



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

***Joint Training on  
Effective Electoral Assistance***

**DAY 1**

**Brussels, 22-26 October 2007**



# UN POLICY AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Craig Jenness  
Director  
Electoral Assistance Division  
Department of Political Affairs  
United Nations

Joint Training on  
Effective Electoral Assistance  
Day 1



# UN Focal Point for Electoral Assistance



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

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

The Focal Point for Electoral Assistance 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 fulfil 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



# Organigramme EAD

**Director** – Craig Jenness  
**Deputy Director**- Ali Diabacte

## COUNTRY SUPPORT

- Responses to requests for electoral assistance
- Allocation of responsibilities within the UN family on a country specific basis.
- Advising DPA regional divisions, DPKO missions and UNDP on the delivery of electoral assistance
- NAMs and missions.

**Team Leader:** Marco Carmignani

## POLICY/ INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

- Reports, research and policy papers
- Collect, analyze and utilize institutional electoral experiences and knowledge
- Guidelines, manuals, training and seminars.
- Promote exchange on electoral global policy and best practices

**Team Leader:** Kendra Collins

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

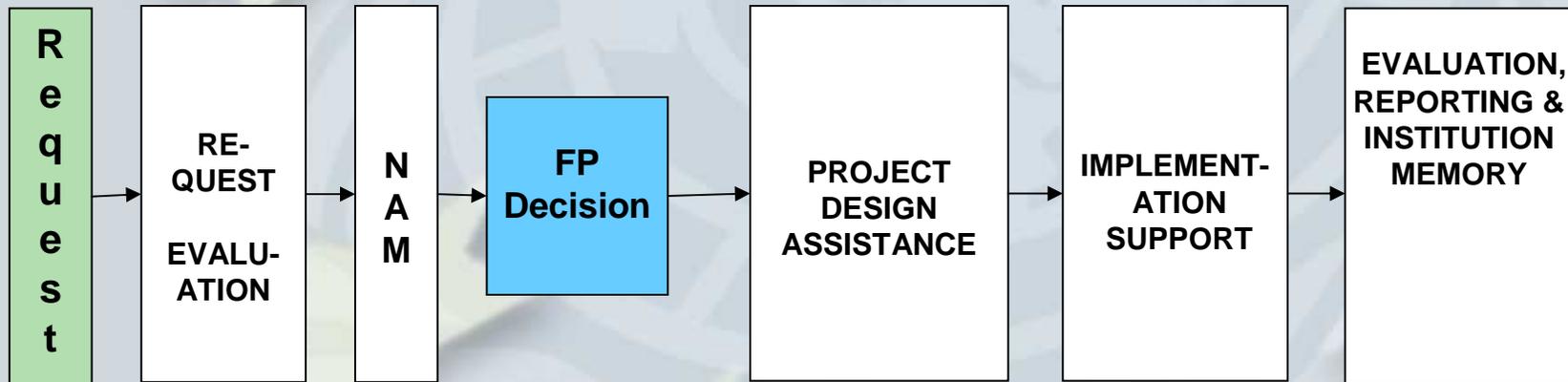
- Strengthening institutional networks and promoting knowledge and information exchanges with relevant non-UN actors
- Resource mobilization
- Forecasting and Evaluation
- UN/non-UN agreements

**Team Leader:** Robin Ludwig



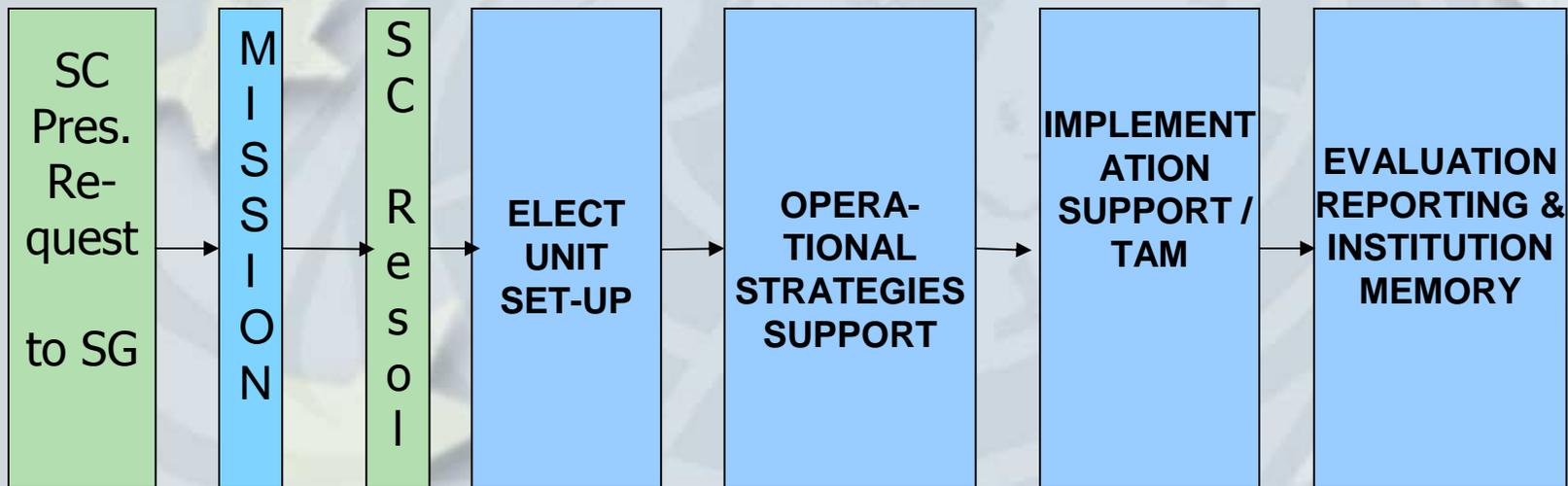
# UN Election Procedures

## (1) Standard technical assistance



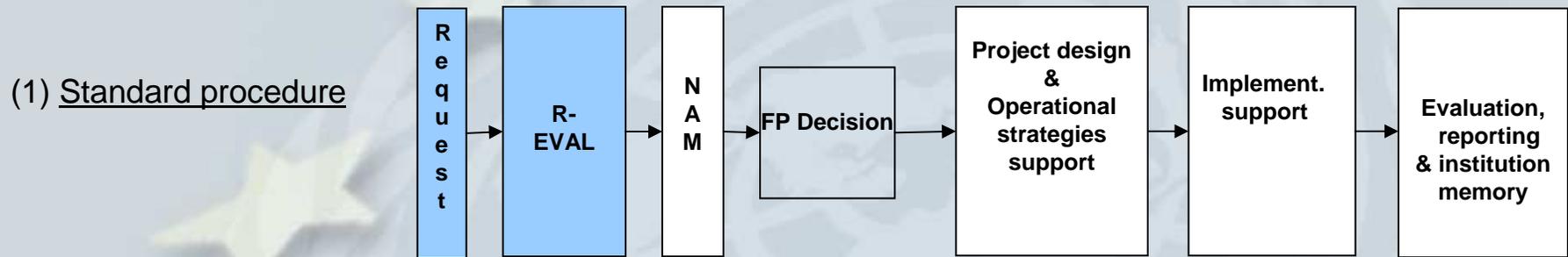


## (2) Peacekeeping settings





# Request by Member State

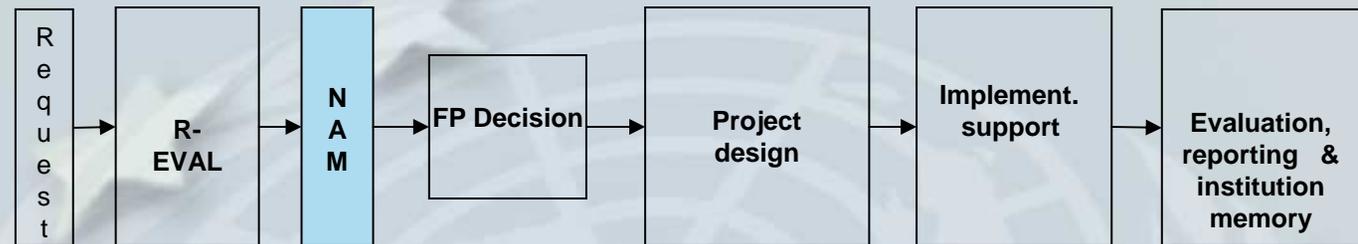


- Requests for assistance should be made no later than four months, but preferably at least six months before the electoral event.
- Regardless of where in the system the request is addressed (UN Resident Coordinator, head of Political Office, etc.), it must be forwarded to the Focal Point.
- Requests for electoral assistance should be made by the head of government, minister of foreign affairs, or the electoral commission. Requests cannot be made by groups within the legislature, nor by civil society or other groups.



# Needs Assessment Missions

## (1) Standard procedure



- NAMs are the primary tool used to decide whether to provide assistance and what sort of assistance to provide.
- NAMs provide technical and political assessments of the electoral environment. They clarify the feasibility of delivering that assistance within constraints such as political consensus, financial limits and/or time constraints
- During the course of the NAM, mission members will meet with government entities, political parties, civil society, and other actors. The mission will also meet with the international community and identify who is doing what and how best the UN can serve to support coordination of assistance.
- NAMs are usually composed of an EAD staff member and an expert consultant. Close cooperation with DPA Regional Divisions is maintained and DPA desk officers participate in missions in specific cases. Close cooperation is also maintained with UNDP at HQ and the country level and UNDP may participate with EAD in the missions.



# Criteria for assistance

Based on Resolution 48/131 (1994)

## **Appropriateness:**

- Is there is a clear need for United Nations assistance?
- Is there a national political consensus for UN assistance?
- Will the requested assistance correct an identifiable issue and improve electoral practices?
- What are the risks and potential problems of this assistance
- Will United Nations norms be respected through the provision of electoral assistance.

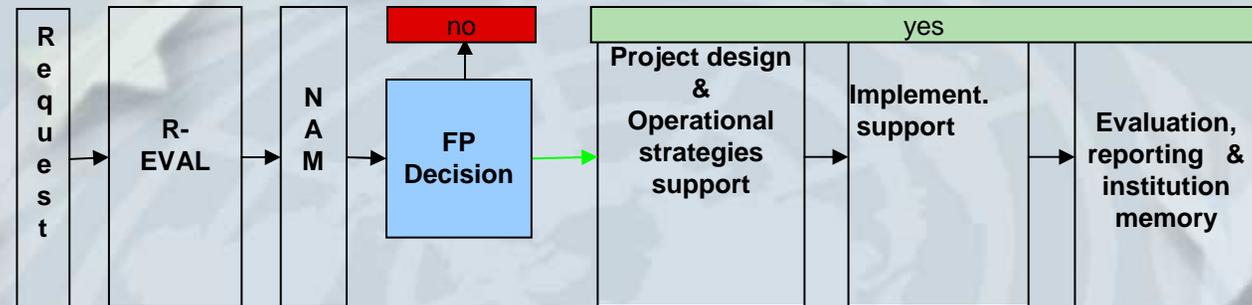
## **Technical feasibility:**

- What are the identified constraints and pre-requisites for delivering the requested assistance (e.g. time, resources)
- What is the full scope of necessary assistance (i.e. is more or less assistance necessary than was originally requested)
- Can the assistance be delivered with necessary quality considerate of the constraints



# Focal Point decision

(1) Standard procedure

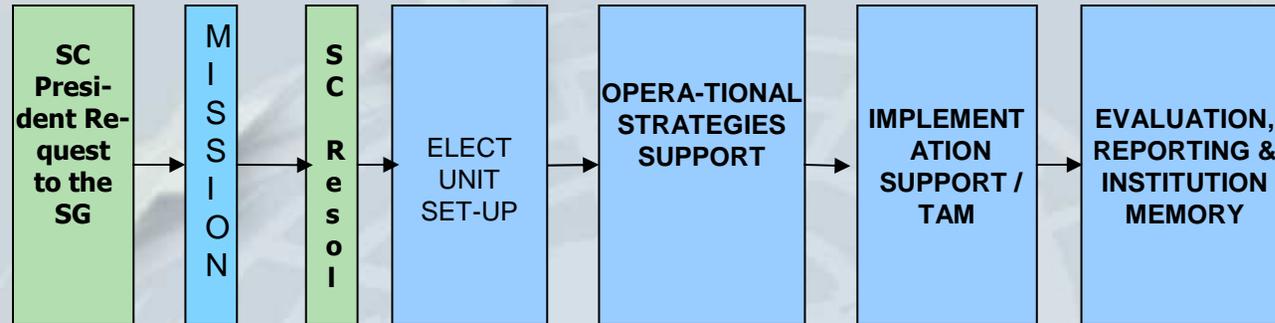


- Upon receipt of the NAM report, the Focal Point for Electoral Assistance, the USG for Political Affairs, decides whether to provide support and under what conditions
- Further to approval by the UN Focal Point, design and implementation of the proposed activity is done by the relevant agency, in accordance with the NAM recommendations.



(2) Post-conflict settings

# Mission Support



Based on a request of the president of the Security Council, a assessment mission is completed with EAD participation. The mission is responsible for producing a report to be submitted by the SG to the SC for decision. On approval of the report, the SC will prepare a mandate for the mission. If the mission mandate includes an electoral component, support is provided by EAD in the following ways:

- Helping to establish an electoral unit within the mission, including preparing the concept of operations and budget for approval of the Fifth Committee
- Providing operational support (expertise from the roster of electoral experts and technical assistance for all aspects of the process).
- Overseeing the evaluation and reporting on the mission.



# UN System

(1)  
Standard  
technical assistance  
UNDP



(2)  
Post-conflict  
settings  
DPKO and  
DPA



**-major implementing partner**

-offers technical advice and assistance to electoral authorities and other institutions with the advice and support of EAD (see DPA-UNDP Note of guidance on electoral assistance)

-manages some 40-50 field-based projects per year

**-long-term capacity-building approach** of electoral institutions and processes, including civil society awareness and participation.

-coordination among donors and national and international actors at the country level

- In the last biennium: twelve cases of assistance have been provided in **post-conflict situations** through peacekeeping or special political missions, on the basis of a Security Council or General Assembly mandate.

-Examples: Democratic Republic of Congo\*, Liberia\*, Sierra Leone\*, Timor-Leste\*, Haiti\*, Côte d'Ivoire, Iraq, Afghanistan\*, Nepal

-Trend towards **integrated missions**, and electoral cycle approach in post-conflict missions with electoral mandates;



# Note of Guidance (DPA-UNDP)

**-Clarifies respective roles of DPA & UNDP**

**-Explains procedures for providing electoral assistance**

## Annex II

### Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme: note of guidance on electoral assistance

#### Overview

1. Recognizing the need for strengthened system-wide coordination and implementation of electoral assistance activities, the present note is intended to clarify respective roles and standard procedures for the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the provision of electoral assistance to Member States and replaces all previous guidelines.

2. The United Nations system is engaged in a wide range of development assistance activities that are intended to support the efforts of Member States to promote democratic electoral processes and build sustainable capacity to manage electoral systems and processes. Member States most often request advice and assistance on the legal, institutional, technical and administrative aspects of organizing and conducting democratic elections or seek the Organization's assistance in supporting the international or domestic observation of electoral processes.

#### Objectives

3. The objectives of United Nations electoral assistance are two-fold:

(a) To assist Member States in their efforts to hold credible and legitimate elections in accordance with internationally recognized criteria;

(b) To contribute to building, in the recipient country, a sustainable institutional capacity to organize democratic elections that are genuine and periodic and have the full confidence of the contending parties and the electorate.

#### Roles and responsibilities within the United Nations system

4. In view of the increasing demand for electoral assistance and in order to ensure consistency in the handling of requests of Member States which were

organizing elections, the General Assembly, in resolution 46/137 of 17 December 1992, took steps to create an institutional framework to support activities in this area and recognized and affirmed the role of each of the main United Nations electoral assistance actors:

(a) **Focal point for electoral assistance activities.** In accordance with Assembly resolution 46/137, the Secretary-General, in 1992 appointed a focal point for electoral assistance activities "to ensure consistency in the handling of requests of Member States organizing elections ... to channel requests for electoral assistance to the appropriate office or programme ... to build an experience gained to develop an institutional memory, to develop and maintain a roster of international experts ... and to maintain contact with regional and other intergovernmental organizations to ensure appropriate working arrangements with them and the avoidance of duplication of efforts". The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs serves as the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance;

(b) **Electoral Assistance Division.** The Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs was established in 1992, initially as the Electoral Assistance Unit, to provide technical support to the focal point in carrying out his functions. The main role of the Division is to evaluate requests for electoral assistance, to identify and maintain United Nations electoral standards, to undertake needs-assessment missions, to assist the organizations of the United Nations system and other organizations in the design of electoral assistance project activities, to develop operational strategies for electoral components of peacekeeping operations, to maintain a roster of electoral experts, to facilitate the international observation of elections and to serve as the institutional memory of the United Nations in the electoral field;

(c) **United Nations Development Programme.** The Assembly, by resolution 46/137, recognized the role of UNDP in the provision of technical assistance for electoral activities and underscored the importance



# UN System

A variety of United Nations departments, programmes and agencies are also providing components of electoral assistance. Their activities reflect the increasingly sophisticated requests of Member States.

- The **United Nations Volunteers ( UNVs) Programme** provides staffing assistance for electoral missions. In 2006 some 445 UNVs provided support to six electoral missions. As of 31 July 2007, 576 UNVs were serving in seven electoral missions. UNVs are currently engaged in missions in Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Conakry, Haiti, Madagascar, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste and Togo.
- The **United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF)** has received financial support from 30 Member States from all regions. Its Board particularly invited civil society organisations and United Nations entities to submit project proposals. The Board recommended 125 projects, of which 28% related to "Civic Education, Elections and Political Parties". A total of 35 election-related projects were approved, all vetted by the Electoral Assistance Division and, as necessary, endorsed by the Focal Point for Electoral Assistance.
- The **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** has frequently implemented out-of-country registration and voting (OCV) programmes for conflict forced migrants. In 2006 the Ecuadorian Government requested IOM to formally observe the presidential out of country voting in a number of European countries. IOM also served as an implementing partner for several EU Election Observation Missions in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.



# UN System

- The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** continues to provide advice on human rights aspects of elections. For example, the Yaounde Sub-Regional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa is supporting democratization processes in the 11 countries of the region. In Timor-Leste, the Human Rights and Transitional Justice Section monitored polling stations in order to ensure that vulnerable voters (those in detention, in hospitals and internally displaced persons) were able to vote.
- The **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)** is collaborating with seven institutional partners (including the Department of Political Affairs and UNDP) in maintaining and expanding “ACE: the Electoral Knowledge Network”
- **The United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS)** is a service provider which assists DPA, DPKO, UNDP and Member States with operational and other support in electoral events. Prominent examples include the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti and Iraq. UNOPS coordinated international electoral observers for the Democratic Republic of Congo’s July and October 2006 elections. For Haiti's February 2006 elections, UNOPS provided services to the Provisional Electoral Council, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and the Organization of American States (OAS).



# Observation

- UN observation is only conducted in specific cases and is always based on a UN General Assembly or Security Council mandate.
- The UN tries to maintain the principle that the UN does not observe elections in which it is also providing technical assistance, so as to avoid a possible conflict of interest.
- The UN has increasingly been providing support for the coordination of international election observers, in request of the national authorities and international observer groups.



# Certification/Monitoring

- Certification of elections by the UN was first carried out by UNTAG in Namibia in 1989.
- Certification has risen again as a service requested by Member States from the UN, most recently in Timor-Leste, Cote D'Ivoire, and Nepal. These exercises vary widely in the contexts and mandates.
- In consideration of the remaining interest among Member States for support in this area, it is likely that similar activities will be required from the UN in the future.
- EAD is closely examining these cases, with a view to establishing clear policy guidelines for the UN and Member States in early 2008.



## SG report 2005-2007: Conclusions and Recommendations

- The role of the Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities should be re-emphasized and efforts should continue to define more clearly the division of labour within the UN family.
- The multiplicity of actors within the Organization can enhance effectiveness through application of comparative advantages, and increased specialization. However, more attention must be paid to system wide coherence and consistency.
- To meet the growing demand for complex electoral assistance, the United Nations should increase its capacity both to develop and disseminate electoral standards and best practices. Specific attention should be given to promoting the responsibilities of political participants, understanding that successful elections require more than just credible and transparent technical operations.
- A cyclical approach to electoral assistance helps ensure sustainability and should be encouraged.
- The need for appropriate human and financial resources will grow with continuing demand and increasing complexity of electoral assistance.
- The United Nations Trust Fund for Electoral Assistance should replace the Trust Fund for Electoral Observation to better reflect the shift of the Member State demands.



Electoral Assistance Division  
Department of Political Affairs  
United Nations Secretariat  
New York, New York 10017, USA  
Fax: +1-212-963-2979  
[ead@un.org](mailto:ead@un.org)  
(Same address for the roster)