Second Edition of the Thematic Workshop on Elections, Violence and Conflict Prevention

Pre-Election Phase - Conflict Triggers and Inhibitors
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Pre-Election Phase

❑ **Policy decisions concerning critical elements of the electoral legal architecture**

❑ **Policy decisions may trigger or inhibit electoral conflict in this and subsequent Phases of the Electoral Cycle**

❑ **Issues which fall outside of the mandates of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and electoral assistance initiatives**

❑ **HOWEVER..**

   EMBs and the assistance community must understand the conflict impact to be prevented or managed

Planning Principles for Electoral Conflict Prevention

❑ **Defined by a Set of Strategic Objectives**

❑ **Integrated among Electoral Conflict Stakeholders**

❑ **Stakeholders - Agents of Change to Change**

❑ **Identify the Gender Dimension to the Conflict**

❑ **Integrated into Broader Electoral Assistance and Conflict Prevention Programming**

❑ **Coordinate with Security Sector Reform**

❑ **Compliance with International Standards and Practice Norms**

Electoral Calendars and Conflict Prevention

❑ **Technical Calendars**

- Operational in nature and concern the administrative steps required to organize an election

❑ **Political Calendars**

- Negotiation on electoral legislation, electoral official appointments, qualifying candidates, and resolving disputes
- Political agreements on electoral timing and sequencing and other aspects of the electoral process

❑ **Peacebuilding Calendars**

- Prosecution of war criminals; Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration; demining

❑ **Electoral Conflict Assessment**

❑   **State Electoral Security Stakeholders**

❑ **Non-State Electoral Security Stakeholders**

❑   **Electoral Legal Architecture**

Electoral Conflict Assessment

❏ **Conflict Dynamics**

- Drivers or Perpetrators of Conflict
- Motives
- Tactics
- Targets or Victims of Conflict

❏ **Environmental Factors**

- Locations of Previous Conflict
- Anticipated Conflict by Electoral Phase
- Historical Intensity of Conflict

❏ **Conflict Profile**

Electoral Security Stakeholders

❏ **State Stakeholders**

- Regulatory
- Security
- Judicial

❏ **Non-State Stakeholders**

- Political Parties
- Civil Society Organizations
- Media Organizations
- Traditional Leaders

Electoral Legal Architecture

❑ **Constitutional Framework**

❑ **Electoral Systems**

❑ **Political Party Systems**

❑ **Defining the Electorate**

❑ **Election Management Body (EMB)**

Electoral Rules and Conflict Basic Principles

❑ **Rules can affect whether violence takes place, but also nature, form and location of violence**

❑ **Constitutional, electoral and informal rules can influence stakes**

❑ **Inclusion is an important basic principle (Atwood)**

Electoral Rules and Conflict Basic Principles

❑ **Broad trust, consultation and buy-in for rules – from political contenders as well as other stakeholders – are as important as rules themselves.**

❑ **Disagreement about rules can be a sign of troubles ahead**

❑ **Predictability is also important (certain rules, uncertain outcomes)**

❑ **Politicians, not electoral experts, make rules. EMBs and advisers often should identify how existing rules may shape violence, rather than advise on rules themselves. (Atwood)**

❑ **How are power and resources managed and distributed - predictability of rules**

❑ **Basic rules of the game can be formal or informal**

❑ **How much power do election institutions enjoy? What are the benefits of office?   How is power shared or decentralized (Atwood)?**

❑ **Static or Evolving Legal Environment**

❑ **Static**

- Historical Impact and Conflict
- Political Eligibility
- Electoral Stakes
- Type, Timing, and Sequencing of Elections

Triggers and Inhibitors

❑ **Evolving Legal Environment**

- Potential for conflict in reform process or as a result of reforms
- Constitution "drafting" and constitution "making"
- Drafting is the legal responsibility of putting the rights, ideals, and guarantees which are agreed upon into language
- Constitution making is the broadly collaborative and inclusive process of identifying the priorities and scope of the constitution to ensure broad acceptance of its terms and ideals (IDEA)

❑ **Reducing Stakes?   Sharing Power?   Type, Timing, and Sequencing of Elections? Opposition's Roles?**

Electoral Systems

❑ **Impact on behavior – creating incentives for conflict**

❑ **Repressiveness and Representativeness**

❑ **Majoritarian –**

- Winner-Take-All
- Promotes officeholder accountability
- Electoral engineering minority representation

❑ **Proportional (PR)**

- Inclusive of small parties
- Reserved seats for women and minorities
- Political fragmentation

❑ **Mixed - Mixed Member Proportional and Parallel**

Delimitation

❏ **Potential for conflict during the delimitation process and in the Post-Election Phase when representation is perceived to be inequitable**
  - India (2007)
  - Nigeria (2003) – Niger Delta

❏ **UN Peacebuilding Commission Priority in Sierra Leone (2007)**

❏ **Delimitation Conflict Prevention**
  - Impartial delimitation authority
  - Develop and publicize the standards for delimitation policy decisions
  - Transparent delimitation process
  - Channels for public comment
  - Appeal Mechanisms

Political Party Systems

❏ **Political Party Law – eligibility, prohibitions, regulation, and revocations**

❏ **"Electoralist"**

❏ **Interest Articulation**
  - Structured channels of communication between citizens and government

❏ **Aggregation**
  - A spectrum of issues and beliefs can be assembled and brokered

❏ **Party Primaries and Selection of Candidates**

❏ **Opportunities for Women in Political Party Leadership**

Political Party Vote Seeking Strategies

❑ **Bridging Strategies**

- Create a broad coalition across diverse social and ideological groups in the electorate

❑ **Bonding Strategies**

- Focus upon gaining votes from a narrower home base among particular segmented sectors of the electorate (Norris)

Electoral and Political Party Systems

❑ **Bridging strategies in majoritarian systems**

- Threshold for victory is higher
- Parties must reach out to diverse groups for support
- Centripetal

❑ **Bonding strategies for PR systems**

- Threshold for electability is lower
- Political appeals can be limited to a particular ethnic, linguistic, religious, regional or other segment of society
- Identity politics
- Centrifugal

Defining the Electorate

❏ **Age**

❏ **Residency – Internally Displaced Persons**

❏ **Disability**

❏ **Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

❏ **Diaspora**

❏ **Military and Other Security Forces**

❏ **Lustration**

Regulating Political Behavior and Conflict

❑ **Democracy requires participation for legitimacy**

❑ **Participation - competition can transform into conflict**

❑ **Institutions that regulate political behavior**

- Election Management Bodies
- Media Commissions
- Land and Boundary Commissions
- Anti-Corruption Commissions
- Political Finance Regulators

Election Management Body

❑ **Perceptions of EMB impartiality influences potential conflict through the Electoral Cycle**

❑ **Key Policy Decisions**

- Relationship to Government
- Appointment and Confirmation Process
- Appointment Authority
- Eligibility for Appointment/Composition of EMB
- Number of Members (Lopez-Pintor)

❑ **Structural Independence and Behavioral Independence**

❏ **Development of a profession versus professional development**

- Respect for the law
- Non-partisan and neutral
- Transparent
- Accurate
- Designed to serve voters (IDEA)

Role of New Media – Trigger or Inhibitor or Both?

❑ **Internet Electoral Web Sites**

❑ **SMS**
  • Indonesia (2005) coordinating 750 domestic observers
❑ **Ushahidi – Crowdsource Crisis Information**

❑ **"Facebook Revolutions"**
  • Tunisia (2011)
  • Egypt (2011)
❑ **Documentation or Abetting Electoral Crimes**
  • Russia (2011) Aroz
  • Electronic "chain voting"
❑ **Globalizing Electoral Violence**
  • Iran (2009)
❑ **Demonstration of Electoral Violence**
  • Haiti (2010)

Thank you…

Questions?