties agree that it is mutually beneficial, where any new action of electoral assistance is to be launched in a partner country, and following a due request of the respective national authorities and the respective internal decisional processes of the parties, to undertake joint project formulation missions. These missions would be carried out by members of the JTF according to the specific needs of the project/programme being discussed and will rely on preparatory work from the EU delegation and UNDP country office in terms of information to be exchanged with headquarters and initial drafting of parts of the project documentation related to the political scenario, complementary actions, economic and social situations and development policy of the beneficiary country.

The missions will identify the overall results sought from the electoral assistance; the activities to be carried out; and the related operations, implementation methodologies and needed technologies for the implementation of the given electoral assistance. They will assess the needs and capacity of the EMBs and CSOs, as well as the timing, costs and procurement aspects of the registration and electoral processes. A joint report will be produced reflecting the common position of both organisations, and if possible a list of electoral experts drawn from the rosters maintained by EAD and EuropeAid will be submitted to the UNDP country offices and EU delegations for selection and subsequently agreement with the national authorities. The joint formulation missions will usually last eight to ten working days, and can be eventually extended with the input of external expertise, specifically recommended by the JTF.

A joint formulation mission will identify the overall results sought from the electoral assistance, the activities to be carried out and the related operations, methodologies and technologies needed for the implementation.

A close collaboration has been established with EAD in order to evaluate the overall environment to hold democratic elections in the given country and to provide a realistic assessment of the existing conditions for the conduct of elections including legal, political, human rights, material and institutional situations. The collaboration is context specific, but in broad terms, EAD could submit for focal point approval UNDP electoral assistance based on an NAM or desk review in advance of a joint formulation mission by UNDP

and the EC. Detailed discussions on the results of the NAM (if one is undertaken) would take place prior to the fielding of the EC-UNDP mission.

The joint missions will support both the UNDP country offices and the EU delegations while liaising with all the other stakeholders of the electoral assistance project in the given beneficiary country. The UNDP country offices will be supported in the production of the **project document** and the related budget and in reinforcing the links with the EU delegation. Where applicable and desirable, the mission supports the UNDP country offices in the formulation of a MoU between development partners supporting the electoral assistance project/programme and the relevant national authorities. The EU delegation is supported in the production of the project identification fiche, of the financing proposal and its budget, and for the preparation of the first draft of the **contribution agreement** to be signed with the UNDP services.

From UNDP's perspective, any project commitment for electoral assistance requires a decision by the UN focal point on electoral assistance, which is based on an EAD assessment of the overall environment and conditions to hold democratic elections in the country.

From the EC's perspective, formulation of projects will take due consideration of the experience gained from previous projects and recommendations of EU EOMs previously deployed in the country.

B. UNDP and EU/EC project/programmes documentation

In the case of multi-donor contributions, a basket fund will be established to manage the pooling of resources among development partners.

The parties agree that the wording and content of their respective official project documents to be signed separately with state authorities should be harmonised to ensure an efficient follow up within their respective organisational channels and reflect complementary actions. It is understood that the format of the respective documents will remain unaltered.

The parties agree that the projects/programmes are financed through the existing standard contribution agreement signed between the EC and UNDP. In the case of multi-donor contributions, a basket fund is established to manage the pooling of resources among development partners. Contributions to the basket fund are based on existing standard UNDP cost-sharing and/or closed trust fund agreements.

The first draft of the contribution agreement is produced by the EU delegations following the content of the UNDP project document, the related project budget and the EC **financing proposal.** The draft is submitted to the UNDP country office and has to be cleared by the UNDP Brussels Office before signature

takes place. In consideration of the particular nature of the electoral assistance activities, it is preferable that the text of the final draft contribution agreement is available by the end of the joint formulation mission to ensure that it is signed immediately after the adoption of the EC financing agreement.

The EC and UNDP project documentation should refer to the relevant articles of the operational guidelines adapted to the country context. Where appropriate and desirable, and in addition to the UNDP project document and contribution agreement, an MoU can be signed among UNDP, the EU and all development partners contributing to the basket fund — as well as EMBs and other partners at country level — to elaborate on the results sought from the electoral assistance and necessary financial and management arrangements. This MoU, the UNDP project document and the UNDP-EC contribution agreement should be aligned. The activities and performance indicators should be set out in the UNDP project document following agreement with the EMBs of the given country. They can be elaborated upon in the MoU where appropriate. The UNDP project document should also integrate the appropriate EU/EC standard indicators for aggregating the effects of external aid projects financed by the EU/EC.

The MoU, the UNDP Project Document and the UNDP-EC contribution agreement should be aligned.

It is recommended that projects/programmes within the scope of the operational guidelines should be directly executed by UNDP or have UNDP as the implementing partner. In this context, the EU delegation might, where appropriate, accept as valid a contribution agreement signed with UNDP by relevant national authorities.

UNDP country offices ensure necessary project/programme implementation capacity. Preferably, a technical assistance team (taking the form of a programme management unit [PMU] or a small team of advisors) is established and the first jointly selected electoral experts should be in the country when the joint formulation mission leaves or no later than 20 working days after this date. The technical assistance team is composed of electoral experts as needed and will be constituted as the day-to-day management component of the project. When developing their work, the experts provide support and transfer knowledge and skills in a capacity development perspective in favour of the EMBs and/or the beneficiary CSOs dealing with the electoral process. UNDP country office senior management is responsible for setting up and managing the technical assistance team.

UNDP country offices will ensure necessary project/programme implementation capacity and will be responsible for setting up and managing the technical assistance team.

C. UNDP financial and technical input for preparatory activities

The sensitivity of electoral assistance — which is often a critical part of the stabilisation and/or reconstruction of a country — as well as the frequently complex environment in which it takes place, often means receiving a late request for assistance from the local authorities. Therefore, whenever the EC financial contribution cannot be mobilised with sufficient anticipation for the project identification and formulation phases, UNDP could mobilise resources for preparatory activities.

The parties agree that it is possible to start up an agreed project/programme through a limited use of core or other resources of the UNDP country office to support the identification and formulation phases leading to the signature of the EC-UNDP contribution agreement. The activities will cover the costs of specific electoral assistance expertise through the JTF for the drafting of the necessary project documentation and monitoring activities in liaison with UNDP country offices, EU delegations, local authorities and EMBs. The resources applied by UNDP in this instance are considered a UNDP contribution and would not be considered pre-financing of the joint initiative. They would not, therefore, be reimbursed after a contribution agreement is signed.

In a second phase, on the basis of a duly signed contribution agreement between the EC and UNDP, and in accordance with UNDP's and EC's financial regulations and rules, UNDP will be in the position to advance funds from the day of the signature of the contribution agreements that will be reimbursed when the resources of the EC contribution become available.

The UNDP Executive Board decision 2007/18 on cost recovery directs UNDP to adopt a rate of 7 percent for the recovery of indirect general management support (GMS) costs for new third party contributions and trust funds.

Exceptional circumstances may arise which would call for a modified GMS rate to take into account specific priorities, modalities incurring lower indirect costs, and harmonisation goals. In such circumstances, the Board has indicated that UNDP will retain the authority to grant waivers to the cost recovery rate.

D. EU participation in the steering and monitoring of the projects and visibility issues

The parties agree that specific measures and initiatives shall be undertaken to ensure participation and adequate perception of the EU efforts among all the stakeholders of the electoral process. These measures are discussed and agreed upon by EU delegations and UNDP country offices. UNDP is strengthening the important objectives for greater EU visibility and seeks to communicate the positive results of the EU/EC-

UNDP cooperation, in line with the 'Joint Visibility Guidelines for EC-UN Actions in the Field'. To this extent, expenses for visibility actions are considered eligible project expenses. This aside, it is recommended that UNDP country offices submit specific electoral assistance visibility plans to the local EU delegations for consideration within the first month of project start up.

This visibility plan can be evolving throughout the project's implementation and could include joint press releases, TV spots, joint presentations, photo opportunities and policy-oriented publications in specialist press. UNDP will ensure that any internally required political clearance regarding public statements related to election matters is sought.

> *UNDP acknowledges the importance of ensuring the appropriate EC tenure and visibility during all phases.*

In this context, EU delegations are encouraged to take a more proactive role in promoting EU/EC-funded activities implemented through UNDP. EU delegations may take on additional responsibilities in steering committees and increase efforts to follow technically the implementation of the programmes/projects, also with the support of external expertise. Moreover, the EU delegations may consider recruiting electoral operations experts who would liaise with the EMBs and the UNDP country offices in the follow-up of the project.

The parties agree that for any future collaboration specific steering and technical committees shall be formed. The steering committees should include the relevant EMBs and development partners supporting the respective project/programme. Where appropriate, UNDP chairs the committee — together with the representative of the local EMBs as relevant — and provides the secretariat with the support of internal or externally recruited electoral assistance expertise.

The decisions within the steering committees are preferably to be taken by consensus. However, in the absence of consensus and as a last resort, there is a weighted vote — linked to contributions made — the result of which must have UNDP's backing as it is responsible for the management of the project.

The parties agree that restricted technical committees are formed and can include the respective electoral experts of the major donors plus the representatives of the EMBs. These committees are tasked with preparing the issues to be discussed within the steering committee.

E. Selection of electoral assistance experts for the programme management unit

The parties agree that the selection of electoral assistance experts to work in projects/programmes shall be done in collaboration and in agreement with all key actors, including UNDP country offices, the EU delegations, other developments partners contributing to the UNDP-managed basket fund, and especially

with the local EMBs. Specific support should also be provided by EAD and the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force; it is recommended that a pre-selection of candidates be done in a coordinated manner between EAD and the JTF, which both maintain a roster of international experts, in accordance with the requirements of competitive review and diverse applicant pools. EAD, in coordination with the JTF, will aim to submit a list of candidates to UNDP country offices, EU delegations and local EMBs for consideration and selection in a 15 working days timeframe after the end of the joint formulation mission. To this end, EAD and the JTF agreed to collaborate towards the establishment of a comprehensive shortlist of experts for the sake of efficiency. The selections are carried out by the UNDP country office, the EU delegation, other developments partners contributing to the UNDP-managed basket fund and local EMBs, within a standard timeframe of maximum 15 days after a suitable candidature has been proposed to or by EAD and the EU/EC services. To respect this calendar, the feedback on a potential candidate should be provided within seven days.

UNDP agrees that clearance for the selection of experts shall be provided in an expeditious manner and the selection of the entire set of experts required may be completed at different stages in order to allow the immediate implementation of the project.

> Recruitment of experts shall be done in accordance with UNDP regulations, rules and procedures.

F. Performance indicators, benchmarks and phased disbursements

UNDP agrees that the disbursement of the EC financial contribution may be subject to the meeting of specific performance indicators, conditionalities and/or benchmarks previously set by the EC (e.g., in country strategy papers, national indicative programmes, and EC financing agreements). These will be indicated also in the UNDP project document (and, where applicable, in MoUs) and devised during the formulation stage of the project via a consultation process with the EMBs. The EC agrees to undertake a periodic review of such benchmarks, in accordance with the related developments of the political situation.

G. Reporting requirements

The parties agree that, in addition to the standard reporting requirements laid out in the FAFA, specific reporting mechanisms may be agreed upon by the UNDP country offices with the EU delegations during the project formulation phase. In general terms, the reporting follows the indications of the joint guidelines on reporting obligations under the FAFA presently in preparation between the EC and the UN family organisations.

The technical assistance team acts as a common information point for all development partners supporting the respective project/programme and can take responsibility for circulating information to the relevant partners

as appropriate. The reports should be also sent to the permanent members of the JTF and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- one-page reports that could be used as a basis for joint press statements also to be reissued at HQ levels whenever justified;
- technical progress reports (ideally on a monthly basis) outlining progress of activities against the outcomes and performance indicators articulated in the UNDP project document;
- substantive reports (on a quarterly basis) reflecting the status of the activities funded within the wider context of electoral preparation and implementation, drawing attention to any key issues that would have an impact on the elections calendar and providing provisional financial information; and
- decisions and proceedings of steering committee meetings. It is recommended that a project Web site be established and updated according to the needs.

H. Procurement of specific election material

The parties agree that the procurement of sensitive or highly specific or costly election materials should preferably be done in close collaboration and involvement of the UNDP Procurement Support Office (UNDP/PSO) and, where applicable or desirable, conducted via UNDP/PSO.

Where the services of UNDP/PSO are requested by the UNDP country office, UNDP ensures that timely and resumed information on the tenders' results and selection process is provided to all development partners, including the EU delegation and relevant EU/EC services.

In the event of costly procurement actions for highly technical electoral materials, the parties furthermore agree that particular additional mechanisms such as pilot and validation tests shall be put in place to enhance transparency of the process before the selection of the vendor is completed, in line with UNDP procurement procedures.

Where requested, UNDP/PSO provides to UNDP country offices ad hoc training courses on UNDP rules and regulations related to elections procurement. Also it assists UNDP country offices in developing procurement plans to ensure timely and cost-efficient deliveries of electoral equipment.

Procurement of sensitive or highly specific or costly election materials should preferably be done in close collaboration and involvement of the UNDP Procurement Support Office (UNDP/ PSO).

I. Enhanced collaboration on the production of content and participation in specialised networks

The parties agree to continue collaborating on initiatives and networks for the production of knowledge products and services for the support of electoral processes, such as the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network. The parties intend to continue supporting ACE using materials and tools derived from their experience of project implementation, from the EC and UNDP guides on electoral assistance and from the training on effective electoral assistance. It is expected that EU delegations and UNDP country offices dealing with electoral assistance projects and local EMBs benefit significantly from this package of initiatives, which is enhanced by interaction with the existing ACE Regional Electoral Resources Centres, strategically located around the world (see Module 5 of the BRIDGE course[26]).

The parties agree to undertake studies of mutual interest, such as those on the synergies between civil and voter registration linked to the increased use of ICTs; the issues of conflict, security and elections; and the issues of disadvantaged groups and elections, etc.

J. Joint training and global platform on effective electoral assistance

The EC and UNDP collaborate on initiatives and networks and share expertise, information and materials through the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network.

The parties agree to continue collaborating towards the refinement and delivery of joint training curricula on effective electoral assistance for the respective officers in charge of electoral assistance projects at headquarters and country levels. Cooperation, interaction and synergies are sought with International IDEA and the ACE network. The objectives of these curricula are to introduce UNDP and EC staff with the current policy framework that governs both EU and UN involvement in elections, to share experiences, and to sensitise practitioners to the electoral cycle approach. The trainings are particularly focused on the respective procedures for implementing electoral assistance activities, the procurement of specific electoral material and services, voter registration methodologies and the importance and methods of strengthening the capacities of EMBs and civil society.

The parties jointly chair, together with International IDEA, the Train4Dev Subgroup on Effective Electoral Assistance of the Joint Donors' Competence Development Network (JCDN) and promote the development of training activities and knowledge development with other JCDN partners through the Global Training Platform on Effective Electoral Assistance.

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26   The BRIDGE course is online at http://bridge-project.org/.

THE JOINT EC-UNDP TASK FORCE ON ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

What was identified as the first 'key component' of the partnership in the revised 2008 operational guidelines is the Joint EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance (JTF). Based on the observations of EC and UNDP services at HQ and field level, it was decided, in 2007, to strengthen the partnership through the establishment of the JTF as an informal mechanism. The JTF is formed by EC and UNDP staff dealing with electoral assistance at HQ levels in Brussels.

The overall purpose of the JTF is to further strengthen and facilitate the EC-UNDP partnership in the electoral assistance field. It aims to improve the overall efficiency and adherence of the projects to the common EC-UNDP strategic approach. The success or failure of electoral assistance projects where the EC contributes to the UNDP-managed basket fund has an impact on the global partnership between the two organisations. It is therefore important to ensure that mutual expectations are met and that each project is effectively designed, implemented and adequately monitored.

The focus of the JTF is to provide identification, formulation and implementation support for joint EC-UNDP projects on electoral assistance.

The focus of the JTF is to provide identification, formulation and implementation support for joint EC-UNDP projects on electoral assistance whenever needed and requested by EU delegations and/or UNDP country offices. The lessons learned are consolidated and codified so that they can effectively feed into the implementation of new electoral assistance projects, the various joint EC-UNDP training exercises and the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network.

Specific tasks of the Joint Task Force are summarised as follows:

A) OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

- support the relevant EC and UNDP services at HQ and field levels in the drafting process of project identification fiches and financial proposals, EC-UNDP contribution agreements and UNDP project documents (including definition of operational procedures, selection of necessary personnel/contractors, and resource mobilisation for the project);
- ensure contractual compliance with EC-UNDP contribution agreements in the electoral assistance fields;
- collaborate with UNDP/PSO and UNOPS for procurement-related issues and in particular for the drafting of technical specifications;
- develop model terms of reference for commonly required services; and
- develop model terms of reference for joint formulation missions in terms of budgeting, risk assessments and planning.

b) Liaison

- liaise with UNDP/BDP, UNDP regional centres and UNDP sub-regional resource facilities (SURFs), and relevant EC services for monitoring and assessing EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects in view of providing support and cross-fertilisation of best practices;

- collaborate and liaise on initiatives and networks for the development of knowledge products and services for the support of electoral processes, such as the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network;

- collaborate with other services of EC and UNDP, EAD and International IDEA on the definition of performance indicators for electoral assistance projects;

- liaise with EuropeAid (now DevCo) and UNDP/BDP for the EC-UN internal rosters of electoral administration/assistance experts;

- reinforce synergies and complementarity between electoral observation and electoral assistance activities; and

- facilitate the communication and interactions between EC and UN services at HQ and field levels.

c) Training, development of content and dissemination of information

- disseminate and implement the EC-UNDP operational guidelines;

- develop the content and contribute to organising and carrying out the required HQ and regional sessions of the EC-UNDP Joint Training on Effective Electoral Assistance and related thematic workshops;

- liaise with the NEEDS project for the preparation and delivery of effective electoral assistance sessions within the training of core team and long- and short-term observers of EU election observation missions;

- develop operational tools to support staff (templates);

- liaise with UND/BDP, regional centres and SURFs, and relevant EC services for the development of information and dissemination of products on electoral assistance (leaflets, publications);

- increase the amount of joint activities, which could include the joint launch of reports, provisions of joint press release, and joint meetings with partners and specialised think thanks;

- collaborate on initiatives and networks for the development of knowledge products and services for the support of electoral processes, such as the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network;

- undertake studies and publications on issues of mutual interest, such as those on the synergies between civil and voter registration, on the increased use of ICTs in electoral processes, on the issues of conflict and security and elections, on disadvantaged groups and elections, and on the support to regional and local elections.

Expected results of the joint task force

- more effective electoral assistance through better and timelier formulation, implementation and monitoring of projects;
- improved mutual EC-UNDP understanding and knowledge of the respective policies and procedures on electoral assistance;
- at national level: positive policy development regarding electoral processes, improved situation regarding adherence to international standards and norms, and strengthened national capacity in electoral administration;
- professional development of EC and UNDP staff and improved knowledge of the institutional aspects of electoral assistance projects and principles of effective electoral assistance;
- cross-fertilisation of projects through appropriate dissemination and application of best practices and lessons learned;
- improved homogeneity and harmonisation of project design activities with the overall EC-UNDP strategic approach;
- higher visibility of operations and, in particular, of the input from EC;
- development of operational tools and knowledge content to support staff;
- increased communication and exchange of information among EC-UNDP and to the outside world through Web sites and publications;
- consolidation of networking relations with other actors in electoral assistance; and
- coordination and synergies reinforced between EU EOMs and electoral assistance activities.

THE ELECTORAL CYCLE APPROACH

The principles of the Paris Declaration, together with the recognition that there were obstacles to the implementation of effective long-term assistance, led the EC, UNDP and International IDEA to develop a visual planning and training tool to help development agencies, electoral assistance providers and electoral officials in partner countries understand the cyclical nature of the various challenges faced during electoral processes. This tool, developed in 2006-2007, has become known as the electoral cycle.

The electoral cycle is based on an understanding of elections as continuous processes rather than as isolated events. At the most general level, the electoral cycle is divided into three main periods: the pre-electoral, the electoral and the post-electoral periods. Notably, the electoral cycle has no fixed starting or ending points, which is also true for the three periods and for the segments within the cycle. Some segments, such as civic education and support to political parties, for example, cut across the whole cycle.

The inspiration for the electoral cycle approach came from some lessons learned by both the EC and UNDP over the course of a number of years of implementing electoral assistance projects. Among these lessons are the following (identified by UNDP or the EC in parantheses):

Figure 9: Electoral cicle

- increased focus on long-term capacity-development is essential in contributing to a country's ability to organise future elections with little or no external help (UNDP);
- electoral assistance is a strategic entry point for broader governance programming — e.g., to cultivate relationships required to support governance reform efforts in sensitive areas such as human rights and judicial independence and also to promote human development/poverty alleviation (UNDP);
- civic and voter education programmes supported by UNDP increase general awareness of electoral and democratic processes and enhance citizens' ability to defend their rights. They also promote citizens' interests in electoral and other democratic processes (UNDP);
- UNDP assistance to the conduct of elections provides i) valuable donor coordination and resource mobilisation services, and ii) essential backing and expertise to the implementation of technical assistance programmes, including, where requested, necessary operational and procurement planning (UNDP);
- electoral assistance has been most effective with a lead time of at least one year prior to elections (UNDP);

- continuity of leadership among UNDP Resident Representatives and country offices is important to extend UNDP electoral assistance beyond the specific event of an election and help the programme country build long-term capacity to conduct future elections (UNDP);
- in some cases, the EC's input in the design of jointly funded operations has been diminished by excessive delegation of responsibilities and lack of electoral assistance knowledge. Also, the internal institutional set up of the EC, the variety of financial instruments to be used and the related rigidity of EC contractual-financial procedures has hampered the Commission's ability to be properly equipped to play a more important role in the electoral assistance field and to react swiftly enough to change this general perception (EC); and
- the time constraints that have typically characterised EC-UNDP cooperation in electoral assistance to date have sometimes caused misunderstandings at the implementation level, in particular with reference to limited visibility of the EC contribution and/or lack of political influence of the EC during the decision-making process. The different language and definitions used by the two organisations in the respective project proposals have often been the source of confusion (EC)

Notable lessons learned in recent years also indicate that common features of many EC electoral assistance interventions include:
- lateness of the identification and formulation phases,
- absence of a strategic approach within which specific interventions can be placed,
- implementation through contributions to common pool-funded projects (clear advantages in terms of coordination of activities and pooling of resources and expertise), and
- limited emphasis on the inclusion of adequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the electoral assistance process (EC);

Partly as a result of these shortcomings, the EC now targets:
- increased focus on early programming and long-term strategies as well as maintenance of ad hoc programming;
- increased attention towards pre-electoral and post-electoral activities;
- increased collaboration with global and regional players in the field;
- greater efforts to take advantage of and further develop the EC methodological guidelines on electoral assistance and the electoral cycle approach; and
- increased internal capacity-building through specific training on effective electoral assistance.

Another lesson learned in the first years of the partnership was that the majority of EU contributions to UNDP-managed projects were formulated and agreed upon too rapidly and directed to support individual electoral events rather than processes. The electoral cycle approach, however, views electoral assistance as an ongoing or cyclical activity rather than being event-driven at designated points in time. The strategy is to provide selected assistance activities throughout the different phases in which the electoral cycle is divided.

The electoral cycle approach supports development agencies and partner countries to plan and implement electoral assistance within the democratic governance framework by thinking ahead 5 to 10 years, rather than reacting to each electoral event as it occurs.

The conceptualisation of the electoral cycle approach was completed with the publication of the EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, the International IDEA Handbook on Electoral Management Design, and the UNDP Implementation Guide on Electoral Assistance in 2006-2007. This approach has been officially endorsed by the EC and UNDP for every joint electoral assistance project through the signing of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects in April 2006 (and subsequently reviewed and revised in December 2008). The document recognises that "electoral assistance has to take stock of all the steps of the electoral cycle and that inter-election periods are as crucial as the build up to the elections themselves, thus requiring regular inter-institutional contact and support activities before, during and after election periods, for the sake of lessons learned and inter-institutional memory aiming at improved electoral processes in beneficiary countries".

In addition, the electoral cycle approach has been endorsed by the report of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (23 August 2007) to the UN General Assembly on 'Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratisation'.[27]

The electoral cycle approach is a key instrument to facilitate understanding of the interdependence of different electoral activities, helping EMB officials and donors to plan and allocate resources for specific activities in a more timely fashion than in the past. In particular, it places an important emphasis on the post-electoral period as a significant moment of institutional growth as opposed to a vacuum between elections.

Finally, elections provide an important entry point for wider interventions to support democratic governance development, such as the strengthening of civil society, the promotion of human rights, support to parliaments, media and political party development, reinforcement of the rule of law and justice, and more opportunities for political dialogue and conflict mitigation. The electoral cycle approach is valuable in engaging other stakeholders in the process and providing them with tools to improve their assessment of times and roles for their action. Consequently, financial support should be linked to a more longer-term and integrated strategy, which should include the electoral period as one phase of a longer-term democratisation process.

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27   The General Assembly Resolution 60/162 Strengthening the role of the United Nation in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratisation: www.undemocracy.com/A-RES-62-150.pdf.

EC-UNDP COLLABORATION IN ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The UN's initial discussions with development agencies and assistance providers about possible financial support for electoral assistance, including from the EU, often starts during the needs assessment phase. More detailed negotiations ensue once project arrangements, the related project budget and donor positions have become clearer. As the revised operational guidelines attest, the EU may choose to work with other partners in the implementation of its electoral assistance, and indeed the EU's electoral assistance can be funded in different ways: through direct bilateral support of the respective governments, through civil society, through the UN, through other implementing partners, or a combination of all four. Regardless of how funding is channelled, it is important to ensure close coordination and information sharing among all partners involved so that assistance is delivered in a timely and efficient manner.

When choosing to work with UNDP (as with the vast majority of the EU's electoral assistance support to date), the EU and UNDP contribution agreement will assert the fiduciary responsibility of UNDP for the EU funds even when the UNDP-managed project is implemented according to any one of the following ways, using the following implementing partners (or institutions):

IMPLEMENTATION/EXECUTION BY GOVERNMENT OR NATIONAL ENTITIES: National execution/implementation (NEX/NIM)[28] refers to arrangements where the overall responsibility and assumption of accountability is on the host government for the formulation and management of UNDP-supported programmes and projects.[29] NEX/NIM is considered appropriate when there is adequate capacity in the host government to undertake the functions and activities of the project and is considered particularly useful for projects aiming at long-term capacity development. Under NEX/NIM, the project is managed by the EMB, and UNDP works closely with the EMB when it comes to identifying specialist support and contracting such personnel. Specialist experts report to the EMB but should also have a close working relationship with UNDP. While NEX/NIM is the norm for UNDP projects, it is not the case for electoral assistance projects (see DEX/DIM below).[30]

IMPLEMENTATION/EXECUTION BY UNDP ITSELF: Direct execution/implementation (DEX/DIM) is undertaken in the context of special development situations. DEX/DIM is the default modality for electoral assistance.[31] With this modality, UNDP takes on the full responsibility for project implementation.[32] DEX/DIM refers to full responsibility by UNDP for project implementation and is considered appropriate where:

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28   The terms 'execution' and 'implementation' have the same meaning — i.e., management and delivery of project activities to produce specified outputs and efficient use of resources.

29   Governing Council decision 92/22 of 26 May 1992.

30   See also UN General Assembly Resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992. Given the political and often sensitive nature of the electoral environment, however, special caution should be exercised in the national execution of electoral assistance projects. NEX/NIM should only be used in electoral assistance in cases where there has been full consultation and there is consensus as regards the impartiality and the strength of the capacity of the EMB and/or when the nature of the assistance is longterm and well integrated into other areas of democratic governance that are also delivered via NEX/NIM.

31   See Revised Note of Guidance: www.undp.org/governance/library.shtml.

32   Note that the 'implementation' spoken of here refers to the activities as set out in the project document, not the actual implementation of the elections themselves, which, of course, remains the EMB's primary responsibility.

- there is a situation which calls for speed of delivery and decision-making where UNDP management is necessary for mobilising resources;
- national authorities lack the capacity to carry out the project;
- the project cannot be carried out by another United Nations agency; and/or
- the UNDP country office has adequate capacity to manage, report and achieve the expected outputs of the project.

Under DEX/DIM, the senior staff of the project (whether gathered under a formal programme management unit or not) report to the UNDP (Resident Representative and/or Deputy Resident Representative) and to the donors through the Steering Committee.

It is important to remember, however, that UNDP will always continue to pursue the national capacity development objective of the project even under DEX/DIM.

IMPLEMENTATION/EXECUTION THROUGH NGOs/CSOs. For projects that primarily support civil society activity (voter and civic education and media monitoring, most notably), UNDP often contracts CSOs directly. Similarly with some other projects, the UN can use other UN agencies such as UNOPS, UNIFEM, etc., to implement projects or elements of projects that suit their particular expertise.

SUMMARY

- Upon a request for electoral assistance, UNDP forwards the request to the focal point who, with support from EAD and the NAM, determines whether support is granted.

- Initial recommendations of activities are put forward in the needs assessment period and further identified in the project document.

- The choice of implementation modality assigns the policies and procedures to be followed when implementing UNDP-supported programmes and projects. UNDP can arrange for its support to programmes/projects through i) national implementation/execution (NEX/NIM), ii) direct implementation/execution (DEX/DIM), iii) implementation/execution through NGOs/CSOs, or iv) through other UN agencies.

- DEX/DIM is the default modality for electoral assistance programmes and projects.

- Milestones in UN/UNDP and EU/EC collaboration to promote effective electoral conditions include the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (2003), the EC-UNDP Strategic Partnership Agreement (2004) and the EC-UNDP Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects (2006, revised in 2008).

- The establishment of the Joint Task Force aimed to increase the overall efficiency and adherence of the projects to the common EC-UNDP strategic approach.

- The partnership enhances the possibility for and desirability of establishing joint formulation missions and harmonisation of project and programme documentation. It also improves processes regarding the rules regulating financial and technical input for preparatory activities and retroactivity, the selection of electoral assistance experts and the PMUs, and procurement for election material.

- The overarching goals of electoral assistance are to enhance democratic development and promote human rights.

- The basic foundation for involvement in electoral assistance projects is i) a request from recognised authorities and ii) the existence of political will and commitment to organise and conduct credible elections in the requesting country. Subsequent to the fulfilment of these conditions, additional evaluations are carried out before the organisations determine whether to approve or reject a given assistance request.

- Building on lessons learned in the field, there is a general desire to focus on long-term capacity-building.

- EU started to fund electoral support missions in 1993-1994 in the Russian Federation, South Africa and Mozambique. Since then, the EU's work in the area of electoral support has grown considerably and it is now one of the key international donors in the field.

- The UN does not observe elections unless specifically mandated by the General Assembly or the Security Council.

- EU election observation is the political complement to electoral assistance. Its main goals are to provide an independent assessment of an electoral process and the related enhancement of public confidence in it, and to deter fraud, irregularities and intimidation. It strives to contribute to conflict prevention and resolution, and to recommend possible improvements.

QUIZ

1. Who is the designated focal point for electoral assistance activities in the UN?
   - a. The UN Secretary-General
   - b. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs
   - c. The UNDP Administrator
   - d. The country representative for the country in question

2. What are the main criteria against which the focal point makes decisions as to whether to provide UN electoral assistance?
   - a. There is a clear need for UN assistance
   - b. It will improve the electoral process
   - c. Political actors support international assistance
   - d. UN norms will be respected through the provision of such assistance
   - e. All of the above

3. Who has the leading role in the EU when it comes to the identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation phases of electoral assistance programming?
   - a. The EU delegations together with the national authorities
   - b. DevCo together with the national authorities

4. The primary aim of the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance relates to:
   - a. Strengthening and further facilitating the Partnership on Electoral Assistance and improve the overall efficiency and adherence of joint projects
   - b. Operational guidance
   - c. Liaison
   - d. Training, development of content and dissemination of information
   - e. All of the above

5. What is DEX?
   - a. A strategy of choosing implementation partners on the basis of their technical, managerial, administrative and financial capacity
   - b. An execution modality placing the overall responsibility for formulation and management of UNDP-supported programmes and projects in the hands of the host government
   - c. An execution modality by which UNDP takes the full responsibility for project implementation

6. What are the main documents regulating the relationship between the EC/EU and the UN/UNDP cooperation in the field of electoral assistance?
   a. The Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA)
   b. The EC-UNDP Strategic Partnership Agreement
   c. The EC-UNDP Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects
   d. All of the above

7. Who signs the EC-UNDP contribution agreement?
   a. The EU delegation and the UNDP country office (after clearance from the UNDP Brussels office)
   b. DevCo and the UNDP Brussels office
   c. The EU Commissioner of External Relations and the UNDP Administrator
   d. The EU commissioner of development and the UN focal point for electoral assistance

8. In which ways does the EAD support the focal point
   a. In ensuring consistency in the handling of requests
   b. In channelling requests to the appropriate office or programme
   c. In regards to developing and maintaining a roster of international electoral experts
   d. Regarding the maintenance of contact with regional and intergovernmental organisations
   e. In maintaining the organisations institutional memory
   f. All of the above

9. What types of projects are undertaken with support from the European Instrument on Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) in the electoral support sector?
   a. Large-scale training programmes
   b. EU EOMs and small-scale electoral assistance activities implemented by CSOs, particularly in the area of domestic observation and voter education
   c. Media training
   d. Technical upgrade

10. What is the default modality for election-specific projects when donors decide to channel funding through UNDP?
    a. DEX
    b. NEX

11. Under which circumstances is the NEX execution modality considered the most appropriate implementation modality?

    a. When activities require unique technical sector experience, specific management capacities and/or international networks
    b. When governments lacks required management and/or substantive capacity
    c. When there is adequate capacity in the host government to undertake the functions and activities

12. Within the framework of the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), one particular region has received additional attention. Which region?

    a. Central Asia
    b. South-East Asia
    c. Africa
    d. Latin America
    e. The Pacific Islands

13. Besides producing the report on the joint EC-UNDP stance, what is the primary objective of the joint missions?

    a. To choose among implementing partner
    b. To set up the steering committee
    c. To locate contributors to the funding of the project
    d. To liaise with stakeholders and to provide support to the production of the various project documents

14. *"The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures."* What is the source of this quote?

    a. The Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness
    b. The EC Communication 191 of April 2000 on Electoral Assistance and Observation
    c. The UN Declaration of Human Rights

15. What is the **primary** objective for UN electoral assistance?
   a. To foster the creation of a strong, professional and independent EMB and related public institutions or to enhance the independence and credibility of such entities where they already exist
   b. To provide economic assistance and expertise in setting up the budget for the technical operation of the election process
   c. To control the tabulation of results and to handle complaints and appeals in order to bestow legitimacy upon election results and enhance independent management of election-related enquiries
   d. To foster the participation of people living outside the country borders in elections
   e. To ensure a professional and independent media

16. What is the basic requirement for the EC and UNDP to be able to provide electoral assistance?
   a. A request from recognised authorities and the existence of a political will and commitment to hold genuine and credible elections
   b. An independent EMB and the existence of a budget
   c. That elections are organised for the first time, either after a democratic breakdown or a conflict situation

17. Who or what makes the final decision in response to requests for UN electoral assistance?
   a. The needs assessment mission (NAM)
   b. The Electoral Assistance Division (EAD)
   c. The Under-Secretary-General for the DPA (the UN focal point for electoral assistance activities)
   d. The UNDP country office

18. Which of the following is NOT a criterion for EU electoral assistance involvement:
   a. Adequate time-frame for preparation
   b. Freedom of movement
   c. Access to main actors
   d. Financial independence of EMBs
   e. The existence of complementary national funds (except in post-conflict settings)
   f. A general agreement among the stakeholders to the assistance project

19. What is correct as regards to the UN and election observation?
   a. The UN does not observe elections
   b. The UN does not observe elections unless specifically mandated by the General Assembly or the Security Council
   c. On the basis of a NAM, the focal point for electoral assistance activities makes decisions as to whether the UN shall be involved in observation missions
   d. The UN deploys only long-term observers

20. What are the basic principles of EU election observation?
   a. Full coverage
   b. Impartiality
   c. Transparency
   d. Professionalism
   e. All of the above

21. Which of the following principals does not play a role in the EU's election observation missions?
   a. Chief observer
   b. Core team of experts
   c. UN needs assessment advisors
   d. Long-term observers
   e. Short-term observers

22. What is the primary task of a UN needs assessment mission (NAM)?
   a. To determine whether or not to provide electoral assistance
   b. To analyse the needs of and provide assistance to political parties throughout a given election campaign period
   c. To assist in determining the overall requirements in the requesting country

23. The mandate of an election observer is
   a. to gather information and make an informed judgment without interfering in the process
   b. to observe the electoral process and to intervene if laws are being violated
   c. to certify the validity of the electoral process

24. How does EU perceive the relationship between electoral assistance and election observation?
   a. As two important components of EU electoral support: assistance and observation advances synergy effects and thereby promotes good governance
   b. Electoral assistance and election observation activities are separate entities of development assistance that should never be mixed
   c. Electoral assistance and observation is one thing — there is no conceptual distinction between assistance and observation

25. Following the EC Communication 181/2000, the EC developed a standard methodology for election observation. This covers:
   a. the pre-election period and election day
   b. the pre-election, election day and immediate post-election periods
   c. the whole electoral cycle

26. The first report from the EU EOM is usually released 48 hours after the election and provides...
   a. an assessment of the pre-electoral period
   b. an assessment of the election day with particular reference to voting operations, result tabulation and initial complaints and appeals
   c. Both of the above

27. The final report from the EU EOM is delivered after the EU EOM has closed its activities on the ground and...
   a. provides final conclusions and recommendations regarding the whole electoral process
   b. gives recommendations for electoral reform and possible future assistance
   c. Both of the above

28. When are the recommendations provided by the EC EOMs particularly useful?
   a. During the pre-electoral period
   b. During the electoral period
   c. During the post-electoral period

CORRECT ANSWERS
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3

EC-UNDP electoral assistance activities

ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE STAKEHOLDERS

Electoral management bodies (EMBs). EMBs, the institutions/authorities responsible for the conduct of elections, are often the main recipients of electoral assistance. It is important to note that even assistance in areas such as reform of legal frameworks, reform of electoral systems and assistance in boundary delimitation is often provided within a package of overall support to an EMB, which is often tasked with providing advisory guidance to governments on these important matters. Because the EMB is the institution that organises and conducts elections, it is important for it to foster close cooperation with other stakeholders in order to ensure their support for its policies and programmes. Unless the EMB makes a genuine effort to create and sustain sound relations with these stakeholders, there are likely to be misunderstandings and suspicions about its activities, which may ultimately generate lack of public confidence and trust in the electoral process.

Figure 10: Recipients and Stakeholders
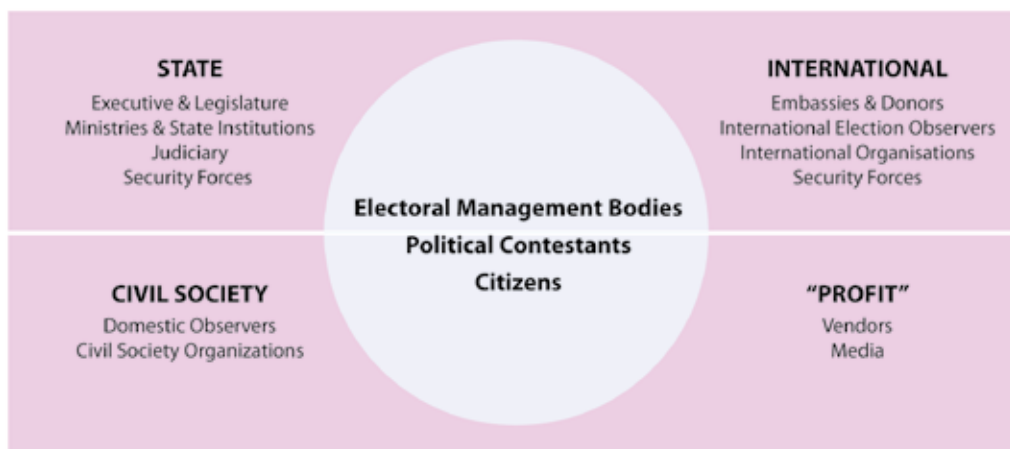
EMBs are the main recipients of assistance

Political parties and candidates are essential components of any electoral process because they have a clear and obvious direct interest in the process and its outcome. Yet despite the importance of including them as beneficiary groups in standard electoral assistance projects, it is often difficult to persuade development agencies' representatives and assistance providers to recognise and accept their engagement.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) and other **non-governmental organisations (NGOs)** are often the recipients of electoral assistance projects, and thus should normally be considered project stakeholders. CSOs and NGOs are an important conduit to disseminate, in particular, voter information, and to promulgate civic education at 'grassroots' level or to target groups which may not be covered by the general public campaign.

Domestic observer groups are essential to enhance the transparency and integrity of the electoral process because they can cover the entire spectrum of the electoral activities more extensively than any international observer group.

The **electronic and print media** play an influential role in any electoral event. They often need to be monitored and supported in equal measure, as freedom of speech and equal access to the media are vital in any meaningful democratic process.

There are a number of other national institutions that can often be involved in electoral assistance projects and are key electoral stakeholders. For example, the interior and/or defence ministries can often be involved,

primarily through the use of **state security forces** to support both the transport and security of materials as well as the security of polling and counting centres. Interior or home affairs ministries — or other state organs responsible for civil registry matters (such as, for example, the Zambian Department of National Registration, Passports and Citizenship) — often are centrally involved in voter registration through either managing elements of the voter register or issuing the documents (such as national ID cards) that citizens must have to register to vote. **State statistics agencies** are often crucially important in producing the statistics necessary to plan both boundary delimitation exercises and determine the required number of voter registration/polling centres, etc.

Other subjects of potential support include **media regulatory agencies** and, in certain cases, the **judiciary.** The former is a useful stakeholder when the support is directed to, for example, media development, while the latter should be engaged when support is provided to electoral complaint bodies.

The **legislature (parliament)** may also be considered suitable for electoral assistance support in relation to the production or revision of electoral laws.

It is advisable for electoral assistance providers to develop an operational culture that makes electoral assistance responsive to the expectations and needs of its stakeholders and recipients. This is best done through assessment, open dialogue and regular consultation. There are a number of basic actions that can be taken to maintain good relationships with and among electoral stakeholders, most of which electoral assistance providers can foster and support. These include:

- fostering open communication and regular consultation with and among stakeholders;
- being sensitive to stakeholder needs and concerns;
- seriously considering stakeholder views when making decisions;
- treating stakeholders equitably; and
- maintaining the highest standards of ethics, respect for human rights, impartiality and care in relationships with stakeholders.

ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

Electoral assistance projects target both i) one or more areas within the electoral cycle, and ii) one or more stakeholders. Sections A-J below highlight support areas usually delivered **primarily** outside the purview of EMBs, while Section K highlights the more substantial support that electoral assistance projects usually provide directly to EMBs.

A. Support in drafting or reforming electoral legal frameworks

Taking into consideration the different activities and phases of the electoral cycle allows for better identification of needs and advance planning.

Electoral support activities in this area might include the drafting of constitutional provisions, enacting of temporary constitutions and reforming electoral legislation regarding topical issues such as:

- the system of representation;
- the role of the EMB;
- voter eligibility rules;
- boundary delimitation; and
- competencies and functions of electoral tribunals.

In addition, this support might entail the provision of advice on:

- the drafting of political party laws;
- political finance laws and audit regulations for political parties' expenditure;
- media laws and public administration laws.

Over the last 10 years, there have been several cases where international institutions were mandated through peace agreements (e.g., Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo) or other types of negotiated accords to directly shape the constitutional and legal set up of newly formed states. In other cases (e.g., Cambodia, Timor-Leste), electoral assistance and general legal reform programmes have provided less visible but nevertheless critical legal advice to the legislative bodies and electoral administration to change and modify constitutional and legal frameworks, including for elections.

B. Support in drafting or refining electoral justice and electoral dispute resolution mechanisms

Since elections are the means by which struggles for power and resources are often channelled, respect for electoral laws and constitutional norms by candidates and voters is a key factor for a free, fair and genuine electoral process. Both in the pre- and the post-electoral period, however, incidents can occur that contradict or violate electoral laws and constitutional norms, such as, for example, with regards to the registration of candidates, the conduct of the campaign, the distribution and placement of polling stations, the appointment of polling officers and the accreditation of election observers. Such incidents and suspected irregularities[33] often lead to electoral disputes throughout the electoral cycle, and these disputes can threaten the credibility of the entire process. In order to ensure that each procedure or decision related to elections is in line with the electoral law and in order to assure the respect of the electoral rights, it is important to have a functioning and efficient electoral justice system (EJS).

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[33]   According to the IDEA Handbook on Electoral Justice, electoral irregularity can be defined as the situation where procedures and decisions related to electoral process do not keep with the provision of the law (IDEA; 2010).

An EJS can be defined as a "set of means or mechanisms available in a specific country to ensure and verify that electoral actions, procedures and decisions comply with the legal framework, and to protect or restore the enjoyment of electoral rights."[34] The main objective of an EJS is therefore twofold: it should be evident that electoral rights are part of the broader category of political rights, but at the same time electoral rights should clearly be associated with rights that are directly related to the electoral process. Among the most important of those electoral rights are the right to vote, the right to run for elective office, the right to gain access in equal condition to elective public offices, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and petition, and freedom of access to information on political-electoral matters.

An electoral justice system can implement different sorts of mechanisms, known as electoral dispute resolution (EDR) mechanisms, to fulfil its objectives. EDR mechanisms can be implemented by such bodies as:

- the EMB itself or special — permanent or temporary — electoral bodies mandated by the election law;
- ordinary administrative and judicial bodies operating under special procedures;
- a permanent electoral court commissioned directly with the resolution of electoral disputes;
- a constitutional court or council;
- a legislative body; and/or
- mixed systems which allow legislatures to review and rule over electoral appeals, while maintaining judicial intervention at some point of the process.

EDR mechanisms can either be punitive (i.e., the electoral justice systems imposes a penalty on the perpetrator of the irregularities), or corrective (i.e., the electoral justice system provides a formal remedy to adjust the wrongdoings). Such mechanisms can also be informal, characterised by the voluntary intention of the parties to resolve the controversy (often under the terms of a code of conduct that parties sign up to in advance of an electoral process). In practice, many disputes are resolved informally through negotiations among the parties in dispute or even mediated by civic leaders or other respected personalities.

EDR mechanisms should be supported throughout the electoral cycle.

Even if in most cases the recourse to an EDR mechanism has been in the immediate aftermath of elections, electoral justice can only be effectively implemented if a system to both prevent and adjust irregularities is put in place throughout the entire electoral cycle. To be more effective, it is important to establish EDR mechanisms and support them sufficiently in advance as they are the ultimate guarantor of the principle of free and fair elections.[35]

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34   IDEA Handbook on Electoral Justice, p. 9, IDEA, Stockholm, 2010.
35   See also Electoral Justice: The IDEA Handbook; online at www.idea.int/publications/electoral_justice/index.cfm.

There can be different bodies empowered with resolving electoral disputes, depending upon the legal system, history and culture in the country. All nevertheless should follow these key principles:

• independence of EDR bodies, including impartiality of members and staff;
• accountability of EDR bodies, including in regards to transparency and efficiency of the processes as well as integrity and professionalism of their members and staff;
• equal treatment to all complainants and a 'level playing field' in terms of procedures and filing fees; and
• effective enforcement of decisions — including situations in which disputes are resolved informally — so that all parties involved adhere to the agreed settlement.

Electoral assistance in the field of EDR can focus on the design of both formal and informal (e.g., self-regulating party codes of conduct) EDR systems, primarily through the development of the legal framework, procedures and professionalisation of the EDR body's staff, as well as the training of other legal officials and electoral competitors on the EDR mechanisms. Post-election evaluations and review are also an area that can contribute importantly towards future improvements and reform. Other areas include educating the public on the EDR process and ensuring that potential complainants understand their rights and the procedures for making effective complaints. Some EDR bodies make an effort to inform political parties, candidates and election monitors of the procedures and evidence required, but ultimately the mechanisms are only effective when recipients are interested in understanding how they work and contemplate using them. Other EDR bodies do not have the resources or willingness, which present opportunities for assistance providers to step in.

C. Support in the designing or reforming of electoral systems

The electoral system determines how votes cast in an election are translated into seats won. The choice of electoral system has been described as "one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy"[36] in light of the major implications electoral systems have on future democratic developments. Such implications are particularly critical with respect to fair representation, effective government, party development and the linkages between voters and representatives. Another important factor is that the electoral system may be decisive to the final electoral outcome in terms of who wins an election.

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36   See Electoral System Design: the International IDEA Handbook: www.idea.int/publications/esd/index.cfm#toc and UNDP and Electoral Systems and Processes: www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections_Pub_fastacts.pdf.

Key components and types of electoral systems

The key variables of electoral systems are the electoral formula used (e.g., whether plurality/majority, proportional, mixed or other system, and what mathematical formula is used to calculate the seat allocation); the ballot structure (e.g., whether a voter selects a candidate or a party and whether the voter makes a single choice or expresses a series of preferences); and the district magnitude (how many representatives to a legislature are elected in a district). Other elements are fixed thresholds of representation (a specified minimum of support needed for a party to win seats) and tier structure. The latter refers to single versus multiple levels from which representatives are elected as well as the type of connection, if any, among multiple tiers. (Electoral tiers can include, for example, single-member districts and multi-member districts.)

Four broad categories of electoral systems can be identified:

- plurality-majority systems;
- mixed systems;
- proportional representation systems; and
- others.

The key variables of electoral systems are i) the electoral formula used; ii) the ballot structure; and iii) the district magnitude

In general, proportional systems tend to ensure the highest possible correlation between a party's share of valid votes and the seats assigned to it; however, they can limit the creation of close linkages between voters and representatives. Plurality-majority systems tend to ensure that the highest vote winner wins a seat, thereby promoting closer voter-representative relations; on the other hand, these systems can compromise fair representation overall. Finally, mixed systems have been praised (and criticised) for combining the pros and cons of the other two categories.

Figure 11: The electoral system categories
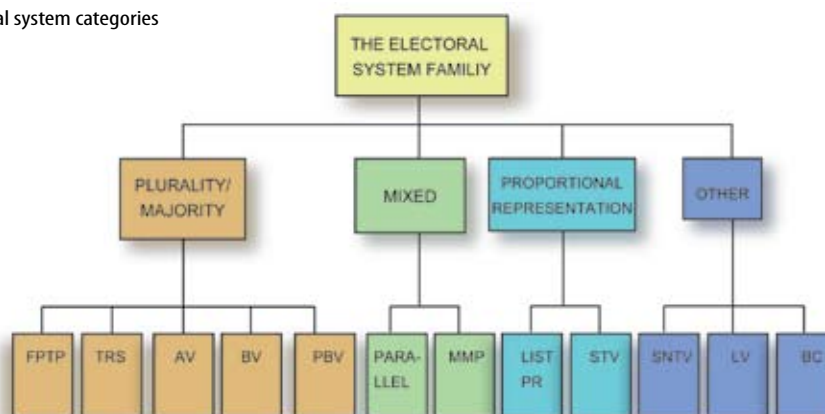
Electoral system choice and electoral system reform

There is no such thing as a perfect electoral system - it all depends on the socio-economic and political situation of each and every country.

Electoral system choice is a fundamental political process, rather than a question to which independent technical experts can produce a single 'correct answer'. In fact, the consideration of political advantage is almost always a factor in the choice of electoral systems — and sometimes it is the only consideration.

In post-conflict settings, the electoral system chosen is almost always the result of a compromise reached to satisfy opposing interests. Often it is the case that after one or two electoral cycles the shortcomings of the system chosen becomes apparent, requiring reforms and adjustments.

Electoral system choice is a fundamentally political process, rather than a question to which independent technical experts can produce a single correct answer.

Whether large-scale change or minor modification, it is important to note that electoral system change may affect other areas of electoral laws: the choice of electoral system influences the way in which district boundaries are drawn, how voters are registered, the design of ballot papers, how votes are counted, and numerous other aspects of the electoral process. Electoral assistance in this area often includes funding public consultations on the electoral system choice/reform as well as bringing in international electoral system experts to advise on various reform options.

D. Boundary delimitation

Boundary delimitation refers to the process of drawing electoral district boundaries, and can also denote the process of drawing voting areas (also called polling areas, districts or election precincts) for the purposes of assigning voters to polling places.

If electoral boundaries are not periodically adjusted, population inequities develop across districts.

Electoral assistance in the area of boundary delimitation involves advising on the criteria for the delimitation process, attempting to ensure that it is pre-set and as transparent as possible, and ensuring that the methodology and guidelines are clearly established and publicised in advance. Those to whom the assistance is provided should be advised to incorporate public hearings into the process to allow stakeholders to provide input/comments to the boundary authority.

Where boundary delimitation assistance is foreseen, partner country governments should be advised to address issues such as:

- Who will draw the district lines or boundaries? Should it be the EMB or a separate authority?
- Who will have the ultimate responsibility for selecting the final districting plan?
- Should the boundary authority be politically neutral?
- Should the legislature have any formal role at all in the process?
- Should some mechanism exist for public input into the process?
- Should criteria be adopted for the district line drawers to follow? If so, what should these delimitation criteria be?
- How often should districts be redrawn and how long should the redistricting process take?

Because delimitation, or redistricting, practices vary greatly around the world, there are few universal principles to guide the process. Countries disagree on fundamental issues, such as how impartial and independent the process can and should be from the legislative and political concerns. But there are several generally accepted principles:

- representativeness,
- equality of voting strength,
- independent, impartial boundary authority (or, at a minimum, reciprocity),
- transparency, and
- non-discrimination.

E. Civic and voter education

Voter information refers to basic information enabling qualified citizens to vote, including, for example, the date, time, and place of voting; registration requirements; and mechanisms for voting. These constitute basic facts about the election and do not require the explanation of concepts.

Voter education typically addresses voters' motivation and preparedness to participate fully in elections. It pertains to relatively more complex types of information about voting and the electoral process and is concerned with concepts such as the link between basic human rights and voting rights; the roles, responsibilities and rights of voters; the relationship between elections and democracy and the conditions necessary for democratic elections; why each vote is important and its impact on public accountability; and how votes translate into seats. Such concepts nvolve explanation, not just a statement of facts. Voter education should, ideally, be undertaken on an ongoing basis.

Photo 3: PNTL and UNPOL Educate Voters in Dili

Civic education deals with broader concepts underpinning a democratic society, such as the respective roles and responsibilities of citizens, government, political and special interests, the mass media, and the business and non-profit sectors. It emphasises not only citizen awareness but citizen participation in all aspects of democratic society. Civic education is a continual process, not tied to the electoral cycle. Voter information and voter education, however, may be part of larger civic education endeavours.

Civic and voter education/information programmes are costly activities and cannot always be the sole burden of the EMB. They can be supported and sponsored by election administrators; democratically elected governments through various state agencies and/or offices; constitutionally established bodies such as human rights commissions; and international, regional, and domestic civil society organisations.

In general it can be said that EMBs are typically required to provide voter information and voter education, although contestants in the elections and CSOs will also do so. Civic education, on the other hand, is likely to be carried out through the school and university system, through CSOs, and perhaps by some state agencies. An EMB is not necessarily involved.

F. Domestic observation

The forming of domestic groups with capacities to observe their own countries' elections is an essential part of democratic development. Domestic observation, in addition to the activities of the political party agents, is vital for the transparency and ownership of the electoral process.[37]

Domestic observation often has a significant advantage over international observation, in that domestic observer groups can more easily gather larger numbers and they better understand the political culture, language(s) and territory of their countries. Domestic observer groups are also often better equipped than international observers to carry out particular types of specialised observation efficiently. Examples include observing voter registration, monitoring the complaint process, documenting instances of intimidation and human rights abuses, and media monitoring.

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37   See also The Work of Domestic Election Observer Groups Around the World: www.eueom.eu/files/dmfile/promoting-and-defending-democracy_en.pdf.

The methodology employed, the accuracy of the findings set out in the reports, the presentation of reports, and the holding of press conferences will all influence the credibility of any domestic observation. Building and maintaining credibility is vital considering that domestic observers can often be subject to local pressures and may also be perceived to lack capacity and independence when associated with CSOs and/or political and social activist groups.

Assistance in EC-UNDP projects in this area often involves funding domestic observer groups as well as providing training or logistical support. Support to domestic observation groups can also be linked to support other civil society initiatives, in particular in the area of voter and civic education.

Domestic observation is vital for the transparency and ownership of the electoral process.

In the Gambia in 2006, for example, a comprehensive training programme was developed by UNDP in collaboration with NGOs and the election commission. It included the printing of a domestic observation manual and the provision of direct support (administrative costs and per diems) provided to help deploy domestic observers countrywide.

The EU has gained valuable experience in observation in the past decade and is well placed to provide technical assistance to facilitate better coordination, to enhance credibility of domestic observers, and to empower in-country organisations carrying out domestic observation. Via the NEEDS project,[38] the EC has also organised a series of forums around the world, designed to increase the capacity of domestic election observer groups.

Tailored training programmes for domestic observation groups and administrative/logistical support can be carried out with limited human and financial resources while having significant impact on the process, in particular with regard to the perception of the exercise by voters.

G. Political party and election campaign financing

Political financing can be defined in its most basic sense as political party and electoral campaign funding. A number of trends have brought the issue of political financing to the forefront in recent years: increasing costs of election campaigns; concerns about inappropriate influence and the linkages with broader corruption issues affecting politics and government (e.g., proceeds from illegal activities, misuse of public funds); and greater public demand for transparency and regulation of the financial aspects of politics.

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38   See www.needs-network.org for additional information.

Disclosure, either through an EMB and/ or publicly available reports, is a fundamental way to ensure transparency.

A number of issues should be considered when discussing political party or election campaign financing — including, for example, transparency, sources of income, campaign expenditure limits and monitoring, sanctions and enforcement. Each is discussed below.

Transparency: Voters increasingly want to know the sources of political party income and forms of expenditure. Disclosure, either through an EMB and/or publicly available reports, is a fundamental way to ensure transparency. Political parties can be required to prepare and make available annual accounts and election campaign accounts (where these are separate). Political parties can be required to maintain a catalogue of donations (cash and non-cash) and report these on a regular basis (e.g., quarterly or weekly during an election campaign).

The media and civil society organisations play a key role in ensuring transparency. Media are often the first to uncover political financing discrepancies and bring to them the attention of the general public and/or the EMB. Freedom of information laws also increasingly allow for greater public access to the financial information relating to elections, particularly where the EMB or a government agency (e.g., the finance ministry or a national audit body) holds this information.

Sources of income: There are broadly two sources of funding for parties and candidates: public (direct and indirect, from government sources) and private, which consists of income and donations from individuals or legal entities (organisations, businesses, etc.) outside the public sector.

Political parties and candidates generally need to meet certain thresholds to have access to public funds or to get their election expenses reimbursed. For example, they may need to be a registered party, to have received five percent of the vote in a previous election, and/or have at least one member in the legislature.

Under a well-regulated system, the definition of income also includes 'non-cash' or 'in-kind' benefits such as free broadcasting time and donation of professional services (e.g., legal, accounting, consulting). Anonymous and foreign donations are usually prohibited in order to ensure transparency and prevent undue external influence in domestic politics. Moreover, there are often limits on the amounts that individuals or legal entities can donate to parties or candidates. This seeks to ensure that no single individual or business interest exerts excessive influence on the electoral process and subsequent public policy.

Campaign expenditure limits: In many countries there are rules concerning the maximum amount that parties or candidates can spend during an election campaign period and/or the types of expenditure that can be incurred. A worldwide trend towards increasingly expensive elections has brought the issue of campaign limits to the fore, and some countries are revisiting their existing rules to ensure that the upward creep is managed or halted.

Monitoring, sanctions and enforcement: Where its mandate includes political financing regulation, an EMB may have powers to verify political party and candidate income and expenditures. These can range from the authority to review annual party accounts to more substantial powers to require parties to submit information regarding donations, election campaigns, and ongoing financial data. In some countries the financial aspects of elections are delegated to another body — e.g., a national audit body, the finance ministry, an electoral court or an anti-corruption body.

Legislation can provide for different types of sanctions: administrative, fines, criminal, political (barred from running for office, or loss of seat). There is a need for flexible and proportionate enforcement regimes, incorporating a variety of mechanisms. Traditional legal recourse can be complemented by alternative approaches. Options include:

- codes of conduct between political parties on financial matters;
- joint agreements regarding campaign reporting;
- the design of common forms for annual accounts; and
- projects to establish a dialogue among political actors, civil society and the media on political financing accountability and transparency, etc.

> The global trend is towards greater regulation, and strengthening of oversight procedures and mechanisms. Debates about the relative merits of public vs. private funding differ from country to country, but in many cases authorities favour a mixed funding system with some limits on private sources of income. Overall, the most important issue faced by governments is the need for legislation that provides a realistic, practical framework for the regulation of money in politics; achieving this objective can help ensure public confidence in this critical aspect of the electoral process.

Electoral assistance support in this area can include designing campaign finance monitoring systems and codes of practice.

H. Media regulations, monitoring and support to the media sector

The mass media are essential to the conduct of democratic elections, and a degree of media regulation is often required in order to facilitate a level playing field for electoral competitors. This can include regulations requiring publicly owned media to give equitable access and coverage to all electoral competitors or campaign silence periods in advance of polling day.[39]

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39   See also Supporting Public Service Broadcasting: Learning from Bosnia and Herzegovina's Experience: www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs04/PublicService Broadcasting.pdf.

The mass media are usually understood to refer to the printed press, radio and television. In recent years, the definition has become broader, encompassing the internet and other forms of electronic distribution of news and entertainment, such as short message services to mobile telephones.

There are four dimensions to media activities that require attention in relation to elections.

1. The first concerns the media as a mechanism for the initial dissemination of information to voters, and the more general dissemination of election information.
2. The second dimension relates to the *use of the media by political groups to disseminate particular political messages.* The legal framework within which elections are organised should include a media law covering how outlets are funded and licensed and how space is allocated to political parties in electoral campaigns.
3. The media themselves have a *right to report freely and to scrutinise the whole election process.* This scrutiny is itself an important additional safeguard against interference or corruption in the management of the election.
4. A fourth dimension concerns the *relationship between the EMB and the media*, which has three elements: the EMB may sometimes be responsible for developing or implementing regulations (including a complaints mechanism) governing media behaviour during elections; the EMB needs to communicate news of its own to work to the public via the media, and the EMB will be a focus of media interest throughout the election process.

Better communication will lead to an improved public image for the EMB, which brings obvious advantages in various aspects of its work.

Media monitoring

Four main groups may undertake monitoring of the media during elections:

- EMBs;
- independent media regulatory authorities;
- international electoral observation missions; and
- CSOs.

When EMBs have a direct regulatory function, they use their monitoring findings to try to ensure that media comply with the required standards.

If independent media regulatory authorities are in place, it may be their primary role to oversee the performance of the media and their adherence to media laws, licensing requirements, as well as legal mechanisms regulating coverage of the elections.

> *When EMBs have a direct regulatory function, they will use their monitoring findings to make sure that media comply with the required standards.*

International observers often seek to monitor media compliance with national rules and laws. They have no powers of enforcement and will usually withhold their monitoring findings until after the election has taken place. NGOs and other CSO monitoring can often be used as part of an effort to raise journalistic standards while the election campaign is still going on. Moreover, they often have the inclination and opportunity to raise criticisms in a timely fashion about the role of the government and political parties/candidates in providing accurate and reasonable information to the voters, a vital responsibility in terms of assisting voters in making their electoral decision.

Photo 4: Sudan Elections Committee Holds Workshop for Local Journalists

Electoral assistance work in the media area often involves developing media monitoring methodologies and training local media monitors. They are often either civil society monitors, or as in the case of the EU technical assistance project in Lebanon in 2009, monitors from the EMB tasked with the media regulatory function.[40] Work in this area can also involve training of local journalists on electoral coverage and on election regulations, and developing media compliance regulations.

I. Out-of-country voting and internationally supervised voting

External voting provides the means for citizens residing abroad to participate to their countries' elections. According to *Voting from Abroad: the International IDEA Handbook,* some form of external voting is permitted in 115 of the world's 214 states and territories.

There are four basic options for the procedure for external voting:

- voting by proxy;
- personal voting (voting in person in diplomatic missions or military bases);
- postal voting; and
- electronic voting.

There are several categories of external electors in the world and different approaches to categorising them.

40   Standard electoral media monitoring methodologies developed in recent years prioritise analysing both quantitative data (in terms of number of column inches devoted to candidates, etc.), and qualitative (in terms of the tone or bias towards the candidates, etc.).

According to the categorisation made by International IDEA, there are four main groups of people staying or residing abroad who may be entitled to vote. These are:

- migrant workers;
- refugees (including internally displaced persons [IDPs]);
- individuals in certain professional groups, such as military personnel, public officials or diplomatic staff (and their families); and
- all citizens living or staying abroad, temporarily or permanently.

> Since 1996, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has assisted hundreds of thousands of eligible nationals in 74 different countries to exercise their right to vote. It does so in a combination of mail and in-person operations representing the largest external voting programmes to date.

The enfranchisement of external voters poses a fundamental political and administrative dilemma. From a human rights standpoint, if citizens have been displaced outside of their home country by war, poverty, or natural disaster, their political empowerment is essential to re-establish themselves in society, a process which paves the way for both socio-political stability and an affirmation of individual rights. In other contexts, however, the enfranchisement of citizens residing abroad can be strongly resisted in the home country, particularly if many of the enfranchised citizens have never resided on home territory, do not contribute in taxes to the running of the government that their votes may contribute to electing, represent one particular ethnic group, and/or are suspected to strongly favour one particular electoral option.

Apart from the specific problems linked to the specific host countries' legislations, the main legal problem in large external voting operations is the determination of voters' eligibility.

External registration and voting operations can be implemented in various forms, according to the logistics and the time available in advance of the election date. Implementation of the external vote is complicated by factors such as the number of voters, their locations, the distances involved and the complexity of the voting system. Planning becomes a two-tiered process as tasks for the internal vote are duplicated, under very different circumstances, for the external vote. Planning therefore requires a carefully integrated approach to ensure that it is as transparent and administratively correct as the internal vote.

> There is no 'best procedure' for external voting, and the implementation issues will vary depending on the methods of registration and voting. It is clear, however, that implementation is best done through professional agencies that have a sound logistical basis and that can couple specific expertise in the refugee protection field.

Another form of external voting is internationally supervised balloting for refugee, asylum seeking, and diaspora communities. The Iraqi diaspora, for example, was enfranchised in the January 2005 elections for the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) and the December 2005 elections for the Council of Representatives. There was in-person registration and voting in about 15 countries with the highest concentrations of Iraqis in residence. For the January election, the initiative to conduct external voting was made by regulation from the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI). However, for the December election, diaspora voting was mandated by the electoral law adopted by the TNA.

Other examples of internationally supervised balloting are Timor-Leste in 1999, Kosovo in 2000-2001 and Afghanistan in 2004.

Out-of-country voting in Afghanistan (2004)

On 21 July 2004, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the IOM entered into agreement on the conduct of the out-of-country 2004 Afghan presidential elections in Pakistan and Iran. The task of conducting this exercise was entrusted to IOM, which implemented the programme on behalf of the Afghan Joint Electoral Management Body and UNAMA.

An MoU was signed by the government of Afghanistan, UNAMA and the governments of Iran and Pakistan. This MoU ensured that the two host governments would provide widespread support for the IOM's Out of Country Registration and Voting Programme (OCRV), including providing and securing registration and polling locations as well as escorts for the material transport.

The OCVR successfully registered 737,976 Afghan voters in Pakistan alone. A total of 846,776 Afghans voted in both Iran and Pakistan in Afghanistan's first democratic elections. This IOM operation was the largest out-of-country registration and voting programme ever held.

J. Assistance in promoting equal access to and participation in electoral processes

All electoral processes should give adequate consideration to the issue of equal access to marginalised groups, focusing not only on the legal framework but also on effective implementation measures. The aim should be to facilitate equal rights, and to achieve the participation of all disadvantaged groups in activities such as:

- voter registration;
- adequate representation in political parties and on party lists;
- participation in political gatherings, access to media, security and freedom of movement, and the opportunity to work in the election administration (not only as polling station staff);
- inclusion in voter information or targeted civic education campaigns; and
- respect of the secrecy of the individual vote.

Participation of women in electoral processes

Possible areas of intervention regarding the participation of women in electoral processes are: i) political participation; ii) the number of women in election administration, and iii) access to voter information and education.

Photo 5: Presidential elections in Haiti

A first area of intervention includes political participation themes. This should start with an assessment of the percentage of previously elected women candidates, followed by analysis of their access to political parties' nomination mechanisms and a possible review of the legal framework to facilitate the participation of women.

A second area of intervention is directed at assessing the preparedness and the quantity of women working in the electoral administration. This should include reviewing recruitment policy and selection criteria of the institution and assessing the capacity or eventual limitations for women applicants to respond to applications.

Photo 6: Long Queues Characterize Congolese Elections

A third area of activity is access to voter information and education. An assessment of the media landscape and parties' information campaigns could identify what messages are likely to enhance women's knowledge of, and participation in, the electoral process and where and how women are most likely to get the information they need to make their choices.

There are additional factors that need to be taken into account by an EMB and CSOs. They include literacy levels and education (level of women's knowledge of their political and civil rights, an apparent reluctance of women to vote for other women); freedom of movement and security (women's ability to leave the house/family for meetings, political or social intimidation); and financial independence (where and how women can obtain the resources to stand as a candidate, etc.).

People with disabilities

Extending the participation in electoral processes to citizens with disabilities is an emerging area for assistance. Some considerations regarding access by the disabled, which electoral assistance activities could support, include:

- the existing legal framework could be reviewed for potentially discriminating regulations.
- disability access should be mainstreamed into the electoral process as much as feasible, including in areas such as voter and civic education;
- electoral authorities may need assistance in identifying specific strategies to enfranchise voters with disabilities;
- the needs of the disabled should be considered in the process of selection of polling places;
- guidelines for officials at polling places should include instructions on how to extend special help to elderly, hospitalised and disabled voters;
- consideration could be given to providing training or voter education materials in Braille or through deaf signers; and
- efforts to develop the capacity of disabled people's organisations may be supported to strengthen demands for inclusion in the development of government and political party policies.

K. Direct assistance to electoral management bodies

The majority of electoral assistance work provided by UNDP with EU support targets the work of EMBs. These are the authorities mandated to organise and conduct electoral processes in most countries; as such, they usually manage at least one (but often more) of the following elements for the conduct of elections, and of direct democracy instruments such as referenda:

- compiling and maintaining a register of voters;
- registration of political parties and candidates as well as verification processes;
- conducting polling; and
- counting and tabulating votes.

In addition to the above-mentioned elements, and as indicated previously in this publication, an EMB may often have additional responsibilities associated with electoral tasks, such as:

- conducting voter information/education;
- delimitation of electoral district boundaries;
- registration of political parties;
- regulation of financing of political parties;
- regulating the conduct of political parties and candidates (in particular during election campaigns);
- regulating the conduct of the media during elections;
- accreditation and regulation of the conduct of election observers;
- adjudication of electoral disputes; and
- advising the government and legislature on electoral reform issues.

While there are many variations of detail, the three broad types or models of EMB are independent, governmental and mixed.

Figure 12: The three models of electoral management
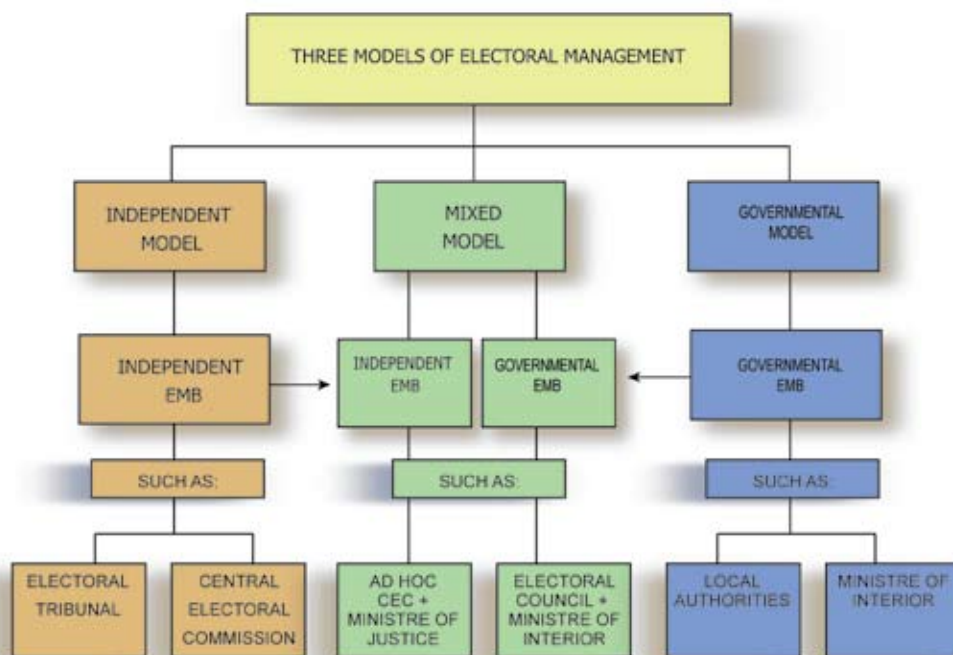
A key characteristic of an independent model EMB is that it is institutionally independent from the executive branch of government. A governmental model EMB, on the other hand, is part of and accountable to the executive branch. Mixed model EMBs typically consist of a component similar to the independent model, with varying policy and/or monitoring powers, and an implementation component similar to the governmental model.

No matter what model is used or what the attributes are, all EMBs should follow the following guiding principles:

- independence;
- impartiality;
- integrity;
- transparency;
- efficiency;
- service-mindedness.

The guiding principles are essential to ensure both the actual and the perceived integrity of the electoral process. In Africa, the prevailing view is that the guiding principles are more fully achieved under an independent EMB model than by other models, and thus the independent EMB model has become increasingly popular. Some of the factors that can influence the level of independence that an EMB can exert include:

- the way in which commissioners (where they exist) are selected and appointed;
- the political commitment to allow the EMB to act freely and impartially;
- the sources of funding and the EMB's ability to determine and manage its own funds;
- the range of powers and functions given to an EMB;
- recruitment procedures, qualifications and responsibilities of senior staff;
- security of tenure of commissioners (where they exist) and their senior staff and their terms of office;
- the oversight and accountability framework of the EMB; and
- whether the EMB's legal status means it is able to sue and be sued.

Support and assistance to EMBs

The electoral assistance support provided directly to EMBs can be both internal support (e.g., regarding an EMB's internal organisation, its strategic planning, its budgeting and the professional development of its staff), and support to EMBs in the implementation of their mandates. The latter kind of support, often seen as the 'bread and butter' of electoral assistance, primarily consists of financial and procurement support, as well as logistical, technical and operational support, in the implementation of voter registration, candidate

registration and voting, counting and results management operations. Each one of these areas is addressed below.

In the vast majority of cases, the objective of the electoral assistance in most of the above areas is not for the assistance providers to carry out the work themselves, but to build the capacity of the staff of the EMB to carry out the activity.[41]

Assistance in the professional development of EMBs

EMBs need to ensure that all election officials, whether core staff or temporary workers, are well trained and acquainted with the necessary skills to apply high professional standards in the implementation of their technical work. Professional training prompts public trust that the entire process is 'in good hands' and visible professionalism in an EMB gives political parties, civil society, voters, donors, the media and other stakeholders the confidence that electoral managers are capable of undertaking their tasks effectively.

EMB staff requirements are cyclical, with particularly high peaks in the beginning of an election period. They typically need to provide operational training quickly for large numbers of electoral event staff.

Given changes in electoral procedures and increasing sophistication of the processes, even the most experienced staff cannot rely on experience alone to adequately perform their tasks. Furthermore, EMBs commonly must cope with 'brain drain' when qualified staff move to better paid positions in the private sector or with international organisations, and the consequent loss of institutional memory.

EMBs in partner countries generally have a difficult time persuading governments to approve budgets that contain sufficient funds for training activities. External assistance can thus play a crucial role. Assistance is often requested and provided, however, at a late stage in an electoral cycle, when electoral officials are absorbed by operational duties related to upcoming electoral events.

Effective electoral assistance in this sector should thus mean greater awareness of the professional development and institutional capacity needs of recipient EMBs rather than focusing solely on training needs for procedures related to a given electoral event. Organisational and staff development for an EMB's long-term staff should address their capacity-building and skills requirements, and also take into account staff career development.

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41   One of the most complex and controversial areas of electoral assistance is the extent to which the capacity of the EMB staff is developed, how that capacity development is measured, and how much implementation (rather than advisory) work electoral assistance providers engage in.

Long-term capacity development in the post-electoral period and investment in EMB staff training and development are critical for improving overall EMB effectiveness. Such strategies could be implemented through:

- internal courses;
- professional associations;
- academic qualifications;
- mentoring and skills transfer by consultants and senior managers; and
- electoral management curriculums, such as the BRIDGE course (see Module 5).

EMB training needs

EMBs need trained and skilled personnel at various levels to perform the following activities, among others:

- prepare electoral budgets;
- procure electoral equipment;
- conduct voter registration;
- understand party and campaign financing;
- perform polling and counting operations;
- conduct or supervise voter and civic education;
- help manage and coordinate stakeholder activities;
- engage in public outreach and communication;
- conduct training needs assessments;
- manage logistics for the election, including result reporting and tabulation;
- advise and enact (when applicable) electoral law reform;
- facilitate electoral observation activities; and
- engage in global/regional networking activities with other EMBs.

Assistance in embracing new technology

ICTs have already dramatically changed the way elections are conducted in many developed countries. This process is likely to continue and affect more and more emerging democracies, regardless of their level of preparedness to introduce such applications. This is not necessarily a welcome development: the cost implications can be far beyond what many countries can afford.

In general terms, ICT applications in the electoral process can be categorised into three broad groups:

- communications, telecommunications, radio, networks and the internet;
- computer hardware and software, word processing/spread sheets, database management systems; and
- specialised electronic/mechanical devices, non-electronic innovations and materials.

The biggest challenge is how to ensure a sustainable, appropriate, cost-effective and transparent use of technology, particularly in post-conflict elections and in fragile and emerging democracies. As a general rule, the level of technological upgrades suitable for a given partner country should always be directly related not only to its capacity, but also to the trust and independence enjoyed by its EMB. These elements are decisive to the acceptance of the use of ICTs by the public and, as a consequence, influence the level of trust in the electoral process.

Photo 7: Voter Registration Finger Printing

There is no fixed solution for the use of appropriate technology: different situations require different solutions.

Provided that technologies are legally supported, operationally appropriate, cost-effective, introduced in a timely fashion, transparent and sustainable, they can build credibility by improving the speed and efficiency of the electoral process.

However, too much devotion to new technology may divert EMBs from other important matters, and may drain development agency and/or EMB budgets. Costs associated with purchasing and distribution, system defects, poor design or testing may leave development agencies captive to increasing costs in order to save what they have already invested. There is a need to 'skill up' staff to implement high-tech systems, and this may not be easy given the short timetables that are often involved. Some systems, moreover, require a level of IT qualifications that may not be available on the local market, or are available only at a cost that public agencies like EMBs cannot afford. Moreover, undue influence in favour of one solution or another

Technology can build credibility by improving the speed and efficiency of the electoral process.

— or one vendor or another — may be exerted by interested vendors, donors or development agencies that wish to either introduce a technology similar to the one in use in their own country, or secure business for a vendor from their own country. Finally, governments may view the use of technology as the ultimate and the most effective method to improperly control the electoral process.

Technology should be:

- implemented in a timely fashion before an election;
- legally supported;
- operationally appropriate;
- cost-effective;
- transparent and designed to add to integrity; and
- sustainable.

Technology should NOT be:

- driven by vendor or donor interests;
- considered a 'proof of development;'
- suppress more important needs; or
- introduced too close to election day.

Technology and the socio-cultural dimension:

One aspect of introducing technology applications in electoral processes that has been strongly neglected to date is the socio-cultural dimension. Too often, heavy investments in technology are not further supported by adequate attention to confidence-building activities aimed at explaining to the stakeholders and the electorate the purpose and the functions as well as the security control mechanisms associated with every technology upgrade. This can generate additional distrust, which can sometimes be the most difficult problem to overcome in transitioning to a new system and might lead to a dangerous loss of credibility for the electoral institution. Another problem has to do with the fact that too much may be expected all at once from technology upgrades — such as improved security, transparency and efficiency — and public expectations may be unrealistic.

IT infrastructure and the capacities of partner countries

Effective technology upgrades cannot be introduced without an honest evaluation of the degree of IT literacy and infrastructure that already exists in the partner country. Long-debated issues like feasibility as well as long-term technical and financial sustainability can only be properly addressed through transparent and open tendering procedures (including pilot and validation tests) and through serious training and capacity-building measures to be required as part of the service.

A fascinating debate persists as to whether it is appropriate to introduce a level of technology that is aligned with the existing capacity of the partner country or whether such capacity should be increased for the purposes of introducing a technological upgrade that can serve the partner country beyond the immediate needs of the electoral event. This debate is particularly heated over crucial aspects of the electoral process such as voter registration, voting, vote tabulation and results aggregation. Less controversial areas are communications and logistics, voter and civic education, and even training, where technology can be introduced more smoothly as a tool to improve effectiveness and product delivery without requiring legal changes.

Assistance in strategic and operational planning

A **strategic plan** is a public document that stands as a record of what the EMB stands for, what it does and why, and what it intends to achieve. It is a management tool from which fundamental decisions on EMB activity flow — mainly operational planning and prioritising, resource allocation and service standards. The strategic plan should be based on the EMB's legally defined responsibilities and be consistent with its mandate. The strategic plan, which should be the basis for the operational plan, should include:

- vision;
- purpose (objective/mission);
- values;
- outcomes and focus areas;
- key results;
- indicators;
- EMB data;
- performance management strategy.

The strategic plan should usually cover more than one national election cycle, thus assisting the EMB to operate in and understand its changing environment.

In post-conflict situations, planning elections is a rather unique activity as it usually involves high levels of international assistance and, in general, is considered an advantageous and positive undertaking in operational, logistical and financial terms. This can cause sustainability problems for EMBs tasked with planning electoral events in the "post" post-conflict situation when the international assistance is already drastically cut.

Contingency planning is also important to anticipate any possible scenarios within reason. A proper strategic plan for the electoral process must therefore consider risks such as security and political unrest. In these cases it is recommended to conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis vis-à-vis the EMB and the electoral process to be supported.

An **operational plan** sets out clearly the implementation of the strategic plan against specific objectives by specifying **each** EMB task/activity, **each** activity timeframe, and the manager of the unit responsible for completing it.

Operational plans should be fully integrated with the electoral cycle. The operational concept may divide an electoral process into several phases, including the establishment of the legal and administrative framework, the staffing needs, the budgeting exercise, and the logistics activities. The logistics-related undertakings should include preparations for and conduct of voter registration as well as in regard to polling, counting, and announcement of results; candidate registration; political campaigns; and post-election activities.

Proper planning and budget preparations are essential to identify several timelines/deadlines, as the financing availability determines the kind of operations to be launched. The determination of an election calendar/timeline is essential to the efficiency and legality of an election.

It is good practice for EMBs and electoral assistance providers to plan the entire electoral calendar starting backwards from the tentative electoral date.

The strategic plan is a record of what the EMB stands for, what it does and why, and what it intends to achieve. Operational planning is setting out clearly the implementation of the strategic plan against specific objectives.

Problems which may arise due to poor planning are:

- lack of coordination;
- incorrect assumptions;
- insufficient or unrealistic budget(s);
- underestimation of time needed to complete certain operations;
- delayed disbursement of funds;
- inability to set and meet timelines;
- late procurement of materials and recruitment of personnel;
- unclear or complicated procedures; and
- difficulty in raising funds and support during the post-electoral period, sometimes because of donor fatigue.

A good planning strategy is two-faceted — strategic and operational. The two facets are distinct but equally important.

Finally, when EMBs are assisted there is a risk of loss of institutional memory and of a failure to document processes. Electoral assistance should work to minimise such losses and avoid replacing their functions by supporting EMBs in organising and filing relevant information; drafting/publishing complete (structured) reports that contribute to the preservation of the institutional memory; and training of staff, etc.

EMB budgeting

An EMB cannot be run nor can an election be implemented without a credible budget. If external funding is required, development partners such as the EC and UNDP will be anxious for the EMB to produce as accurate a budget as possible for the entire electoral cycle; lack of an EMB budget may render international assistance extremely difficult.

A budget is typically divided into two parts. One part covers the fixed running costs of the EMB structure, i.e., routine operational costs, and the other covers specific costs related to the implementation of an electoral process itself. These costs can be both fixed and variable costs.

EMB budgets can either be based on a **baseline approach (taking** the last funding period's allocation and simply adjusting it for the next period) or on a **zero-based** approach (taking each funding period as a clean slate and estimating the funds required to achieve the EMB's objectives for that period). Baseline approaches can be inappropriate as an EMB's tasks vary greatly from one year to another, depending on the electoral cycle, and so the budget from the previous funding period may not be adequate; also, costs

are likely to vary substantially from one election to another due to matters such as technological change. Many EMBs nonetheless still use the baseline budgeting approach, usually because it is the generally accepted public-sector approach in the country.

Zero-based budgeting can encourage a 'programme' or 'performance' approach to budgets whereby costs are linked to specific output targets such as ballot paper printing and distribution, staff training and/or information programmes for political parties. The zero-based approach makes it easier to determine how effectively funds have been spent and thereby contribute to the overall accountability of an EMB.

With respect to EMB funding control, there is a distinction between situations in which i) EMB expenditure and cash flows are controlled by a government ministry, and ii) an EMB itself has control over its own payments.

Besides leading to faster payment processes, empowering an EMB with its own financial control enhances its credibility as being independent of the government. The reality is that in the majority of the cases electoral assistance projects tend to fill the financing gaps left by the national budget rather than planning to support the EMB in a coordinated manner.

Baseline budgeting takes as its basis the last funding period allocation, while zero- based budgeting treats each funding period as a clean slate.

The starting point of any budget is to know the operational plan(s) in as much detail as possible. Only then can line items, timings and quantities be written into the budget. As the operational plan changes, so will the budget; therefore, close coordination between the operations team and the budget team is essential.

The budgets can then be further broken down into main activities, e.g., one overall budget for voter registration, one for voter education and public outreach activities, etc. For each main activity, several projects can be listed and then the breakdown costs for each project listed. For example, under the main activity of public outreach activities, several separate project activities could set up a call centre, produce radio jingles, print leaflets and posters, etc.

Voter registration

Voter registration, arguably the most crucial and expensive component of an electoral process, is the activity directed at the identification of those citizens who are eligible to vote in a given election. It is generally aimed at the production of lists and of a register of voters based on the eligibility rules in force in a given country. If the registration system is flawed, an entire electoral process may be perceived as illegitimate. Voter registration can often be a highly contested activity and one of the major sources of complaints.

Photo 8: United Nations Mission in Nepal - 80-Year-old Nepalese Woman Participates in Historic Elections

As one of the more costly, time-consuming and complex aspects of the electoral process, it often accounts for a considerable portion of the budget, staff time and resources of an EMB. With the increasing use of information technology leading to an enormous expansion in cost in what was already an expensive exercise, requests for assistance from international partners such as UNDP and the EU for high technology voter registration solutions are increasing, which is not without controversy.

Voter register typologies

There are three broad types of voter registers: a periodic register, a permanent register and a register drawn from the civil registry provided by the civil registry authorities.

A **periodic registry** is produced immediately prior to each new electoral event by an EMB and is not maintained between elections. Periodic registration is relatively expensive and time-consuming since it requires the active participation of all eligible voters before an electoral event. It is often, however, the method that leads to the most accurate register because it effectively addresses three obsoleteness problems faced by registers that are compiled at any time other than immediately before an electoral event. These problems include the difficulties that EMBs face in i) removing deceased voters, ii) adding voters who have attained the voting age since the register was last compiled, and iii) updating rolls to reflect voters who have moved to a different voting location.

A **permanent register** is established, maintained and regularly updated by an EMB. This system depends on appropriate infrastructure and financial means being provided to the EMB to maintain the list. Maintenance typically involves the addition and deletion of names and data annually or more often. Consequently there is no need for election-specific registration, although the list may well need to be displayed immediately prior to an election. To facilitate list updates, an EMB could form data-sharing partnerships with other government bodies, particularly those involved in civil registration. This makes it possible to update the electoral register without any direct contact between the voter and the election authority.

A **civil registry** is produced and maintained by the government; it usually contains a repository of vital statistics (e.g., births, deaths, marriages, name changes, national ID card issuance, etc.) If a civil registry is in place, it may be possible to extract the voter register from the civil register — assuming there is adequate address data, etc. on file that will allow the EMB (or the civil registry authority on the instructions of the EMB) to allocate voters to polling stations. Such a system is passive, as citizens do not have to positively register themselves through an act of registration.

Even if there are still relevant cases where 'ad hoc', periodic voter registration exercises are organised in order to conduct specific electoral events, the establishment and maintenance of a permanent, continuously updatable register or list of voters is now acknowledged as a common goal for many election administrations. In fact there is a growing interest among partner country governments, EMBs and donors to explore possible synergies between voter and civil registration, including eventually facilitating the automatic generation of the voter register from the civil register (as takes place in South Africa and in many countries in Europe).

There is a significant lack of comparative and balanced assessments of the main advantages and disadvantages of the potential synergies between civic and voter registries, however. For example, there are important issues to consider concerning sustainability, cost-effectiveness and the political, institutional and financial implications of creating civil and voter registration synergies, including:

- The quality of the data protection environment and the freedom of information environment of the country. These factors can significantly influence the extent to which the digital voter/ civil registry databases could be abused by state agencies; only in relatively transparent situations can citizens determine the extent to which their data is being accessed by other agencies. Legal and public support for the proposed synergies between the voter and civil registry databases is therefore essential, as is institutional collaboration.

- The quality of the civil registry. If the civil registry is missing substantial data on citizens eligible to vote, or is otherwise not up to standard or unable to produce an accurate register, then the extracted voter registry will be unsatisfactory. Furthermore, the EMB may well be implicated, through no fault of its own, in the poor quality of the register.

For the above reason (and others), many EMBs wish to remain responsible for generating the voters' lists. Indeed, what often happens in practice (and what EMBs often wish to be the case) is that the civil registry body compiles the list of those eligible, and the EMB oversees and/or assists in the allocation of those eligible to polling centres. This is particularly common in cases where the address data kept by the civil registry body is inadequate.

Photo 9: Voter Registration Identification

Both the EC and UNDP appreciate the added value of supporting national institutions in charge of civil registration and EMBs in charge of voter registration to explore these synergies. After all, the costs of supporting parallel and sometimes unsustainable activities of voter and civil registration in post-conflict and transitional countries have at times been incredibly high and neither cost-effective nor sustainable in the longer term.

Voter registration methodologies

The methods used to gather voter data can be divided into three broad categories based on the level of technology applied to the process:

Low-tech: Manual transcription of voters' data onto paper performed at voter registration centres in an active registration system. This is often chosen in the first generation of post-conflict elections when technology is not available or far too expensive. It was used most recently in the 2011 Southern Sudan referendum.

Medium-tech: Recording of voter data by using standardised paper forms later scanned through various technologies (e.g., optical mark recognition,[42] optical character recognition,[43] and intelligent character recognition[44]) that allow an electronic voter database to be constructed.

High-tech: Immediate data-entry performed at voter registration centres through notebook computers, usually stored electronically for periodical delivery through external memory devices to higher-level data centres for database building. These systems often involve digital picture taking and the capturing of biometric data from fingerprints (later to be used in association with automated fingerprint identification systems[45] for duplicate analysis and detection). They also often involve the production and distribution of voter cards on site. Biometric voter registration systems have

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42   Optical mark recognition is the process of capturing data by contrasting reflectivity at predetermined positions on a page. By shining a beam of light onto the document the scanner is able to detect a marked area because it is more reflective than an unmarked surface.

43   Optical character recognition involves computer software designed to translate images of handwritten or typewritten text captured by a scanner into machine-editable text, or to translate pictures of characters into a standard encoding scheme.

44   Intelligent character recognition (ICR) is an advanced optical character recognition system that allows fonts and different styles of hand writing to be learned by a computer during processing to improve accuracy and recognition levels. Most ICR software has a self-learning system referred to as a neural network, which automatically updates the recognition database for new handwriting patterns.

45   Automatic fingerprint identification system (AFIS) refers to software applications capable of establishing the identity of an individual through fingerprints by the use of biometric functions.

been introduced in a number of countries with UNDP support in recent years, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Togo and Zambia, and are under consideration in numerous other countries.

The following are among the main considerations to keep in mind when deciding to support the introduction of digital registration systems:

- Punitive costs. A digital registration kit with the capability to record data for biometric analysis have averaged, from UNDP's experience so far, between US$5,000 US$6,000 per kit. Significant extra costs are associated with the back-end server networks with enormous processing power that are required to process, in some cases, trillions of duplicate checks prior to producing the centralised voter database. It is important to remember that the 'depreciation costs' are high in terms of the equipment procured and can be aggravated by a failure to properly store and look after the equipment.

- Accuracy and credibility. Achieving acceptable levels of accuracy is a necessary consideration, and it is important that there are realistic expectations of what digital registration with biometrics can do, both by an EMB and other stakeholders.[46] For instance, some EMBs have experienced substantial failures (sometimes in excess of 20 percent) of the kits to record voters' fingerprints. Another risk is the failure of the whole system due to the low quality of the collected voters' data or mistakes in its processing during registration updating. Both occurrences jeopardise the significant investments made in technology.

Photo 10: A close-up of registration cards

Procurement support

There are two types of procurement support that EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects can provide to EMBs. The first is advisory support on general procurement standards and best practice, adapted to allow an EMB to implement correct procurement procedures according to the national public procurement rules in place in the country. This type of support is sometimes provided in tandem with support in assisting an EMB with its budgeting task. A much more regular form of procurement support, however, occurs when UNDP procures institutional materials (providing an EMB with vehicles, computers, etc.); electoral materials

46   Additional information is available at ACE Practitioners' Network: http://aceproject.org/electoral-advice/archive/questions/replies/653713389/?searchterm=afis.

(including voter registration materials); and other services such as voter education materials and public media spots, etc., on behalf of an EMB. This latter form of support, in fact, usually represents the majority of expenditures in EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects.

When EMBs seek assistance from EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects in the procurement area, there are a number of risks and challenges, including:

- risks caused by unrealistic timeframes and inflexible deadlines, including in regards to voter registration and elections dates. Critical stakeholders sometimes set such timeframes and subsequently exert pressure on procurement agents without taking into account the potential for serious implementation problems and value for money predicaments, both of which can inhibit cost-effectiveness;
- risks of political pressure and tension, particularly in post-conflict environments;
- risks of uncertain or insufficient budgets or late disbursement of funds available for procurement processes; and
- risks of erroneous or incomplete technical specifications and terms of references for procurement needs. Such developments can have a negative impact on the total quality and quantity of goods and services to be procured.

The most commonly experienced risks and challenges in electoral procurement processes, which in principle need to be addressed at the initial programming stage, involve decisions on implementation methodologies, timing for development of technical specifications/terms of references, timelines, sufficient budgets for procurement needs, national ownership and capacities.

Procurement of goods and services for elections can be divided into five main categories, corresponding to five different activities of the electoral process:

- **Election administration:** Procurement may be needed for equipment and refurbishing of buildings, hardware and software equipment, vehicles, communication tools, printing services, and staff training (e.g., BRIDGE).
- **Civic and voter registration:** Procurement may be needed for technical equipment; material for call centres; development of Web sites; design and printing of posters, leaflets, banners, etc.; production of TV spots and radio jingles; conferences, etc..
- **Voter registration:** Procurement may be needed for hardware and software equipment; means for printing and distribution of registration forms and voter cards; data processing, potentially even the establishment of data entry centres; other materials depending on the type of voter registration used; training and technical assistance; and logistics and distribution.

- **Election day activities:** Procurement may be needed for ballot boxes, voting screens, polling kits, indelible or invisible ink, tamper-proof materials, materials for alternative polling station structures, means for printing and distribution of ballot papers, polling forms, procedural manuals, electoral lists, candidate lists, training of polling staff, logistics, distribution, storage and security.
- **Result tabulation:** Procurement may be needed for software, results and media centre hardware, and other communication equipment.

UNDP procurement activities are guided by the following principles:

- **Best value for money,** which is the core governing principle.
- **Fairness**, which refers to fair and open competition for the supply community through open competitive procurement processes, broad advertisement, clear and unambiguous evaluation criteria, etc.
- **Integrity,** which refers to acting without consideration of personal gain; resisting undue political pressure in decision-making and actions taken; not abusing power or authority; standing by decisions that are in the organisation's best interest; and taking prompt action in cases of unprofessional or unethical behaviour.
- **Accountability,** which refers to taking ownership of all responsibilities and commitments; ensuring proper documentation of the procurement process; and operating in compliance with financial rules and regulations.
- **Transparency**, which refers to demonstrating openness to stakeholders in the procurement process and ensuring compliance with rules and regulations.
- **Effective international competition**, which refers to providing all eligible prospective vendors globally with timely and adequate notification of UNDP's requirements, and then ensuring fair and equal opportunity for all interested parties to bid for the required goods, works or services.
- **The best interests of the organisation,** which refers to the importance of recognising that procurement is ultimately a support function, albeit a strategic one, that supports economic and efficient delivery of UNDP's programmatic and organisational outcomes.

When UNDP is requested to provide procurement assistance, the organisation and the EMB should consider the following issues and ensure they are duly understood and addressed through a procurement strategy and operationalised in a procurement plan:

- procurement objectives;
- procurement methods;
- timelines;
- requirements and legal framework of the elections in which procurement will be conducted;
- roles and responsibilities of different actors and stakeholders;
- risks assessment and contingencies;
- costs — and not just the purchasing price, but the so-called total cost of ownership as well;
- technical specifications and quality requirements;
- disposal and retrieval;
- logistics; and
- sustainability.

The inclusion of a procurement strategy and the consultation of procurement and technical experts in the planning stage are crucial to the success of any electoral assistance projects.

Figure 13: Procurement Process
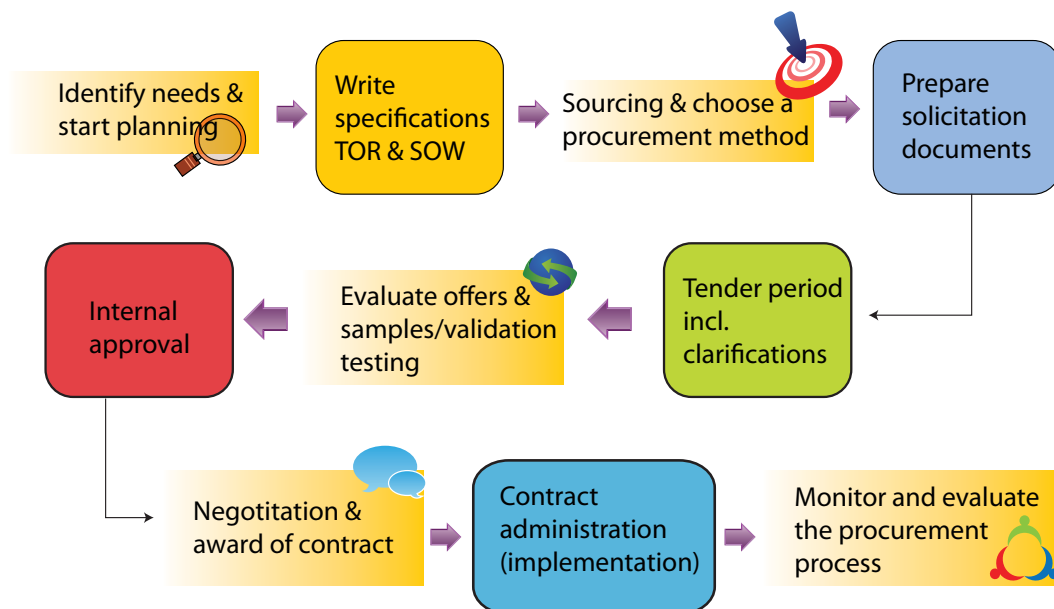
The following key steps then need to be followed:

1. **Identify needs.** Early and detailed planning should ideally address challenges and facilitate open, efficient, effective, and transparent procurement.

2. **Define specifications.** In accordance with the procurement plan and strategy, the procurement request must be defined from the start through technical specifications (for goods and equipment), or statement of works (SoW, for works), or terms of reference (ToR, for services). When defining specifications, in the case of goods, the description should include all technical specifications; norms, practises and standards; functional guarantees; performance, design details, and inspection requirements; the avoidance of use of brand or trade names as far as possible; provision of samples; handling of defects, etc.

3. **Clarify sourcing and methods.** Once a request has been approved, funding assured and specifications, SoW or ToR prepared, a method of procurement must be agreed. The decision will depend on the nature and size of the procurement and will result in either local and/or national competition, open international competition, or limited international competition.[47]

4. **Initiate the tender (bidding) period.** The is done through the issuance/publication of the solicitation documents, which will include among other sections the corresponding instructions to bidders, terms and conditions, technical specifications or ToRs/SoWs, price schedule, and evaluation criteria. Once the bidding period closes, bids received will be correspondingly opened and handed over to procurement staff for evaluation.

5. **Undertake evaluation.** Evaluation results in the selection of supplier/s based on the specified evaluation criteria and procurement principles, including best value for money.

6. **Negotiate and award contract.** A contract or purchase order can be awarded to the selected supplier/s only following internal approval from the corresponding contract committees.

7. **Initiate contract administration or management.** This is often an ignored but important stage of the procurement process to ensure that the time, cost and quality criteria are met.
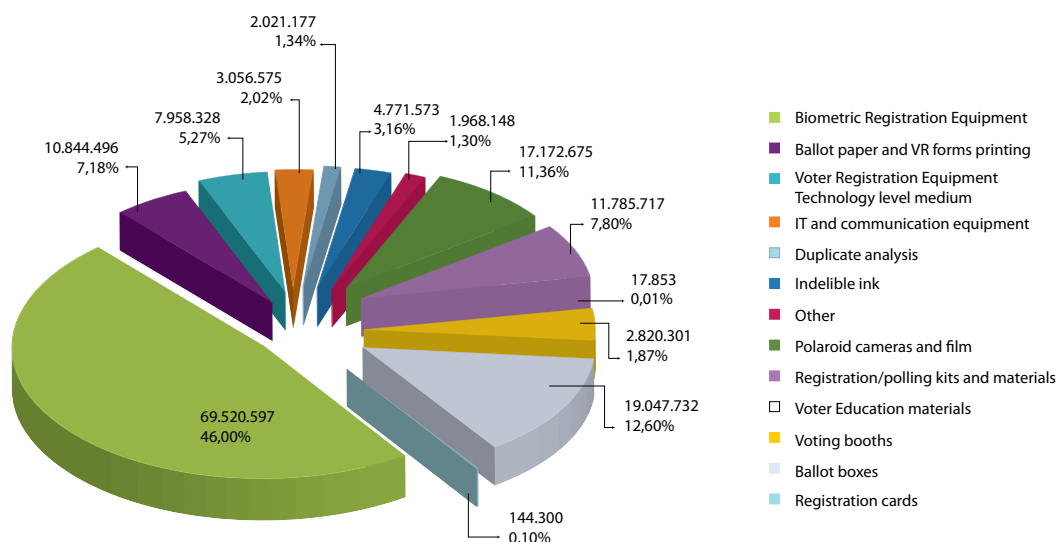
UNDP's Global Procurement Unit (GPU), part of the Procurement Support Office (PSO) in Copenhagen, offers both direct procurement support and procurement advisory services. The GPU Election Team provides continuous assistance to UNDP country offices supporting EMBs through advice and support on procurement planning, timelines, on-site training and assessment missions relating to procurement, capacity and operations. When requested, GPU also conducts full procurement processes on behalf of country offices. This consists of managing all aspects of the process, right up until delivery and completion

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47   More information about UNDP procurement methods and types of competition may be found at the Contract and Procurement Management section of the UNDP Web site: http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/cap/?lang=en#top.

of contracted services, including support in planning, development of specifications, on-site evaluation processes, validation tests, and liaison with EMBs during the procurement process.

Figure 14: Products procured by the UNDP Procurement Support Office (PSO) 2004-2010 through the Global Procurement Unit (GPU) and its predecessor, IAPSO.

Legend:
- Biometric Registration Equipment
- Ballot paper and VR forms printing
- Voter Registration Equipment Technology level medium
- IT and communication equipment
- Duplicate analysis
- Indelible ink
- Other
- Polaroid cameras and film
- Registration/polling kits and materials
- Voter Education materials
- Voting booths
- Ballot boxes
- Registration cards

Pie chart values:
- 2.021.177 — 1,34%
- 3.056.575 — 2,02%
- 7.958.328 — 5,27%
- 10.844.496 — 7,18%
- 4.771.573 — 3,16%
- 1.968.148 — 1,30%
- 17.172.675 — 11,36%
- 11.785.717 — 7,80%
- 17.853 — 0,01%
- 2.820.301 — 1,87%
- 19.047.732 — 12,60%
- 144.300 — 0,10%
- 69.520.597 — 46,00%

Photo 11: Women in Juba, Southern Sudan

Voting operations

Polling day is, in most cases, the culmination of months and years of preparations by an EMB. It is often the single most important event in determining the extent to which electoral competitors, observers and the public at large judge the performance of the EMB in executing its mandate. It is only natural, therefore, that many EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects include a voting operations support dimension. This is often usually done either through i) procurement of electoral materials (often requested due to a lack of national funds); ii) logistical support for packing, distribution, transport and collection of electoral materials; iii) development of polling

and counting procedures and training of EMB staff on same; and iv) technical and operational advice, in the form of procedures for selecting polling centres, allocating voters to polling stations, communications plans for polling centres, etc.

Photo 12: Voting in Sudan

The challenges of voting operations are much more complicated in post-conflict situations, where usually tight timelines, poor infrastructure and potentially volatile security situations raise an additional set of concerns that require tailor-made solutions. Voting operations often rely on an almost military-style and costly operational plan with solid and secure logistical support. In some of the larger post-conflict countries with extensive UN support, this can include the use of helicopters, armoured vehicles, military and/or police escorts.

Some of the challenges encountered in this highly stressful period are mainly related to poor planning; the use of inappropriate and non-sustainable technologies; the high cost of last-minute deliveries; late, missing or wrongly delivered materials; poorly trained or biased staff not following procedures; disenfranchised voters not on voters' list or not knowing where to vote; irregularities and/or fraud; and the potential for conflict.

One of the policy goals for international partner support, consistent with the electoral cycle approach, is that support for voting operations would eventually diminish as previously given advice, and the adequate professional development of the EMB staff, would eventually result in an EMB taking full control of voting day operations.

Results management

The results-verification process is an activity that spans from the counting and announcement of results at the polling station level to the final allocation of the seats announced by the designated authority. In the middle, there is the aggregation of the results at various intermediate levels, the national aggregation and the announcement of preliminary results by the EMB, the final announcement of results by the delegated authority, and any eventual challenges to the final results. All steps of this process require transparency, expediency and effectiveness.

The credibility of the entire electoral event can often depend on how these activities are managed. Even without any political interference or bias, a poorly managed results-verification exercise will create undue

It is important to overcome the challenge of election fatigue and lack of funding throughout the post election period.

suspicions and can have negative impacts on the elections overall. In Kenya in the aftermath of the presidential elections in 2007, for example, the lack of adequate procedures for the processing and announcement of results, and the delays in ensuring the delivery of the results to the Electoral Commission of Kenya, meant that once the final results were announced, a tribal conflict ignited that eventually claimed the lives of over one thousand Kenyans. The Electoral Commission of Kenya was subsequently disbanded.

The main challenge of any results-verification process is how to balance speed with accuracy and transparency. This often becomes a communication problem as well: how to present an image of efficiency and transparency in such a stressful and delicate moment. Again, this is particularly true in post-conflict scenarios where incautious announcements might trigger violence.

Electoral assistance in the results management area can include traditional operational and technical advice on results-processing procedures (i.e., from polling station to final results centres at an EMB's HQ). Such assistance now often includes software development, auditing procedures and the setting up of secure electronic results transmission systems. It can often also involve the issue of results announcement and media relations.

Alternative activities to be supported that could play an important role to enhance the transparency of the process are the 'parallel vote tabulation' or 'quick count'. These are basically results surveys based on the selection of a statistical sample of polling stations, generally to be implemented by CSOs or domestic observation groups.

Assistance to the results-aggregation process could be combined with the establishment of a media and result centre to provide the media in real time with all the information available on the various stages of the process. This activity is generally part of a good communication strategy that serves the purposes of highlighting to the general public the overall efforts that the electoral administration put in place to organise a transparent and efficient electoral process.

Assistance to the results aggregation process can be combined with the establishment of a media and results centre to provide the media in real time all information available in the various stages of the process.

Post-electoral reviews and reforms

The electoral cycle approach has re-positioned the importance of the post-electoral period for electoral assistance. For an EMB, the post-electoral period can be the perfect moment to discuss and promote electoral reform with the legislature, introduce new technologies or modifications to existing ones, implement functional and structural changes, and commence institutional strengthening and capacity development. The challenge is to overcome post-electoral fatigue and lack of funding. Unfortunately, the same lack of motivation and political disinterest that is found at the national level can also be present among donors, who often shift funding priorities to other sectors and other activities.

The post-electoral period is, in fact, not the end but the real beginning of a new cycle and plays a crucial role in identifying and conceptualising broad lessons learned and recommendations for a range of different issues, both in post-conflict contexts and developing democracies. From legal reform to technological development to EMB internal strategic planning and funding, the period between electoral events provides a perfect opportunity to tackle many issues which could not be dealt with before due to lack of time or resources in the previous run-up to elections.

Electoral assistance providers can play a crucial role in identifying those aspects of the process that require reform, or radical change, at a time when there is less political tension and a greater interest among political parties to seek out compromise positions.

SUMMARY

- EMBs are the main recipients of assistance. Other potential recipients of support include CSOs, domestic observer groups, media outlets, and in some cases political parties, national institutions and security forces.

- The key variables of electoral systems include the electoral formula used, the ballot structure, and the district size.

- The periodic delimitation of electoral boundaries, or redistricting, is necessary in any representative system where single-member districts or uniformly small multimember districts are used.

- A normative, fearless independence of decision and action is expected of all EMBs, regardless of model, and cannot be guaranteed only by adopting a structurally independent model EMB.

- An EMB's strategic plan is a record of what the institution stands for, what it does and why, and what it intends to achieve. Operational planning, meanwhile, refers to setting out clearly the implementation of the strategic plan against specific objectives.

- Civic and voter education programmes are costly activities and cannot always be the sole burden of the election authority. In most cases civic and voter education is conducted by a wide variety of organisations and individuals.

- In the long run domestic observation has a significant advantage over international observation. Domestic observer groups can more easily reach larger numbers of people, and they have greater knowledge of the national and local political culture, language(s) and territory.

- Election authorities have three distinct relationships with the media: as a regulator; as a communicator and as a news target of media stories.

- The main way to support voting operations is to provide financial and technical means to facilitate the timely procurement of communication and transport equipment.

- The main challenge of any results-verification process is how to balance speed with accuracy and transparency.

- The specification of a procurement strategy and consultation with procurement experts in the planning stage is important to ensure appropriate, timely and cost-effective procurement.

- Drafting a procurement plan is a mandatory step in project design and involves the selection of procurement method taking into account the objectives, requirements (needs and legislative framework), risks, costs, logistics, timing and the like.

- When introducing ICTs, it is important to identify what kind of technology is suitable for a specific country, taking into account the level of infrastructure and the capacity of national staff.

- New technology should be i) timely implemented, ii) legally supported, iii) operationally appropriate, iv) cost-effective, v) transparent, and vi) sustainable.

- Voter registration often accounts for a considerable proportion of the budget, staff time and resources of an EMB. Given the complexities and high costs, it is one of the activities where donor intervention is most often sought by EMBs in partner countries.

- Voter registration methodologies can be categorized according to the level of technology applied in the process: i) low-tech, ii) medium-tech, and iii) high-tech.

- AFIS refers to software applications capable of establishing the identity of an individual through fingerprints by the use of biometric functions.

- There is a growing interest among governments, EMBs and the donor community to explore possible synergies between civil and voter registries.

QUIZ

1. Who are the stakeholders in elections?
   a. Those responsible for organising the election
   b. All individuals, groups and organisations that have an interest in the operations and results of the election
   c. Only people with voting rights

2. What is the common name of the authority responsible for organising elections?
   a. Electoral management body
   b. Election administration board
   c. Electoral managerial association
   d. Ministry of the Interior

3. Which is the best electoral system?
   a. First-past-the-post
   b. Proportional representation
   c. Single transferrable vote
   d. Two-round system
   e. Alternative vote
   f. It depends on the circumstances

4. An EMB's strategic plan should ideally cover:
   a. one specific period in the electoral cycle: the pre-electoral period, the election period or the post-electoral period
   b. one electoral cycle
   c. more than one electoral cycle

5. The relationship between EMBs and the media is fairly complex. Election authorities have three distinct relationships with the media; which does NOT belong in the below list?
   a. As regulator
   b. As financial contributor
   c. As communicator
   d. As news target

6. What are the typical challenges encountered on election day?
   a. Poor planning
   b. Use of inappropriate and non-sustainable technologies
   c. High costs of last-minute deliveries
   d. Late, missing or wrongly delivered materials
   e. Poorly trained or biased staff
   f. Disenfranchised voters not on the voting list or not knowing where to vote
   g. Irregularities and fraud
   h. All of the above

7. What does EDR stand for?
   a. Electoral districting regulations
   b. Electoral dispute resolution
   c. Effective and direct reform

8. Assistance to EMBs typically relates to…
   a. funding of electoral operations
   b. technical advice
   c. training
   d. procurement of materials
   e. All of the above

9. Which are possible area(s) when it comes to increasing women's participation in elections?
   a. Political participation: focus on nomination and election of women in (previous) elections and the way in which the general legal framework facilitates women's participation
   b. Administration of elections: focus on the quantity and preparedness of women in EMBs, recruitment policy and selection criteria
   c. Access to voter information and education: focus on messages from media/ political parties and the ways in which they are likely to enhance women's knowledge
   d. All of the above

10. International institutions are:
    a. never involved with setting up a country's constitution because of concerns about lack of impartiality
    b. under specific circumstances involved in writing constitutions
    c. always involved in reforming parts of the constitutional and legal framework when electoral assistance is provided

11. EMBs have four core responsibilities and many additional elements to take care of during the conduct of elections. Which of the following five items does NOT belong to an EMB's **core** responsibilities?
   a. Determining voter eligibility
   b. Verifying party and candidate registers
   c. Campaigning for political parties that endorse democratic principles
   d. Conducting the poll
   e. Counting and tabulating the result

12. There are three broad types or models of EMBs. Which of the following does NOT belong in the list?
   a. External
   b. Independent
   c. Governmental
   d. Mixed

13. Which of the following are core guiding principles of EMBs?
   a. Independence
   b. Impartiality
   c. Integrity
   d. Transparency
   e. Efficiency
   f. Service-mindedness
   g. All of the above

14. The term 'boundary delimitation' refers to:
   a. the establishment of fixed boundaries between EMBs on the one hand and government executive branches on the other in order to ensure impartiality
   b. the setting up of boundaries for the campaign period with particular reference to financial spending rules
   c. the drawing of electoral districts

15. Problems that may arise due to poor planning include:
   a. lack of coordination
   b. insufficient or unrealistic budgeting
   c. underestimation of time needed to complete certain operations
   d. delayed disbursement of funds
   e. late procurement
   f. late recruitment of personnel
   g. All of the above

16. Voter information:
   a. refers to the basic information enabling qualified citizens to vote
   b. addresses voters' motivation and preparedness to participate fully in elections
   c. deals with the broad concepts underpinning a democratic society

17. Which of the following is often the most costly expenditure made by election administrators?
   a. Voter registration
   b. Boundary delimitation
   c. Training of domestic observers and media monitors
   d. The counting process
   e. Party financing

18. A periodic registry is:
   a. established, maintained and continuously updated by an EMB
   b. derived from the civil registry
   c. time- and cost-effective
   d. produced immediately prior to each new electoral event and not maintained between elections
   e. acknowledged as a common goal for many election administrators

19. Which of the following groups may be involved in media monitoring during elections?
   a. EMBs
   b. Independent media regulatory authorities
   c. International election observation missions
   d. Civil society organizations
   e. All of the above

20. Which of the following media monitoring institutions have the most freedom in the way they can monitor election coverage both as far as methodology and publication of findings are concerned — and in doing so, contribute to raise journalistic standards while the election campaign is still going on?
    a. EMBs
    b. Independent media regulatory authorities
    c. International electoral observers
    d. NGOs and CSOs

21. Which of the following media monitoring institutions will usually withhold their findings until after the election has taken place?
    a. EMBs
    b. Independent media regulatory authorities
    c. International electoral observers
    d. NGOs and CSOs

22. Quantitative analysis of media:
    a. entails counting and measuring election coverage according to, for example, the number and length of items devoted to different parties, length in column inches, timing and number of direct access programmes, and so on
    b. is an approach that measures the tone in terms of 'positive', 'negative' and 'neutral' reporting of media's election coverage

23. International electoral assistance to political parties can entail training on:
    a. the electoral system and its consequences for parties' voter information campaigns
    b. voter registration procedures and enfranchisement rules
    c. candidate and party procedures
    d. media law and regulations to ensure fair and equitable access to media
    e. rules relating to party financing and disclosure
    f. All of the above

24. There are four basic options for procedures associated with external voting. Which of the following should be removed from the list?
    a. Voting by proxy
    b. Personal voting — voting in person at diplomatic missions or military bases abroad
    c. Postal voting
    d. Electronic voting
    e. Voting according to party choice made during registration

25. The main challenges as far as managing results relate to:
    a. speed
    b. accuracy
    c. transparency
    d. All of the above

26. What kinds of activities are typical in the post-electoral and early pre-electoral periods?
    a. Civic education, voter registration and training of staff
    b. Vote counting and results aggregation as well as results verification
    c. Legal reform and technological development as well as EMB internal strategic planning and funding

27. Technology in electoral processes should be:
    a. technology-driven
    b. demand-driven
    c. donor-driven
    d. vendor-driven
    e. None of the above

28. High-tech methods used for the registration of voters' data refer to:
    a. recording of voters' data by using standardised paper forms that are later scanned through various technologies
    b. data entry performed at voter registration centres through notebook computers, and/or transmitted in real time to a centralised processing facility where inputs are stored electronically for processing and establishment of voters' lists
    c. manual transcription of voters' data onto paper performed at voter registration centres

29. It is important to test the accuracy of results produced by new technology especially for...

        a.   voter lists
        b.   vote recording
        c.   vote counting
        d.   reporting of election results
        e.   All of the above
        f.   None of the above

30. Low-tech methods for the registration of voters' data refers to:

        a.   recording of voters' data by using standardised paper forms that are later scanned through various technologies
        b.   data entry performed at voter registration centres through notebook computers, and transmitted in real time to a centralised processing facility or stored electronically for periodic delivery through external memories
        c.   manual transcription of voters' data onto paper performed at voter registration centres

CORRECT ANSWERS:

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NOTES

NOTES

4

Global Tools and Networks

GLOBAL TOOLS: ACE ELECTORAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network (**www.aceproject.org**) is the world's largest online repository of electoral knowledge. It is a comprehensive and systematic collection of both country- and topic-specific information on nearly every aspect relating to the organisation and implementation of elections as well as other relevant aspects and cross-cutting issues of electoral processes. The network offers a framework for the design, planning and implementation of electoral projects consistent with the maintenance of the core principles of transparency, professionalism and accountability.

The ACE is the world's largest online repository of electoral knowledge with almost 10.000 pages of election specific information.

ACE not only provides comprehensive and authoritative information on elections, but also promotes networking among election-related professionals and provides capacity-development services. ACE is a joint endeavour of eight partner organisations: International IDEA, UNDP, the Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa (EISA), Elections Canada, Mexico's Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and EAD. The EC is an ex-officio partner and a significant funder of the project. Financial contributions to the regional dimension of the project have also been provided by United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF).

ACE provides EMBs and other electoral practitioners with important resources including the following:

1. **Encyclopaedia of elections** covering the key steps of the electoral cycle with 12 core topics and complementary 'Focus On' publications that total nearly 10,000 pages of election information. The emphasis is on the issues of sustainability, professionalism and trust in the electoral process. The encyclopaedia also includes a glossary, interactive electoral quiz and help desk.

2. **Country and region specific information** for more than 200 countries and territories, highlighting election-specific and related information, news and events, and also providing links and access to relevant external databases. The country pages aim to provide a 'one-stop shop' with all relevant resources regarding elections.

3. **Electoral materials** from more than 150 countries are available in a constantly expanding database of electoral materials gathered from around the world. The type of materials accessible on the ACE Web site includes laws and regulations, ballot papers, training manuals, election posters, administrative guidelines, electoral forms and codes of conduct as well as country case studies, policy papers, electoral observation reports and technical assessments.

4. **Comparative data** is a section of the network that includes a systematic collection of election-related statistics and data from around the world, a resource that can assist countries in managing their elections. It provides a global overview of a number of aspects on elections and allows comparing one country to another.

5. **The electoral advice** section of the Web site allows EMBs and other elections professionals, CSOs, political parties, governments and any other stakeholders in need of electoral advice, as well as electoral assistance providers and election experts, to send a query to the ACE Practitioners' Network.

6. **A regularly updated election calendar** provides updated information on past and upcoming elections.

The ACE Encyclopaedia of Elections includes 12 core topic areas:

- electoral systems;
- legal framework;
- electoral management;
- boundary delimitation;
- civic and voter education;
- voter registration;

- voting operations;
- parties and candidates;
- vote counting;
- media and elections;
- electoral integrity;
- elections and technology.

New electoral topics expected to be launched shortly include electoral dispute resolution, external voting and electoral observation.

The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network brings together election professionals from different countries into the first ever global knowledge network established in the field of elections — the ACE Practitioners' Network.

International IDEA (as the leading ACE partner for the development of the regional dimension, as well as of the ACE Practitioners' Network) also established in 2007-2008 a regional infrastructure of 10 affiliated ACE Regional Electoral Resource Centres. The regional centres are hosted by existing electoral institutions around the world and other reputable regional organisations active in the field of democracy promotion. These regional centres bring an important regional dimension to the ACE Network.

Members of the Practitioners' Network share common interests, goals and professional responsibilities; together with the ACE regional centres, they are the source for generating and sharing knowledge, global experiences and best practices. Through the facilities and services provided through the electoral advice section of the ACE Web site, members of the Practitioners' Network interact and discuss election-related subjects and share expertise and know-how on elections. Their interaction generates election-related knowledge that is then codified and adapted to be applied in local contexts and re-used by other election practitioners who are confronted with the same or similar challenges. The goal is to assist all in need with meeting local challenges through the sharing of adaptable expert advice, best practices, lessons learned and peer review.

ACE is the first ever global knowledge network established in the field of elections.

ACE is interactive and can be used by anyone. In general, though, it is targeted at providing EMBs, electoral administration professionals, key stakeholders and electoral assistance providers with specialised knowledge, comparative best practices, resources and advice on elections and electoral processes.

The ACE regional centres are well-positioned to identify and respond to capacity needs and prioritize target areas for effective electoral assistance and support. This has been achieved through the collection, generation, translation and dissemination of both new and already existing electoral knowledge recourses and materials; partnership-building with key stakeholders in the region; and research, assessment and the identification of challenges, needs and trends within various regions. The ultimate goal is for the ACE regional centres to play a prominent role as a catalyst of change in their respective regions.

The ACE regional centres are located in the following regions and hosted by the following electoral institutions/organisations:

- Central and Eastern Europe: Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO), Hungary;
- Eastern Africa: Institute for Education in Democracy (IED), Kenya;
- West Africa: Goree Institute, Senegal;
- Central Africa: Commission Electorale Independante (CENI), Democratic Republic of the Congo;
- Southern Africa: the Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa (EISA), South Africa;
- South Caucasus and Central Asia: Resource Building Institute in Democracy Governance and Elections (RBI), Armenia;
- South-East Asia: The Centre for Electoral Reform (CETRO), Indonesia;
- Central America: Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE), Mexico;
- South America: Jurado Nacional de Elecciones (JNE), Peru;
- Arab States: Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre (UJRC), Jordan.

ACE places a particular emphasis on the power of training, professional advisory services and peer partnerships — especially among EMBs — to increase the capacity of electoral actors to administer free and fair elections. The objective of the capacity-development aspect of ACE is to more forcefully take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and expertise both in the materials and networks of ACE, as well as of the BRIDGE training curriculum (see below), which in many ways is closely linked with ACE. The ACE initiative also seeks to exploit the expertise and experience of the partner organisations, many of which are leaders in the provision of targeted technical assistance in elections management. The basic concept is to support the capacity of regional organisations to strengthen delivery of quality electoral services to their respective constituencies.

GLOBAL TOOLS: BRIDGE

Until the turn of the millennium, there were few formal opportunities available for comprehensive professional development in election administration. In response to this, the International IDEA, the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and EAD developed the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections Project — more commonly known as BRIDGE.

The original aims of the BRIDGE project were to strengthen election administrations' capacity, to enhance professionalism, and to build networks within election administrations. Since then, the scope of the training has expanded to focus on improving the skills, knowledge, and confidence not only of election professionals but also of key stakeholders in the electoral process, such as members of the media, political parties, CSOs and electoral observers.

The BRIDGE Project has 23 modules covering all aspects of the electoral process. The modules can be organised in four groupings:

- **Introduction:** i) introduction to electoral administration and ii) strategic and financial planning;
- **Electoral architecture:** i) legal framework, ii) electoral system, iii) boundary delimitation, iv) electoral management design and v) electoral technology;
- **Electoral stakeholders**: i) access to electoral processes, ii) voter information, iii) civic education, iv) electoral contestation, v) electoral observation, vi) media and elections, vii) electoral assistance, viii) gender and elections and ix) electoral dispute resolution;
- **Electoral operations:** i) voter registration, ii) pre-election activities, iii) training of officials, iv) external voting, v) polling, counting and results, vi) post-election activities and vii) security.

The BRIDGE project builds an understanding of the standards and principles which underpin good electoral administration. It has been developed by electoral administrators themselves as well as people with wide experience of elections in many different countries and contexts.

The aims of the BRIDGE project are to:

- strengthen electoral administrators capacity to conduct their work in an effective and efficient manner;
- enhance electoral administrators' professionalism;
- build teams and networks that strengthen electoral administrators' capacity to conduct their work in an effective manner; and
- build an understanding of the standards and principles that underpin good electoral administration.

The BRIDGE methodology:

- **is not prescriptive**. It encourages participants to develop creative and appropriate solutions to challenges;
- **is flexible**. The course has been developed in modules, and can be taught so as to cover all aspects of electoral administration, or to focus on specific elements of the electoral process;
- **is adaptable to regional and cultural contexts**. It can be modified to meet the specific needs of clients;
- i**s activity-based**. There is limited traditional lecturing in the course. Participants are called on to play an active role in the course, the aim being to draw on their own skills and experiences;
- **is practically focused**. The course seeks to develop skills in areas which are important in electoral administrators' day-to-day work. It emphasises an understanding of the relationships between different tasks as a vital tool for meeting tight deadlines effectively;
- **emphasises teamwork and network building**. Participants get to know each other, and have the chance to build networks either within their own organisation, or among different organisations, countries and cultures;
- **is global in scope** and seeks to use comparative examples to illustrate options; and
- emphasises the importance of **best practice, based on content developed** by electoral experts from around the world.

ASSISTANCE TO POLITICAL PARTIES AND PARLIAMENTS

A viable political party system capable of representing different groups, interests and opinions and with strong grassroots links is an essential part of a democratic multi-party system.[48] Building political parties and strengthening parliaments is especially critical to democratisation in post-conflict situations.

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48   See also UNDP's Engagement with Political Parties: www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs/Policy-Pub-EngagementPolitical%20Parties.pdf; and A Handbook on Working With Political Parties: www.undp.org/governance/docs/policy-pub-polpartieshandbook.pdf.

Support to political parties

While the provision of support to political parties is a delicate and often controversial exercise, donors often recognise that political parties are essential elements of democratic societies and represent primary vehicles for the expression of public will.

It should be recognised that intergovernmental organisations, (e.g., UNDP) are not the main actors in the area of political party assistance. Such assistance has historically been delivered primarily by party-based NGOs (e.g., German party foundations, the National Democratic Institute) and/or multi-partisan NGOs (e.g., the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy).

Current best practice in political party assistance emphasises non-partisan and inclusive approaches and does not need to be limited to formal political parties. Support to political parties focuses on areas such as:

- establishing a dialogue between parties on electoral reform and other policy issues;
- integrating human development and gender equality principles into internal party activities and platforms;
- internal operations of parties — e.g., organisational leadership functions, day-to-day systems and procedures, financial management, fundraising, campaign planning, candidate selection and training and transparent appointment processes;
- long-term capacity development, particularly in the area of policy development;
- media outreach; and
- specific initiatives for women, youth and political party finance.

There is also a purely technical dimension of assisting political parties. This dimension includes:

- training on the electoral system and its consequences for parties' voter information campaigns;
- electoral management structures and financing, and importance of EMB independence;
- voter registration procedures and enfranchisement rules;
- candidates' registration and parties' procedures;
- media law and regulations to ensure fair and equitable access to media;
- rules on political party finance and disclosure of contributions; and
- party platforms and policy positions.

Political party assistance should recognise the linkages and potential synergies with parliamentary assistance. This is important because elected candidates' role in parliament will be shaped by their political affiliations and understanding of how democratic processes work.

An effective way to provide support to political parties while ensuring the neutrality of the project and of the assistance provider could be, in some cases, to channel support through EMBs or identify another cross-party/non-partisan mechanism for delivering assistance.

Working with political parties is a somewhat delicate area within electoral assistance owing to the sensitive issue of impartiality.

One of the main rules of UNDP involvement in the area of party support is that if support is to be provided, it should aspire to the principles of impartiality of the UN. While it may not always be possible or practical to provide equal support to all political parties, particularly when there is a large number of parties but only a few have national representation, the criteria for supporting political parties should be clearly defined and should be conveyed to all stakeholders in a public and transparent manner.

Under UNDP projects, funding should never be provided directly to political parties and activities if such support would clearly be seen as a direct endorsement of a specific party; this must be avoided. All assistance should be capacity-building, technical or advisory in nature. In some places, UNDP has put resources (in the form of libraries, vouchers for print shops, transportation expenses, resource centres with computers and internet access, etc.) at the disposal of political parties on an equal or equitable basis and based on strict eligibility criteria.[49]

All assistance should be capacity-building, technical or advisory in nature

Basic principles to apply to cooperation with political parties include:

- assessing impartiality;
- emphasising indirect and/or issue-based support in situations that are sensitive or otherwise difficult to understand;
- respecting the democratic process and always bearing it in mind as the ultimate objective of support;
- working with parties that behave responsibly and have a 'project for society';
- clearly demarcating the line between capacity development and endorsement;
- practising transparency and accountability;
- refraining from supporting one party in a way that blocks out other parties;
- being practical and realistic about institutional capacity to interact skilfully with parties; and
- identifying opportunities for encouraging dialogue among parties and developing joint understandings of policy issues, even if parties disagree about approaches.

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49   See also UNDP Handbook on Working with Political Parties: www.undp.org/governance/docs/policy-pub-polpartieshandbook.pdf.

Support to parliaments

Credible, transparent and fair elections and functioning democratic parliaments are two pillars of a democratic governance system in any country around the world. It is important to underline that for fledgling democracies and countries recovering from crisis, elections are not an end, but rather a beginning — a critical but nonetheless preliminary step in the transition to democratic governance. Realising the promise of elections and minimizing the risk of public disillusionment with the democratic process requires investments in long-term democratic development, in particular the consolidation of governing institutions like parliaments.

Thus there is a need to promote greater linkages and synergies between electoral assistance work and parliamentary development. It would be short-sighted for international partners such as the EU and UNDP to commit huge financial resources towards encouraging more credible parliamentary elections in partner countries, for example, and not at the same time focusing adequate attention on assisting those same elected parliaments in serving their citizens better. UNDP supports parliamentary institutions primarily in recognition of their important role in democracy and development, but also because the existence of effective democratic oversight institutions is essential in light of many donors' shift toward budget support as a vehicle for development assistance. Consequently, parliamentary development is an integral component of UNDP services in democratic governance, with activities aimed at enhancing the representative, legislative and/or oversight capacity of parliamentary institutions in the governance process.

Parliaments are fundamental to establishing the rule of law, protecting human rights, overseeing transparent governance processes, and ensuring national compliance with international obligations. As the representative institutions of governments, parliaments have central roles to play in ensuring the participatory, transparent, and accountable workings of government. Members of parliament can help hold governments accountable to their citizens by means of their popular mandate as well as their legislative and oversight functions vis-à-vis the executive. Citizens are also placing ever higher demands on governments and parliamentarians, with many now expecting the state to act as a buffer against rapidly changing international economic and political circumstances.

Programmes in support of parliaments can sometimes have a disproportionately large impact relative to the amount of funding allocated to them. While the pivotal role of parliaments is widely recognised, they sometimes lack the institutional and political space to translate their potential into tangible results. Therefore, with the heightened complexity, challenges and expectations facing parliaments, there is a commensurate need to scale up assistance to parliaments and target assistance effectively.

Global activities

Currently, UNDP supports 69 parliaments around the world. Now in its third phase, the Global Programme on Parliamentary Strengthening (GPPS) works at the global, regional, and national levels. The programme

is an 'incubator' of innovative ideas and approaches to parliamentary development. At the global level, GPPS activities help UNDP to continue to play a leadership and advocacy role in the field of parliamentary strengthening through a soon to be created consensus-building and agenda-setting parliamentary development report; through continued efforts towards the establishment of benchmarks and standards for democratic parliaments and various parliamentary and government effectiveness initiatives; and through the creation of two multi-lateral web-based platforms.

1. AGORA

In 2010 UNDP established, with its partners (including the European Commission and the European Parliament, the World Bank Institute, International IDEA, and NDI), the AGORA portal (www.agora-parl.org). Its creation stemmed from a close review of the challenges of supporting a stronger role for parliaments as participative, constructive and dynamic institutions.

AGORA is a multilateral initiative embodied in a stand-alone reference Web site on parliamentary development; its main targets are parliaments, parliamentarians, donors, practitioners and other actors such as academics, CSOs and the media. AGORA is structured as a tool that can benefit all actors engaged in supporting parliaments and parliamentary staff to better integrate development policies into their daily work (including legislation drafting, oversight, and representation) as well as helping practitioners in the field in support of parliaments. It is also a venue for practitioners of parliamentary development and for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to gain insight into international best practices and regional initiatives. The portal is currently available in French, English, and Russian, and will be soon in Spanish and Arabic.

2. Benchmarks for democratic legislatures

Parliaments are increasingly assessing themselves against international norms and standards as they seek to become more independent, accountable and responsive, and to improve the way in which they carry out their representative, legislative and oversight functions. Over the last three years, UNDP has continued to support the development of an international consensus on **standards for democratic parliaments**. In the future, UNDP expects these tools to inform and improve South-South cooperation and UNDP's own parliamentary development programming

3. iKNOW Politics

In 2007, recognizing that over the last century women's gains in the political arena have been slow and inadequate, five international organisations — UNDP, the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), International IDEA, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) — came together to make women's political participation their collective priority and launched the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics). iKNOW Politics is a multilingual online portal, in English, French, Spanish and Arabic, that aims to increase the participation and effectiveness of women in political life by utilising a technology-enabled forum to provide access to critical resources and expertise, stimulate dialogue, create knowledge, and share experiences among women in politics.

The short-term impact of iKNOW Politics has proven the capability of a Web site to advance women's political participation in new and innovative ways as well as scale up other traditional development strategies, such as networking, building awareness, mentoring, etc. The iKNOW Politics Web site plays a central role in achieving this goal by offering users the opportunity to i) access resources, including the online library and the information and expertise of other users, experts and practitioners; ii) create knowledge through mediated discussion forums, information exchange and consolidated expert responses to member queries; and iii) share experiences by using tools specifically designed to facilitate the exchange of lessons learned and best practices among members of a global community committed to the advancement of women in politics.

Regional activities

Regional programming facilitates a thematic approach as a strong entry point for the democratic governance agenda in a specific region (political party legislation in the Arab region, crisis prevention and recovery issues in West Africa). Linkages between the regional programming and existing democratic governance programmes in a region facilitate the scaling up of activities and agenda for democratic governance reforms, particularly on sensitive topics.

Parliamentary Development Initiative in the Arab Region (PDIAR)

In the Arab States region, GPPS is working with the UNDP Programme on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR) to create and support thematic parliamentary networks focused on improving parliamentary oversight and promoting transparency and accountability. In 2010, the **Parliamentary Development**

Initiative in the Arab Region (PDIAR), launched in 2004 as a joint project of GPPS and POGAR, worked on consolidating its role as the most active actor in the area of parliamentary development in the region. Efforts were made to produce more knowledge and strengthen existing networks of parliamentarians that had been launched by the regional initiative in the past few years, and to explore options for follow-up through supporting country-level projects. PDIAR launched a national parliamentary working group in Morocco with the aim of reviving the debate on reforming political party legislation, and continued its support to the work initiated in Jordan in 2009. PDIAR also worked towards reforming the legal framework that governs the oversight function of Arab parliaments, and was successful in consolidating the regional working group on Strengthening the Oversight Function of Arab Parliaments.

Parliaments and crisis prevention and recovery

On the basis of UNDP Guidelines for the International Community on Parliaments, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP launched a set of activities to better address and enhance the crucial role parliaments play in crisis prevention and recovery. In 2010, the agency's parliamentary development and crisis prevention activities at national, regional and global levels in three regions (namely the Arab States region, Central America and West Africa) prompted the development of a methodology on building the capacity of parliaments to respond to crisis prevention and recovery issues through a dedicated self-assessment tool. That tool has been shared with regional parliamentary groups in the Arab States region, Central America and West Africa and piloted in two countries in West Africa (Togo and Guinea-Bissau) to effectively support the capacities of parliaments to address these challenges in conductive political environments. Moreover, parliamentary working groups have been launched and consolidated in those three regions on key crisis prevention and recovery CPR themes, including security sector reform SSR. These regional networks are composed of both members of parliaments (MPs) and parliamentary administration staff from the regions who have been actively engaged in sharing their experiences and facilitating South-South exchanges within each region on key crisis prevention and recovery themes. Their engagement efforts have focused on regional meetings as well as on the AGORA parliamentary development platform where dedicated regional groups have been created to continue the dialogue (www.agora-parl.org).

National activities

UNDP currently supports 69 parliaments around the world. Of those, 21 projects are implemented in fragile and crisis countries.

Examples from national activities

In **Mauritania**, UNDP managed to continuously support the parliamentary administration during the coup in 2009, confirming the parliament as the key institution where the national political dialogue could continue through support to all political factions represented in the parliamentary committees. In the

wake of recent (early 2011) events in the **Arab States region**, UNDP was requested to provide technical expertise to the Tunisian High Authority for Political Reform on the development of a draft law on political parties and political parties funding on the basis of UNDP's specific comparative advantage as a convener of all political leaders to encourage and facilitate dialogue on key development and political issues. In **Sierra Leone**, UNDP worked towards enshrining in national law key provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); this effort was approached by promoting three gender bills through awareness-raising campaigns, civic education, extension of gender awareness building to the sub-national levels, and support to the parliament. **In Nigeria**, UNDP worked with over 200 politicians across different party lines on issue-based campaigns, media and political engagement skills, and image management for the April 2011 elections. The agency and its local partners focused on developing anti-conflict sensitive campaign methodologies; highlighting the importance and benefits of inclusiveness; establishing strong intra- and inter-party relations; and creating minimum standards and regional benchmarks for political parties to effectively prevent conflicts and engage in state-building. In 2008, as part of a UNDP project with the **Pakistan** parliament, legislators were linked with provincial and national CSOs to conduct public consultations in their constituencies on key human development issues. MPs benefited from expertise from CSOs and were able to use the information gathered to reflect on draft laws being considered that will impact issues as diverse as health, education and security.

GLOBAL PROGRAMME FOR ELECTORAL CYCLE SUPPORT

Through a generous contribution from the Government of Spain, UNDP launched a three-year global initiative in July 2009 to help countries improve their electoral laws, processes and institutions, and to enhance the participation of women in electoral processes.

Based in Brussels, the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS) seeks to enhance the credibility, transparency, effectiveness and sustainability of electoral institutions and processes, with a particular emphasis on capacity development, South-South exchanges, inclusive participation and women's empowerment. GPECS takes an electoral cycle approach to assistance, while seeking also to integrate electoral assistance into a wider framework of democratic governance. Activities are implemented at global, regional and country levels.

At the global level, GPECS develops and maintains an innovative policy agenda, global knowledge products and tools in cutting-edge areas, and the elections community of practice. At the regional level, GPECS focuses on the exchange of good practices, peer networking and knowledge creation and dissemination in all regions — Africa, Asia-Pacific, Arab States, Latin America/Caribbean and Europe/CIS. At the country level, the programme seeks to reinforce the capacity of electoral EMBs to play their role in the professional, transparent and credible administration of elections at the national and local levels; to enhance the relationships between EMBs and key electoral stakeholders such as political parties, civil society and the media; and to reinforce women's political and civic participation.

The focus of the country-level activities is in sub-Saharan Africa, given the volume of UNDP's electoral assistance in this region. GPECS also bolsters UNDP's internal capacity to deliver effective electoral assistance by placing additional electoral and gender expertise in headquarters units and in the regions to support country offices and national stakeholders. Although led by the Democratic Governance Group of BDP, the programme is a joint endeavour involving other UNDP entities including regional bureaus and regional centres, UNDP Brussels and the PSO in Copenhagen. It is implemented in close collaboration and coordination with EAD and draws on and supports ongoing global and regional initiatives such as the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, the BRIDGE project and the JTF. The GPECS Programme Management Team is based in Brussels and is located in the same office complex as the JTF.

GPECS supports the work of the JTF to ensure that country and, in some cases, regional level projects designed through the country window of the GPECS benefit from the early collaboration of other potential partners such as donors to the programme. GPECS supports the regionalisation of the work of the JTF by helping expand the reach of the JTF through the provision of additional staff and consultants based in the Brussels UN/UNDP office. Closer coordination and harmonised cooperation between the JTF and GPECS advisors in the regional centres also strengthens the JTF work. And in response, GPECS draws on the expertise of the JTF when delivering electoral cycle support at the national level. This is an important step given the expertise that the JTF has acquired during the last years in the areas of resource mobilization, operational support, training activities, guidance for formulation and implementation of projects.

The JTF is working in close coordination with, is supported by, and in turn provides support to the UNDP regional centres in Dakar, Johannesburg and Bangkok. These are the frontline providers of Africa and Asia/Pacific regional and country level support for the agency. GPECS provides further support to the JTF to perform its duties following the revised operational guidelines, particularly for formulation missions; joint monitoring and quality support mechanisms; implementing research and studies on issues related to the role of the contribution of the EC and EU Member States in UNDP electoral assistance programmes at country level; delivering and further developing training on effective electoral assistance and related thematic workshops; interacting with and coordinating the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network and Training Programme of IFE Mexico; and cooperating with regional institutions.

NOTES

NOTES

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Photos
Correct answers

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Photo 1:
Training in Brussels 2007

Photo 2:
Poll Workers Count Ballots in El Fasher, Sudan
After a five-day voting period in Sudan's general elections, officials with the National Elections Committee begin to count ballots at a polling station, April 2010, El Fasher, Sudan
UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran

Photo 3:
PNTL and UNPOL Educate Voters in Dili
Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) officers, José Antonio and Carla Ramos, together with Albert Harvey from the UN Police (UNPOL), educate voters ahead of the October 2009 village (suco) elections in Dili's sub-districts. Here they hold a poster with voting times and instructions. The elections give communities the opportunity to vote for village chiefs — a role traditionally inherited — and members of village councils.
15 September 2009. Dili, Timor-Leste
UN Photo/Martine Perret

Photo 4:
Sudan Elections Committee Holds Workshop for Local Journalists
The High State Committee of the National Elections Commission, based in El Fasher, Sudan, holds a workshop for local journalists on procedural details of the country's April 2010 elections.
17 January 2010. El Fasher, Sudan
UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran

Photo 5:
Presidential elections in Haiti
On election day, workers count ballots at a polling station in Croix-des-Bouquets, near Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
28 November 2010. Croix-des-Bouquets, Haiti
UN Photo/Logan Abassi

Photo 6:
Long Queues Characterize Congolese Elections
Congolese women and men from all walks of life queue up outside the polling centre in the 'Muzipele quarter' in Bunia, Ituri, to cast their ballots in the second round of the presidential and provincial elections of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
29 October 2006. Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo
UN Photo/Martine Perret

Photo 7:
Voter Registration Finger Printing
Finger printing of Cani Diakite, a resident of Dabou, during the identification process for the 2008 elections in Côte d'Ivoire
UN Photo/Ky Chung

Photo 8:
United Nations Mission in Nepal - 80-Year-old Nepalese Woman Participates in Historic Elections
Eighty-year-old Ratna Maya Thapa from the Central Region of Nepal shows her voter registration card after walking for one and a half hours to cast her ballot in the Nepalese Constituent Assembly elections.
10 April 2008. Dolakha, Nepal
UN Photo/Nayan Tara

Photo 9:
Voter Registration Identification Photo Shoot
Voter registration photo shoot of Siratiguie Bamba, a resident of the village of Dabou, for the 2008 elections in Côte d'Ivoire
UN Photo/Ky Chung

Photo 10:
 A close-up of registration cards, filled out by a staff member, on the opening day of a referendum registration centre in Juba, Southern Sudan, in November 2010 prior to the January 2011 referendum on independence.
UN Photo/Tim McKulka

Photo11:
Women in Juba, Southern Sudan, vote in their country's national elections, the first to take place in almost 25 years, April 2010
UN Photo/Tim McKulka

Photo 12:
A voter from Zam Zam Internally Displaced Persons Camp, North Darfur, submits her ballot on the first day of Sudan's national elections.
11 April 2010. Zam Zam, Sudan
UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran

CORRECT ANSWERS:

Chapter 1

1=a, 2=c, 3=c, 4=e, 5=c

Chapter 2

1=b, 2=e, 3=a, 4=e, 5=c, 6=d, 7=a, 8=f, 9=b, 10=a, 11=c, 12=c, 13=d, 14=c, 15=a, 16=a, 17=c, 18=c, 19=b, 20=e, 21=c, 22=a, 23=a, 24=a, 25=b, 26=c, 27=c, 28=c

Chapter 3

1=b, 2=a, 3=f, 4=c, 5=b, 6=h, 7=b, 8=e, 9=d, 10=b, 11=c, 12=a, 13=g, 14=c, 15=g, 16=a, 17=a, 18=d, 19=e, 20=d, 21=c, 22=a, 23=f, 24=e, 25=d, 26=c, 27=e, 28=b, 29=e, 30=c