



Strategic and Operational Planning of Electoral Management Bodies

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Organized within:



In collaboration with:



CIDA
Canadian International Development Agency



IOM
International Organization for Migration



OAS
Organization of American States



Indian Elections, 2009

The Lok Sabha
543 elected seats



How do you plan for the following?

22,800 polling stations
1,368,430 electronic voting machines



714 million
registered voters

Police and civil personnel on duty **6.1 million**

Candidates come from **1,055** political parties

Elections are national and local events

Elections should be accessible

Elections are high-pressure events

Elections involve high stakes

Elections are expensive

Elections are periodic events

Elections are public events

Election administration is specialized

Elections seek to balance rights

Elections focus on public good

Elections should be predictable

Elections feed nation-building

The NATURE of ELECTIONS

a centralized effort that is able
into all areas of the country.

st understand and fulfill this objective.

date is set, election administration
meeting a series of deadlines;

There is no other government
function quite like preparing

for elections (except perhaps
preparing for war).

Election administrators must

be able to balance

Elections must exhibit an

overriding concern for

The electoral process should be

Elections must ultimately

be a *nation building* exercise,

rather than a divisive one.



EMB Planning Cultures?

- “If I see a nail, I look for a hammer”
- “Just do it. Get stuck in”
- “It just takes too much time...”
- “What’s the use? It won’t get done anyway.”
- “We already know what to do...”
- “There is still enough time...”

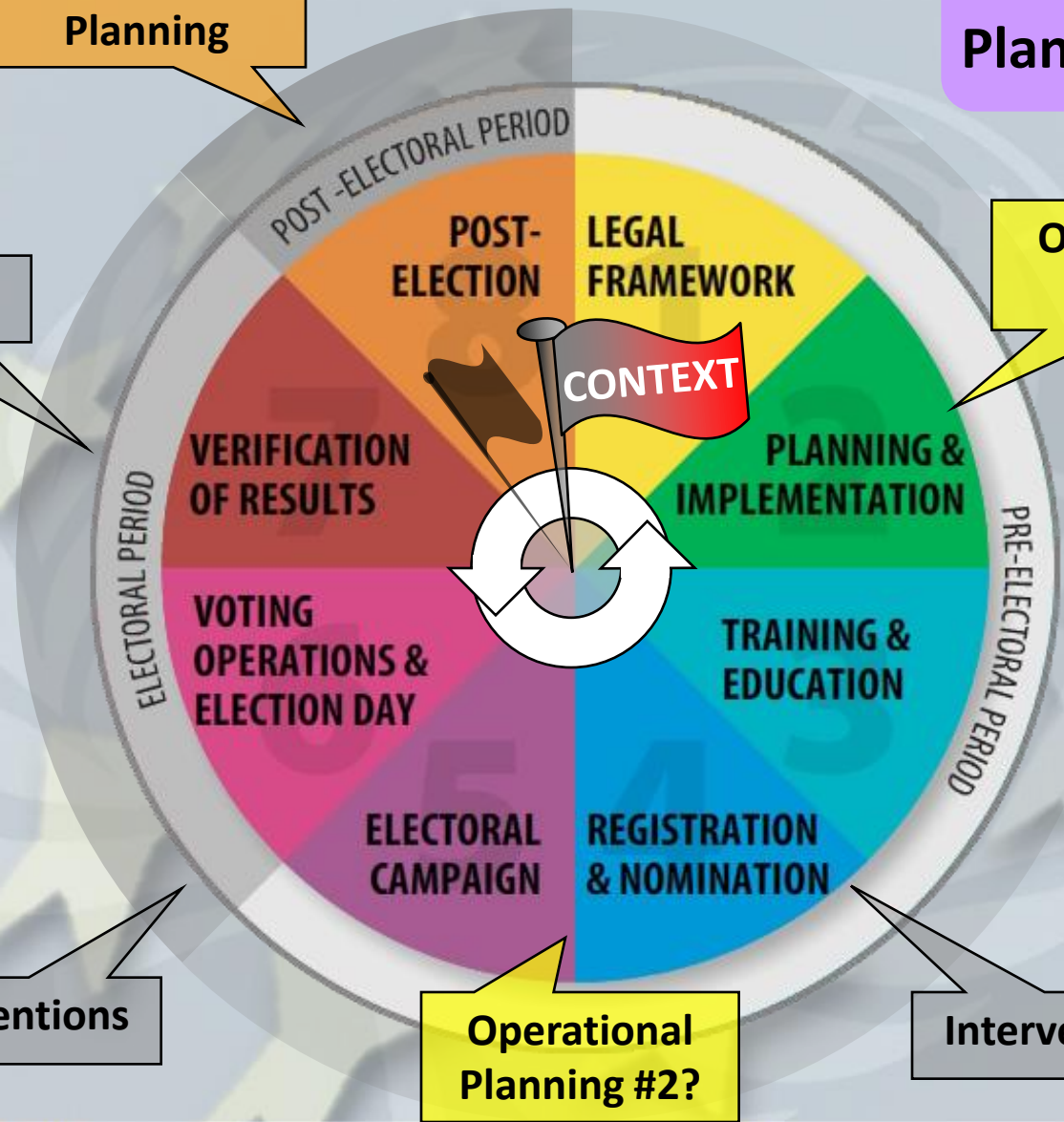


Electoral Cycle Planning Phases

Strategic Planning

Interventions

Operational Planning



Interventions

Operational Planning #2?

Interventions



“*Strategic planning is not simply developing a multi-year budget. It is about deciding what kind of institution the election authority wants to be and then setting a course on how to achieve becoming that institution.*”

– Joe Baxter, IFES

Strategic Planning for Election Organisations



Strategic Planning

- This is not operational planning
 - Usually post-elections, driven by reforms*
 - Often extends beyond one electoral cycle
- Aimed at achieving a long term vision
- Often principles based
 - What the organisation stands for
 - Supported by legal framework and mandate



Don't assume that the client group knows what strategic planning is!

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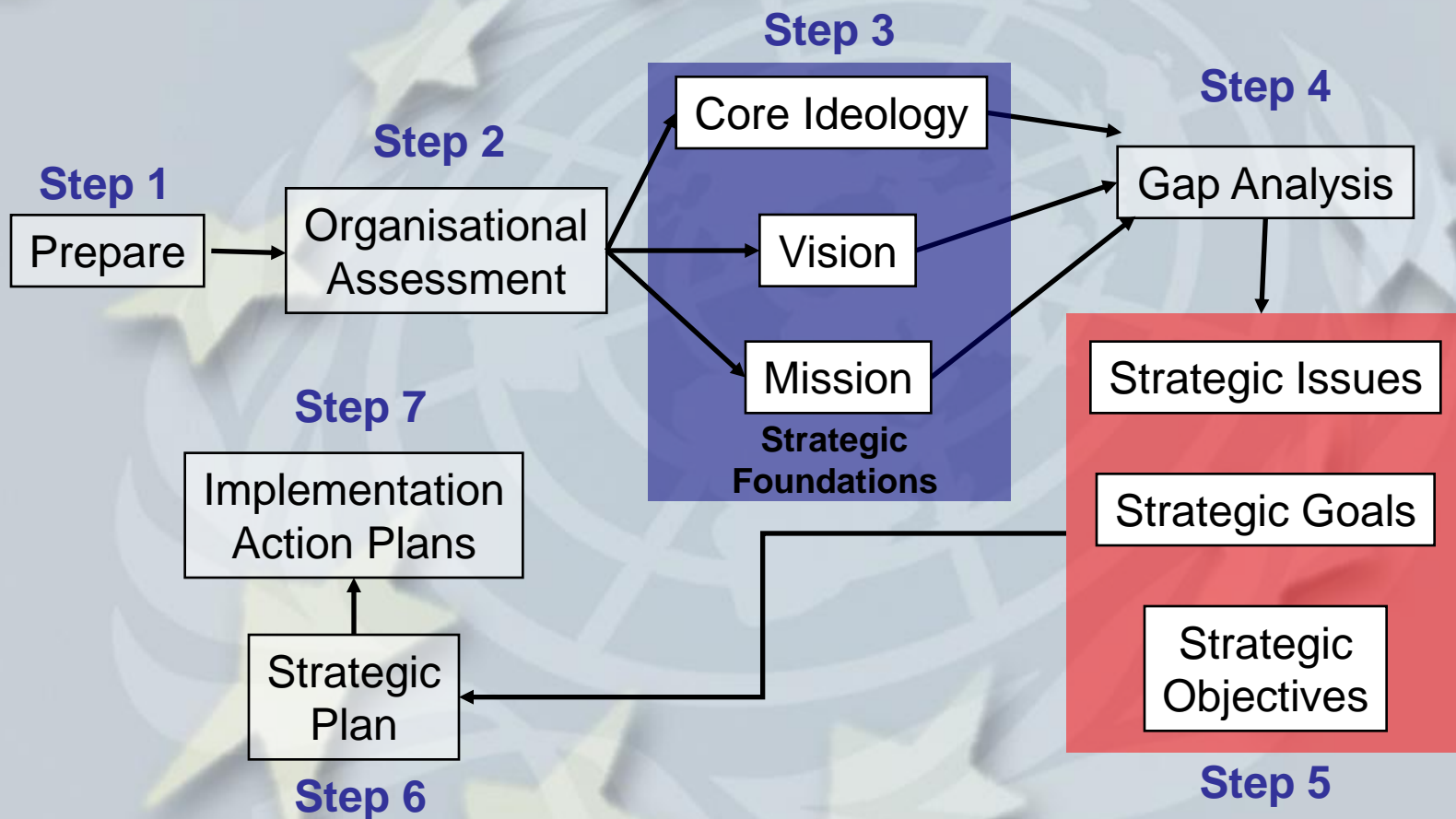


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Broad Strategy Process





Operational Planning

- Sets out the implementation of the strategic plan against specific objectives
- Spells out the task, timeframe, budget and unit responsible, contingency
- Integrated with the electoral cycle activities
- Often associated with an electoral calendar, working back from election date
- A source of major info sharing with stakeholders



Poor Planning results in...

- Lack of coordination
- Incorrect assumptions
- Insufficient or unrealistic budget
- Underestimation of time required
- Delayed disbursement of funds
- Late procurement of materials and recruitment of staff
- Unclear or complicated procedures



Challenges

- Planning as internal “routine”
- Changing institutional culture
- Building institutional memory and rigour
- Discipline of tracking actions against plans
- Developing staff capacity
 - Exposing staff to “best practice”
 - Developing EMB leadership’s oversight role