



European Commission  
United Nations Development Programme  
**Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance**



# **UN Framework for electoral assistance**

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# Presentation

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**Definitions**

**Brief Historical Background**

**UN Mandate and Procedures**

**The new Trend and the Electoral Cycles**

**Scenarios and Electoral Assistance Responses**

**Training Content and Objectives**

**Division of Labour EAD-DPA and UNDP and Actors**

**Lessons Learned**



## Electoral Assistance

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- ☐ **Electoral Assistance is the legal, technical and logistic support provided to electoral laws, processes and institutions**
- ☐ **By “Effective Electoral Assistance” we mean all the initiatives and activities that are intended to improve the quality and impact of electoral assistance to partner country electoral institutions**



# The origins

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- ☐ Election assistance activities have been part of the external relations' agenda of several established democracies since the end of World War II
- ☐ With the end of the Cold War the support for the establishment of functioning and transparent governance institutions was acknowledged as a priority for the creation of more stable, peaceful and economically sustainable democracies
- ☐ Apart from few exceptions related to the role covered by the OSCE in Eastern Europe, there can be singled out three main actors in the provision of election assistance: the UN, the EC and the US.
- ☐ The initial commitment from all of them was related to electoral observation or the provision of logistical support



# The UN

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- ☐ **First involvement in electoral activities, with the Trusteeship Council. Observation or supervision of more than 30 plebiscites and referenda around the world**
- ☐ **Between the end of 1980s' and the early 1990s' the UN deployed major electoral missions of three kinds:**
  - 1) 1989 - UNTAG Namibia – Supervision and Control**
  - 2) 1993 – UNTAC Cambodia– Organization and conduct of elect**
  - 3) 1994 - ONUSAL El Salvador – Verification**
- ☐ **GA Resolution 46/137 “Enhancing the Principle of Periodic and Genuine Elections”**

# Mandate and procedures

The UN Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities in the UN system is the **USG for Political Affairs**.

The Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities was mandated by the **GA resolution 46/137** (March 1992)

The Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities should, among other tasks, ensure **consistency** in the provision of UN electoral assistance.





# Electoral Assistance Division

The Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) supports the Focal Point to fulfill his mandate in all areas covered by GA resolution 46/137:

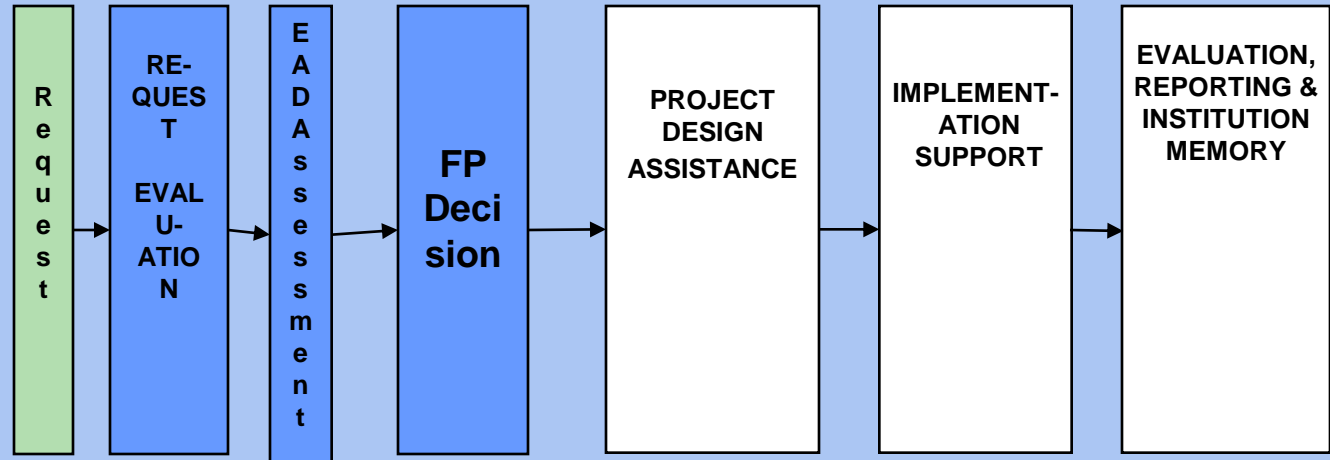
- Review requests for electoral assistance and ensure consistency
- Maintain a roster of electoral experts
- Identify and maintain UN electoral standards
- Serve as the institutional memory of the UN in the electoral field
- Maintain contact with other regional and intergovernmental organizations



# Procedures

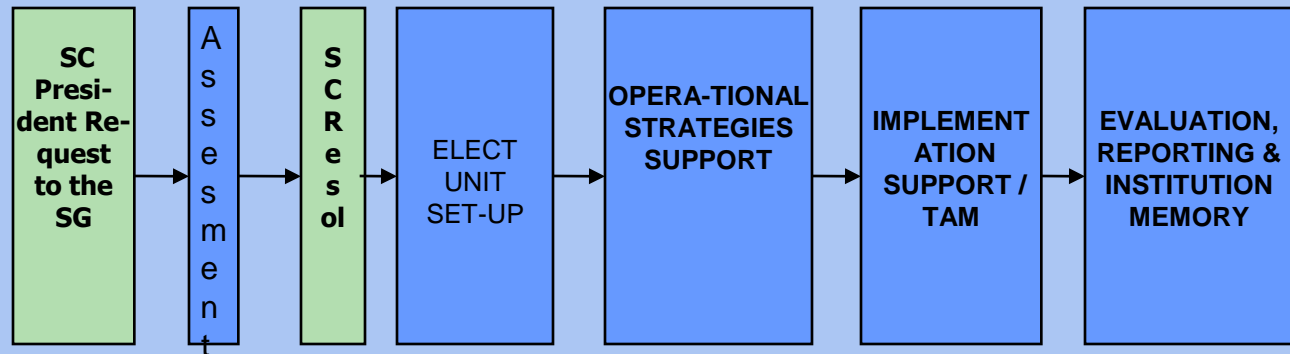
## 1. Request by Member State

(1) Standard procedure



## 2. UN Mission

(2) Post-conflict settings






# Electoral Assessment

- **The Member State request for electoral assistance should be sent by the authority entitled to speak on behalf of the state at international level**
- **Needs Assessment provides the Focal Point with a technical and political assessment of the electoral environment for its decision on respectively the feasibility and adequacy for the UN to provide electoral assistance.**
- **Assessments are increasingly completed jointly with UNDP. An executive summary and a list of recommendations can be shared with the electoral authorities and the donors.**
- **Related to assessment, an ongoing dialogue between UNDP and EAD is essential to: identify the necessity and the appropriate moment for the assessment and to address and prevent political crisis as early as possible**



# UN System

<p>(1)</p> <p>Standard technical assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provided by UNDP</li></ul> 	<p>(2)</p> <p>Post-conflict settings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Supported by DPKO, DPA and UNDP</li></ul> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Offers technical advice and assistance to electoral authorities (see DPA-UNDP Note of guidance on electoral assistance)</li><li>- Manages some 40-50 field-based projects per year</li><li>- Focus on long-term capacity-building approach</li><li>-Supports coordination among donors and national and international actors at the country level</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- In the last biennium: ten cases of assistance have been provided in post-conflict situations through peacekeeping or special political missions</li><li>- Support is provided on the basis of a Security Council or General Assembly mandate.</li><li>- Examples: Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire, Iraq, Afghanistan, Nepal, Sudan</li></ul> 

**Other UN Partners: UNV, UNOPS, IOM, UNDEF, OHCHR, UNDESA**



# Key UN Actors

## **United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)**

charged with SC/GA mandate for electoral assistance in many post-conflict situations, which is implemented through a peacekeeping missions in partnership with the other country team members, particularly UNDP.

**United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS)** is a service provider which assists UNDP, DPA, DPKO and Member States with operational and other support in electoral events.

**United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)** has as part of its mandate support to improve public administration. UNDESA is collaborating with seven institutional partners the "ACE: the Electoral Knowledge Network" initiative.



# Key UN Actors—Continued

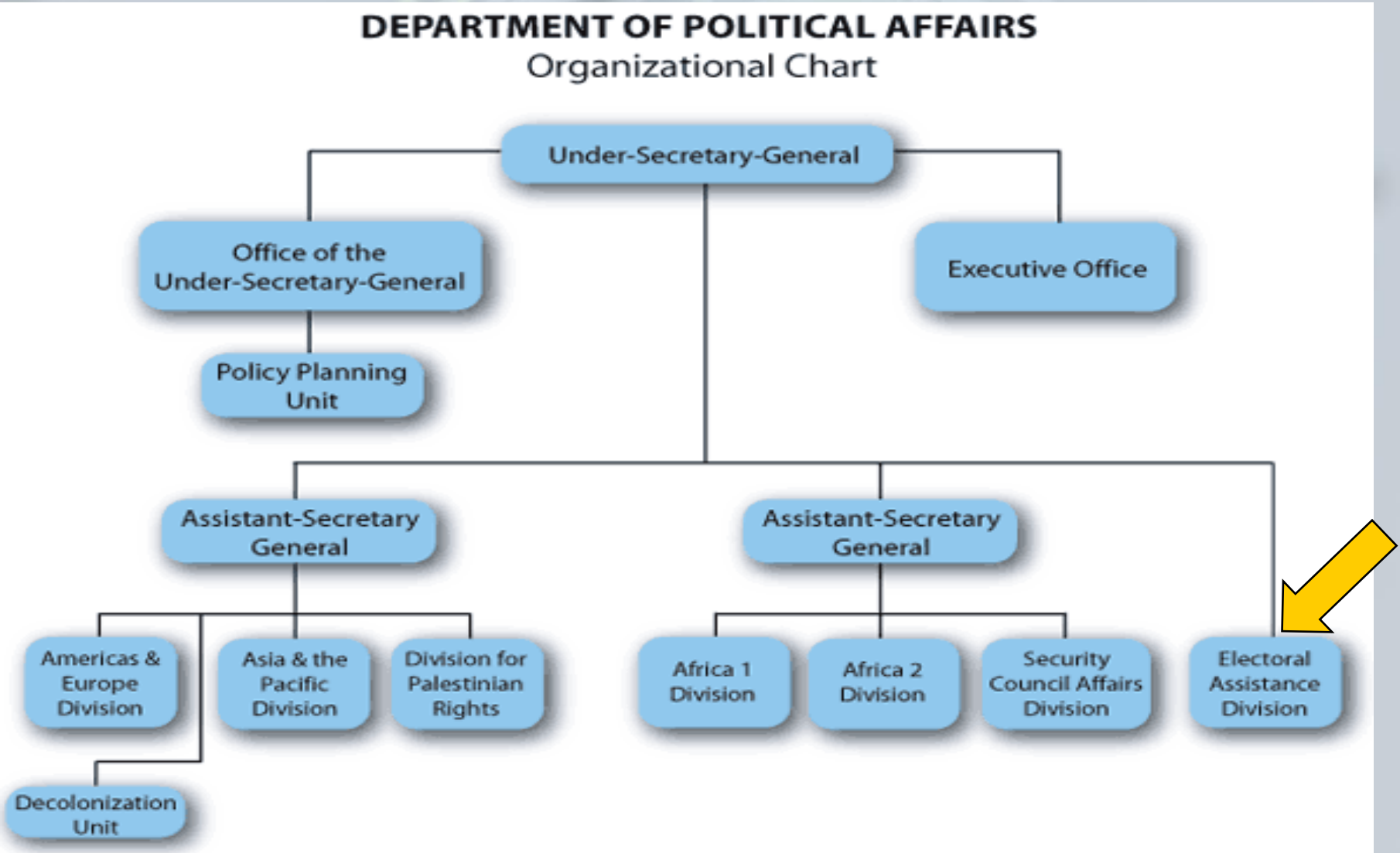
**United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF)** UNDEF, established in 2005 as a United Nations General Trust Fund, supports democratization globally. UNDEF finances projects in a number of areas, including electoral support, political parties, and civic education. It is intended to complement UN efforts to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide.

**United Nations Democracy Fund (UNFPA)** Is a key partner in cases where a census is being done that will ultimately affect the electoral processes of registration, boundary delimitation, etc.

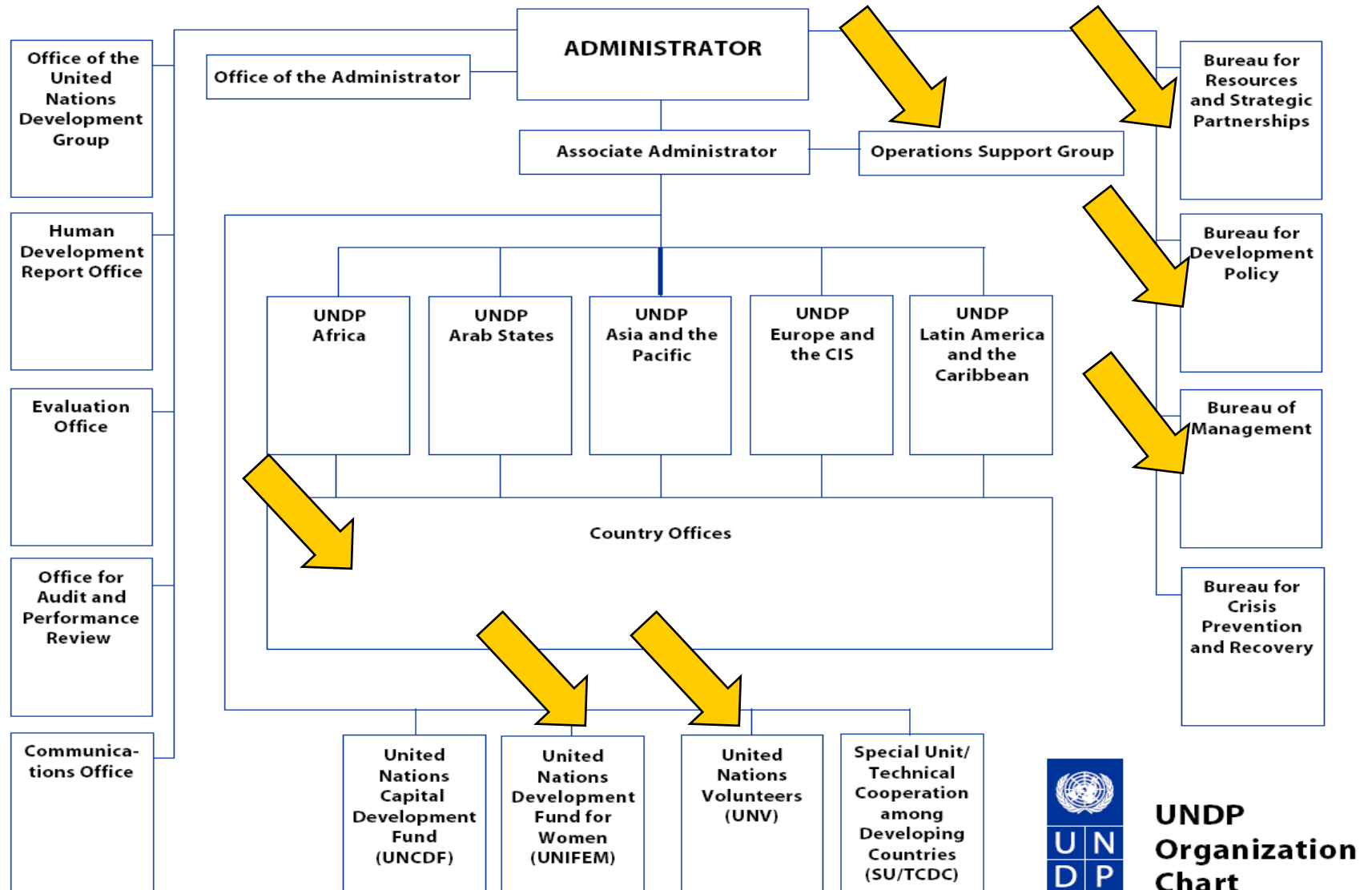
**International Organization for Migration (IOM)** has frequently implemented out-of-country registration and voting (OCV) programmes for conflict-forced migrants. IOM has also acted as a service provider to European Union Electoral Observation Missions and now will implement the NEEDS project with International IDEA



# DPA Organization Chart



# UNDP Organizational Chart



**UNDP  
Organization  
Chart**





# **10-Year Review of UNDP Electoral Assistance (1990-2000)**

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## **Why?**

**To distill lessons/recommendations for:**

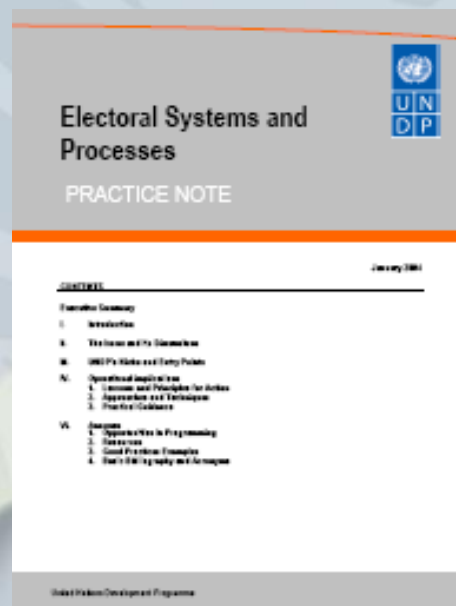
- **UNDP country offices**
- **UNDP and UN policy bodies**
- **UNDP corporate policy on electoral assistance**
- **Broader governance programming agenda**
- **Institutional memory**





# 10-Year Review Findings

- **Approach of UNDP**
- **Gov / Poverty agendas**
- **Civic / Voter education**
- **Donor coordination**
- **Resource mobilization**
- **Logistical support to international observers**
- **Lead time**
- **Information-sharing and evaluation**



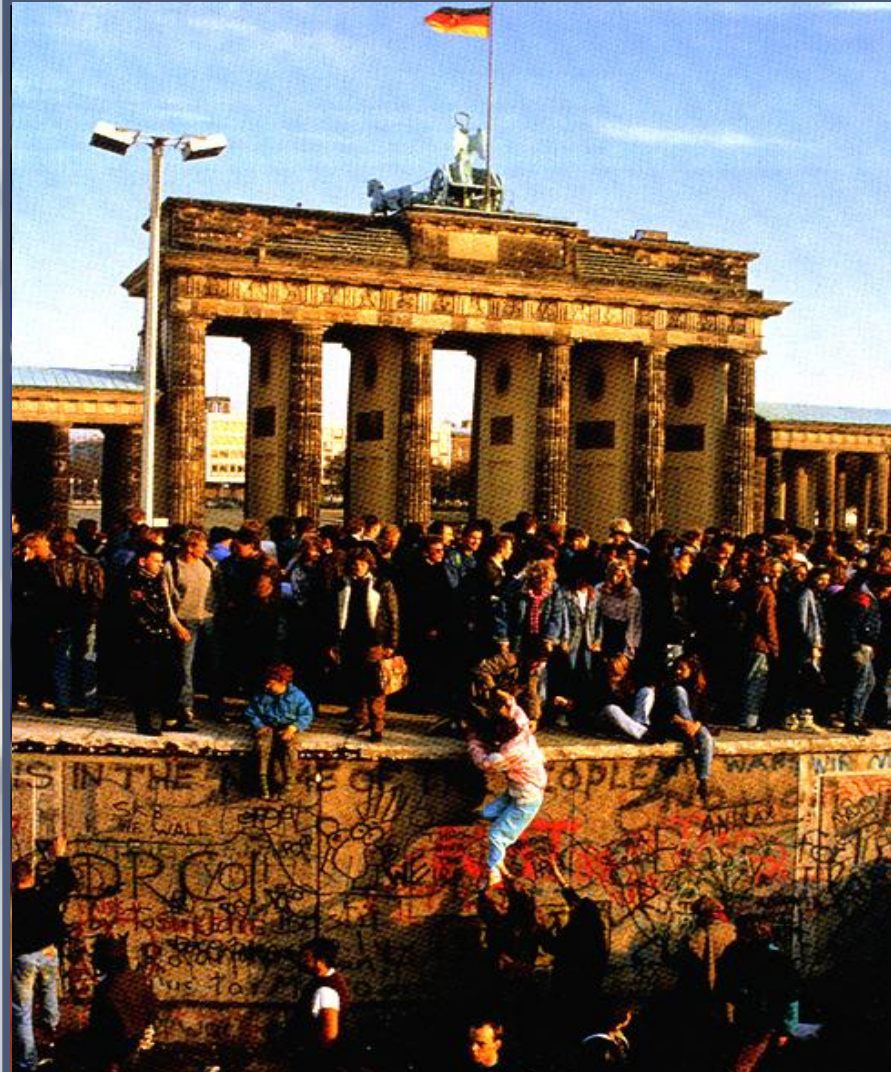
# Electoral Assistance in 1990s



Moving from a scenario where elections were primarily an **internal matter** of states

**EXTERNAL  
SCRUTINY**  
**NO**  
**EVALUATION**

## DEMOCRATISATION WAVE



To a new one where a wide number of countries **reformed** their **electoral systems** and **processes**

# Electoral Assistance in the New Millennium



electoral management bodies **confront** a whole set of **new challenges**:

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

reversing situations of **professional stagnation**

## CREDIBILITY GAP



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

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

solving **political**, **financial** and **logistical** constraints undermining **their work** and the **credibility of the elections**





# Electoral Assistance in the New Millennium

## CREDIBILITY GAP

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**



# Global Practice Mtg Manila 2004

## UNDP needs...

- To bridge the gap b/n 'election' and 'electoral' – in policy, design and implementation
- Guidance on working with political parties
- An implementation guide – what UNDP does, how... substance but + resources, coordination
- To leverage partnerships
- especially with the EC and IDEA



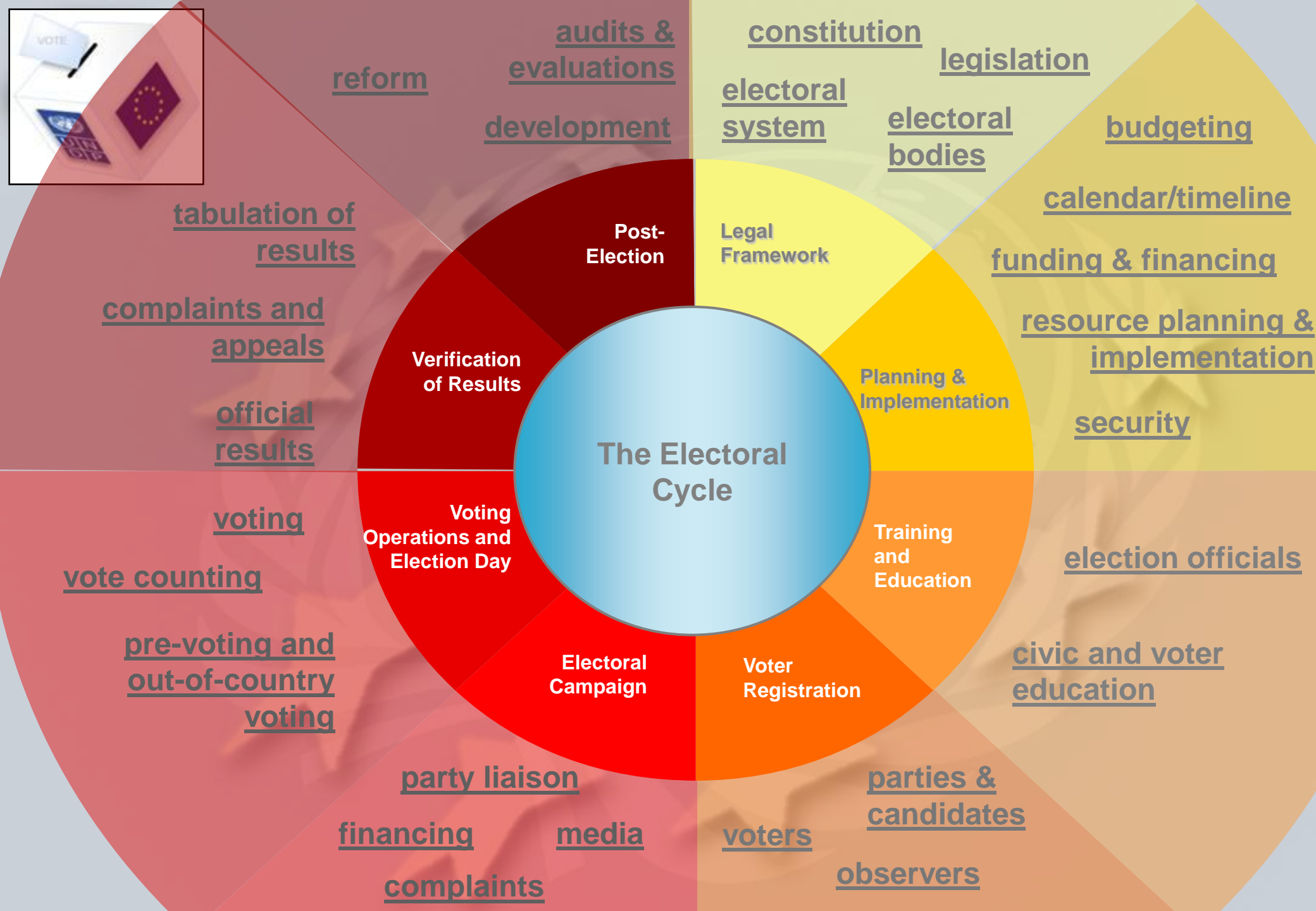


## **Election Assistance VS Electoral Assistance**

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- ☐ **Election assistance is the support for the single electoral event, whilst electoral assistance is the support for the whole process**
- ☐ **Post electoral and inter-election periods are as crucial as the build up to the elections themselves**
- ☐ **It requires regular inter-institutional contact and support activities before, during and after election periods**
- ☐ **It should be based on the lessons learned and inter-institutional memory aiming at improved electoral processes in beneficiary countries, taking stock of all the steps of the electoral cycle**









# The electoral cycle

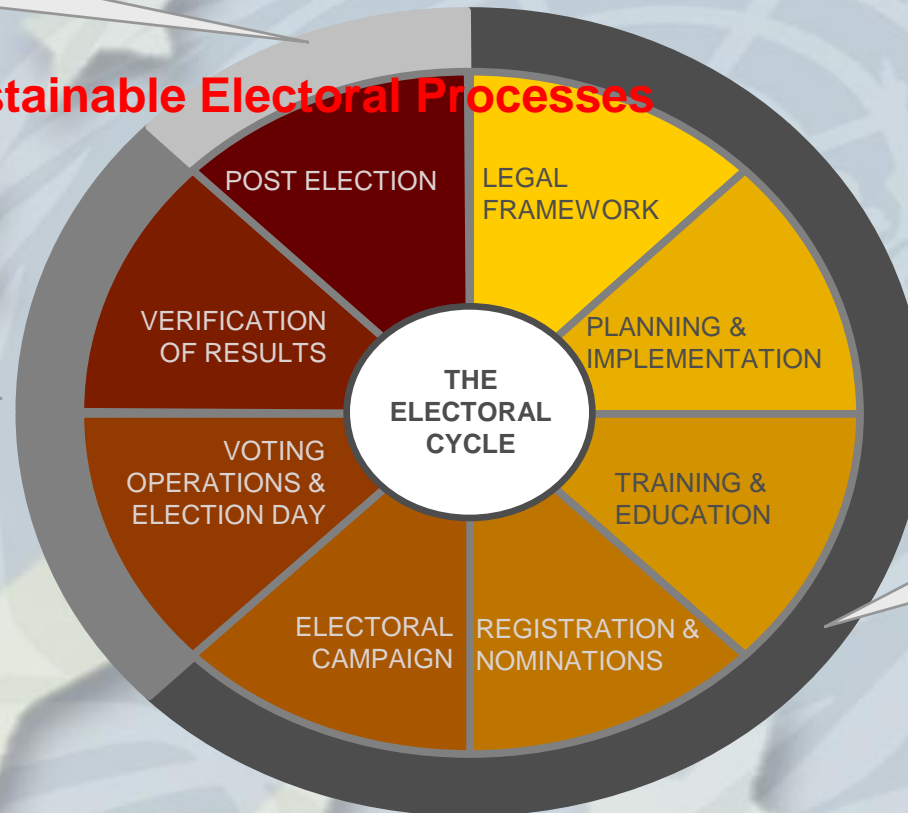
three main segments

post-election  
period (strategy)

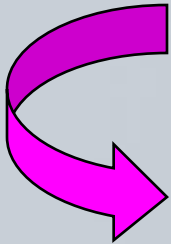
## Sustainable Electoral Processes

Electoral Period  
(operations)

Pre-electoral  
period  
(preparations)



# Practice Meeting Results



- **Electoral Cycle Approach**
- **Political Parties Handbook**
- **Implementation Guide**
- **Global Tools – ACE, BRIDGE, CORE**





# **Findings of UNDP Elections e-Survey (2006)**

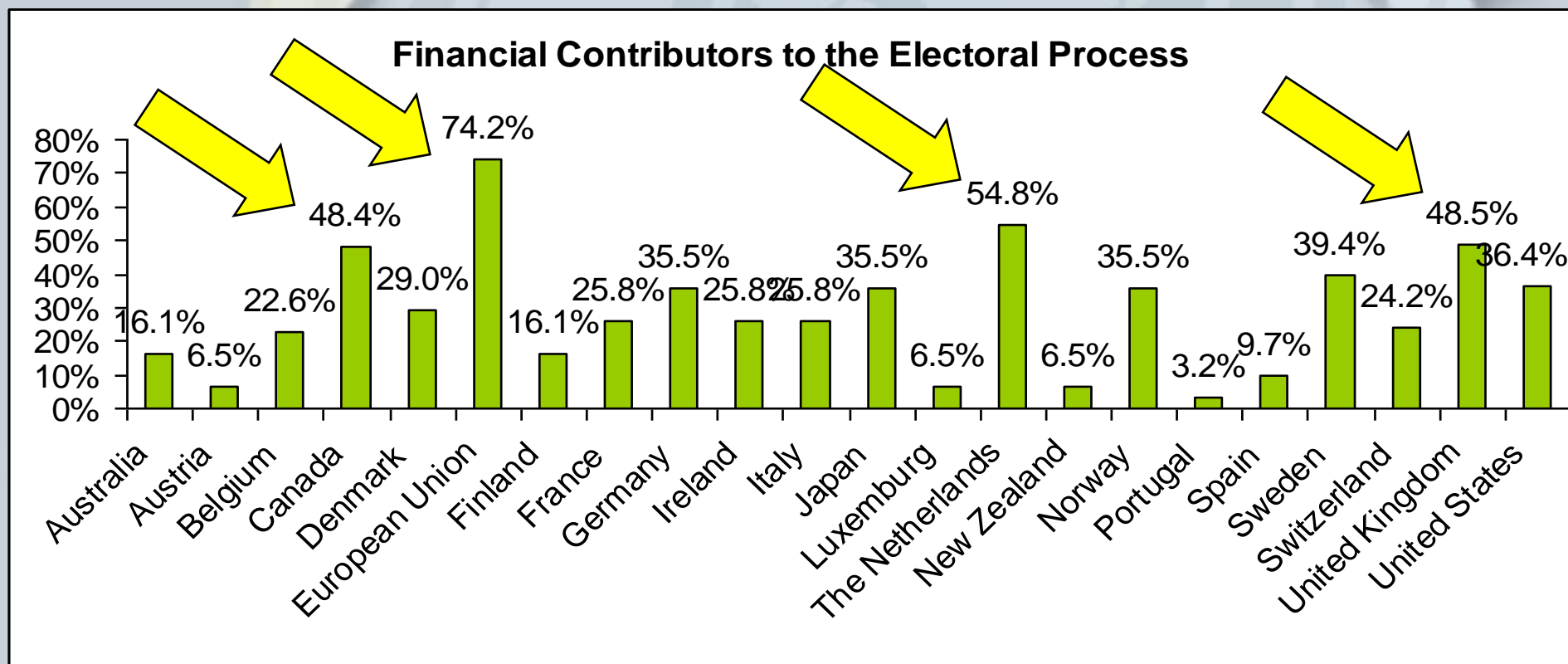
## **Challenges to Effective Electoral Assistance:**

- **Timing constraints**
- **Delays in disbursement of funds and allocations**
- **Financial management challenges**
- **National capacity challenges greater than anticipated**
- **Difficulties in engaging with national counterparts**
- **Voter registration: disputes, security and infrastructure**
- **Political party support**
- **Procurement technical specifications**



# Findings of UNDP Elections e-Survey (2006)

**“Who were the financial contributors to the UNDP election project?”** Respondents listed 21 countries and the European Union (%s reflect frequency of citation)



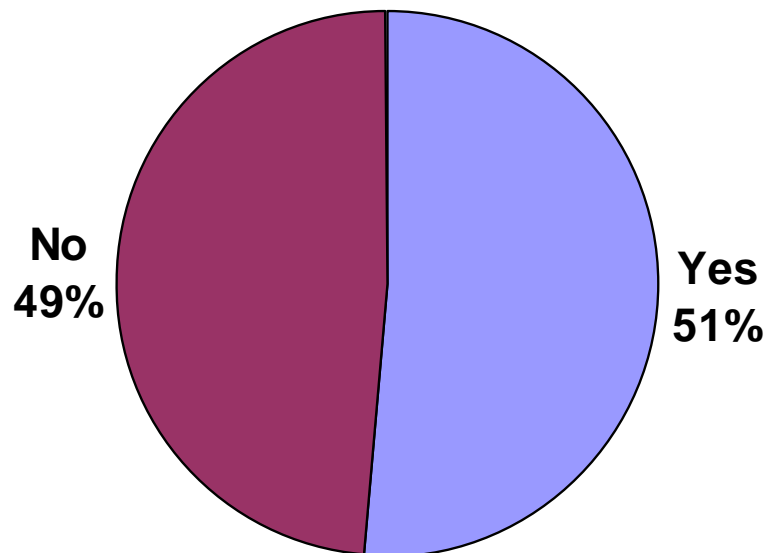




# Findings of UNDP Elections e-Survey (2006)

☐ **Q:** Do you feel you had sufficient training for the electoral support tasks you performed?

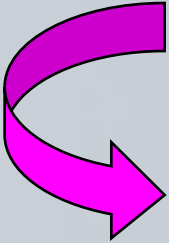
☐ **A:** Almost half said no.





# Actions to address survey

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## Training

- Capacity development of UNDP & EC staff
- Partnership building
- E-learning development

## Implementation Guide (2007)

- Audience is the non-expert practitioner
- Combines findings from 10-year retrospective, Manila, recent e-survey and some evaluations, advisory missions
- Some introduction to the “what”, more on the “how”





# UNDP Electoral Assistance Trends

**2004-2007 Exp. in Democratic Governance=US\$5.3bil**  
**Electoral Systems and Processes=18% of this (1/5)**

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



# Major Types of Assistance

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## **Traditional areas:**

- Electoral reform, administration, sustainable electoral processes
- Civic and voter education, inclusive participation
- Support to international and domestic observers
- Mobilization and coordination of resources/partnerships for electoral support

## **Newer areas:**

- Working with political parties
- Reduction of election-related violence and electoral dispute resolution
- Media and elections



# Factors Affecting Scope and Type of Assistance

- **Type of election**
  - national (presidential, parliamentary) or sub-national (local)
- **Environment in which the election takes place**
  - post-conflict, transition, third or fourth post-transition/post-independence election
- **Other prevailing conditions**
  - size of electorate, health of the national economy and national funding available for elections, aid depending vs. non-aid dependent, state of voter register and electoral institutions, physical constraints, etc.
- **Level of support of political actors for democratic processes per se**

# New Trends

The 2007 SG Report identified changes related to Member States requests:

- **Demand for electoral assistance continues to be high, and initial skepticism that such assistance might encroach on national sovereignty has gradually diminished.**
- **Requests to organize or observe elections have decreased substantially; technical advice and assistance to electoral authorities and other institutions is the norm.**
- **The complexity of requests is increased by technological innovations and local elections, which can be technically and politically more complex, and more costly, than national elections.**

Secretary-General (SG) Report on “Strengthening the role of the United Nations In enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization” (A/62/293) to the General Assembly

# New Trends

**The SG report also noted on the response given to request for electoral assistance that:**

- ❑ There is an increasing realization that building capacity to organize credible elections may require assistance over a sustained period.**
- ❑ Most UN assistance entails technical advice and capacity-building during an electoral period and within a longer-term development framework.**
- ❑ The UN now rarely observes elections whereas, in contrast, regional organizations tend to be increasing their activities in this area.**
- ❑ Too often, the technical successes of elections are overshadowed by political discord or violence and non-acceptance of the results.**

**In addition very few countries are starting an electoral process for the first time.**



# **Electoral Assistance Responses**

## **GA Resolution 2007**

**The General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/62/150) highlights a number of elements guiding the UN activities in the electoral assistance field including:**

- ❑ A request that the UN electoral assistance be provided throughout the entire electoral cycle**
- ❑ An appreciation of efforts to enhance cooperation with international, governmental and non-governmental organizations**
- ❑ An appreciation of comprehensive coordination, under the UN focal point for electoral assistance (the USG for political Affairs), between EAD, UNDP, DPKO**

**General Assembly (GA) Resolution on “Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization”, 2007**

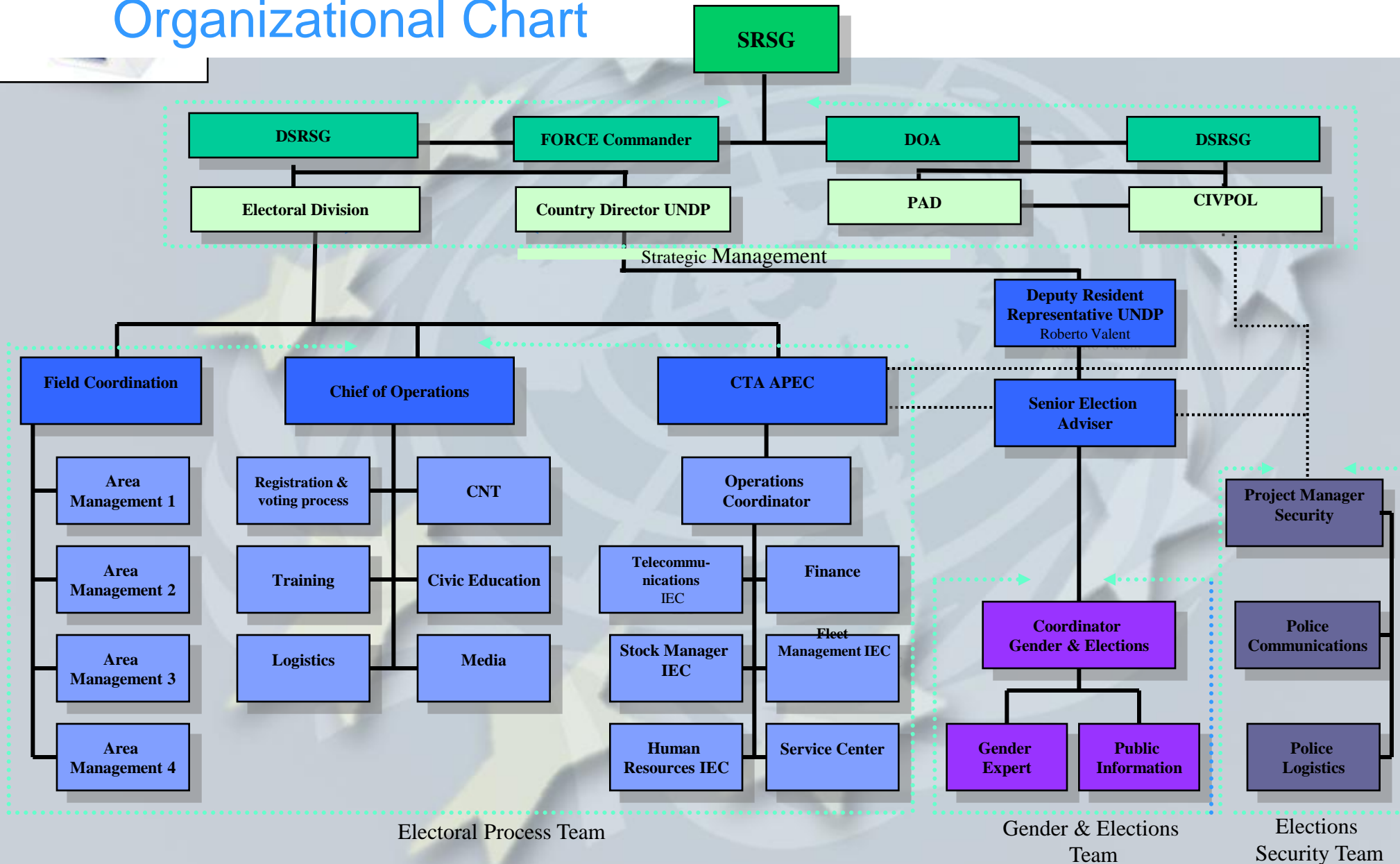
# Sustainable Approach

- **Process-oriented and Electoral cycle approach**
- **Integrated Missions:**
  - **The concept of integrated missions involves the country team in the provision of electoral assistance. UNDP continues to provide electoral support once the mission leaves and ensure an institutional memory.**
  - **The two major examples of integrated missions are DRC and Afghanistan**
  - **Discussions are currently being held within the UN system to specify the concept of integration and to assess its implementation modalities.**
  - **Organizational Chart DRC below**





# UN Integrated Electoral Assistance Organizational Chart



# Observation, Certification and Monitoring

- The UN has generally maintained the practice of not observing elections to which it is providing technical assistance, so as not to be in the position of evaluating its own efforts.
- UN observation is only conducted in specific cases and is always based on a UN General Assembly or Security Council mandate.
- Certification activities vary widely in the contexts and mandates. Recent examples are Timor-Leste and Cote D'Ivoire. Monitoring has been experienced in Nepal.
- In consideration of continued potential interest among Member States for UN certification, EAD is currently preparing clear policy guidelines for UN involvement.