
Pre-Election Phase - Conflict Triggers and Inhibitors
Jeff Fischer

Barcelona 20-24 Jun 2011
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 Security Framework

- 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)
Electoral Rules and Conflict
Constitutional or Informal Rules

- 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)?
Triggers and Inhibitors

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)

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)

- 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
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
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
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
Electoral Administration Code of Ethics

- 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 – Crowdsourcing 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)
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Thank you...

Questions?