European Commission
United Nations Development Programme
International IDEA

In collaboration with

Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
International Organization for Migration
Canadian International Development Agency
Organization of American States

Thematic Workshop:
Elections, Violence & Conflict Prevention

Barcelona, 22-26 March, 2010
Presentation

Electoral Cycle Approach

Meaning of Sustainability

Activities

Inhibitors and Possibilities

Pillars of Sustainability

OECD DAC – International Conference
Moving from a scenario where elections were primarily an internal matter of states to a new one where a wide number of countries reformed their electoral systems and processes.
some countries were largely unprepared to go through major democratic transitions that featured crucial elections. Electoral institutions not always possessed the necessary experience and knowledge to guarantee electoral administrative and technical quality. The lack of comparative knowledge to there was no electoral assistance in the 1990s.
electoral management bodies confront a whole set of new challenges: building the trust of the various stakeholders in the electoral process.

The Knowledge Gap

Credibility Gap

Electoral Assistance in the New Millennium
loss of credibility and mistrust in the electoral process, electoral disputes, electoral violence or civil strife voters’ apathy and low turnout an elected government that lacks of the required legitimacy
ILLUSTRATION: CONFLICT PREVENTION OVER SUCCESSIVE ELECTORAL CYCLES

- E: Election Date
- Crisis Management
- Proactive Elections Programming

Illustration designed by Chris Spies
The electoral cycle

three main segments

Sustainable Electoral Processes

THE ELECTORAL CYCLE

1. Pre-electoral period (preparations)
2. Electoral Period (operations)
3. Post-election period (strategy)

THE ELECTORAL CYCLE

- Legal Framework
- Planning & Implementation
- Training & Education
- Verification of Results
- Voting Operations & Election Day
- Electoral Campaign
- Registration & Nominations
- Post Election

Organised within: UNDP
With the support of: ODA, IOM, OAS
Partners: lnternational Centre for Transitional Justice, Barcelona International Peace Resource Center

0x0
Post-electoral period

Building credibility and sustainability

~ 3 years

electoral calendar

period in-between elections
Some internationally assisted elections have so many resources available that they set up unsustainable processes and expectations that are difficult for a national EMB to continue/meet. Unfortunately this is a consequence of the event-driven support, focusing primarily on election day.

**Challenges**

The new electoral cycle approach aims at building local capacity and processes that are cost-effective and sustainable in the long run.
What do we mean by sustainability?

Sustainability refers to electoral policies and practices which are:

1. cost-effective and realistic; and

2. meet the needs of stakeholders both now and in the future.

Sustainability aims to minimize reliance on external inputs and resources.
One of the central goals is to make international electoral assistance redundant by building locally owned capacity and by making EMBs and electoral processes and practices sustainable in the long run.
Support to electoral event

what could the consequences be if no follow-up assistance is provided during the post-election period?

PERIOD “IN BETWEEN ELECTIONS”

- loss of capacity and know-how
- loss of institutional memory
- lack of incentives, demotivation
- duplications and gaps

building of local capacity
provision of electoral support
what actions can be taken in the period between elections?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>learning from evaluation, observer recommendations</th>
<th>needs assessment, technical evaluation and audits</th>
<th>development partner coordination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>institution strengthening &amp; capacity development programmes</td>
<td>updating voters’ register</td>
<td>upgrade or re-use technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dialogue and stakeholder consultation</td>
<td>parliamentary support, legal reform</td>
<td>civic education programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peer review</td>
<td>regional networks, peer support, exchange programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Elections**
Parliamentary elections – 2004

Parliamentary elections – 2009

Parliamentary elections – 2014

Support of international community

EMB capacity

TIME

ACTUAL CAPACITY

0%

100%
Inhibitors for the post-election period

- lack of donor appeal
- lack of resources
- political disinterest
- lack of motivation
- post-election fatigue

- pre-election period
- election period
- post-election period
Possibilities of the post-election period

- Define long-term sustainable support programmes
- Structural reforms, institutional strengthening and long-term capacity development
- Donor coordination
- Evaluate lessons learned and recommendations
- Adopt and apply lessons and recommendations
- Real beginning of a new cycle
- There is no immediate operational and political pressure
- Opportunity for review, strategic thinking, planning and action
the post-election period offers the opportunity to provide sustainable support that lasts throughout the electoral cycle

need to move away from the notion of ad-hoc assistance

need to ensure continuity of assistance during the post-election period

need to plan support through a process of thinking ahead, rather than reacting to each electoral event as it occurs

need to pay more attention on role and functions of an EMB outside the immediate urgency of a specific electoral event

need to support electoral processes and institutions in the context of democratic governance focusing especially on parliament, media and civil society.

Increase, support south-south cooperation and regional organizations of EMBs also via regional projects

an easy choice...
OECD DAC NETWORK ON GOVERNANCE (GOVNET)

First Roundtable
International Support for Elections:
Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems

Supported by:
United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID)
United Nations Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political Affairs (UN, DPA)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
European Commission (EC)
International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

1 March 2010
OECD Conference Centre, Room CC5

DRAFT AGENDA

OECD DAC NETWORK ON GOVERNANCE (GOVNET)
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
2, rue André Pascal 75016 Paris FRANCE
Advancing adoption of the electoral cycle approach:

**Overcome bad spending habits.** Funders of electoral assistance should strive to overcome entrenched funding habits—including tendencies toward short-term, piecemeal, and trend-driven funding—that work against the electoral cycle approach and instead commit to long-term, comprehensive, and coordinated funding for elections work.

**Keep spreading the word.** Election assistance organizations should continue training and outreach efforts to widen and deepen understanding of the key elements and principles of the electoral cycle approach among their staff and partners.

**Align the shape of demand with the preferred shape of supply.** Partner governments, along with their election management bodies and other relevant domestic actors, should aim to align their requests for elections assistance with the basic values and principles of the electoral cycle approach.

**Avoid an elections aid ghetto.** Donors and election aid providers should more actively integrate elections assistance with the larger domain of democracy support activities, especially political party aid, legislative assistance, media assistance, civic education programs, and efforts to support domestic accountability.
Bolstering conformance to aid effectiveness principles:

Amplify the concept of ownership. Efforts to strengthen electoral processes should be owned by the whole society in question, not just a partner government. Election aid providers should embrace a broader interpretation of local ownership as country ownership rather than government ownership.

Learn more about impact, and act on it. Funders and implementers of elections assistance should recognize the necessity of and commit the necessary resources for more deep-reaching evaluations of the impact of such assistance. As a greater understanding of impact becomes available, they should undertake efforts to incorporate that learning into assistance practice.

Build on donor coordination. The imperative for donor coordination will become even stronger as more election aid interventions follow the comprehensive electoral cycle approach. Both providers and recipients of elections assistance should
Enhancing policy complementarity:

Ground electoral aid in complementary diplomatic policies. Policy makers should recognize the need to ground elections assistance in complementary diplomatic policies that seek to nurture or reinforce commitment on the part of partner governments to adhere to accepted electoral norms. Rooting election aid interventions in incisive political economy analyses that highlight crucial power dynamics and political constraints will assist such policy complementation.

Take electoral risk seriously. Funders and implementers must respond to the recent rise in electoral and post-electoral violence in diverse contexts by giving greater attention to electoral risk in the design and implementation of electoral aid interventions.

Don't misuse electoral aid. Election aid should be used only to promote free and fair elections, not for the sake of advancing other national policy goals, such as burnishing the legitimacy of favored partner governments.

Respond more consistently to flawed elections. Governments committed to