European Commission
United Nations Development Programme
International IDEA

In collaboration with

International Organization for Migration
Canadian International Development Agency
Organization of American States

Joint Training on Effective Electoral Assistance

Brussels, 1-5 December 2008
Civic and Voter Education

- Why are they important?
- Who should provide civic and voter education?
- When in the electoral cycle?
- What are the major challenges?
- How can development partners support these activities?
Civic and Voter Education

- Links voting to broader democratization issues
- Political understanding & conflict prevention
- Increases participation by removing apathy
- Citizens aware of the meaning of elections
- Decreases invalid ballots
- Yet, easily ignored
Civic Education

- Emphasizes roles and responsibilities of citizens, governments, political & special interest groups, & mass media
- Citizen awareness and participation in all aspects of democratic society
- Conditions necessary for democratic elections
- Provides conducive environment for election, but not limited to electoral calendar
- Schools, NGOs
- Long-term strategy
Voter Education: ‘Why’ Elections

Deals with concepts

- Not related to an electoral event, but electoral cycle
- Role of elections within context of democratisation & political participation
- Importance of secrecy of the vote
- Importance of each vote
- The significance of a blank ballot
- How votes translate into seats
Where’, ‘When’ and ‘how to Vote? 

- Election-related event 
- Short-term 
- Based on the electoral laws 
- Duty of the EMB
Challenges to Civic/Voter Education

- Poor conceptualization and planning
- Limited funds
- Timely delivery
- Inadequate coordination among implementing initiatives
- Implementing EMB/CSO may lack capacity
- Credibility and impartiality of those delivering civic and voter education
- Lack of monitoring and evaluation
Whom to Support and How?

- **EMBs**
- **Ministry of Education**
- **CSOs**
- **Media**

- Studies & planning prior implementation
- Baseline surveys on voter attitudes,
- Knowledge & sources of information (prior/after the election)
- Short-term voter information, but also
- Medium-long term civic/voter education
- Capacity development for trainers and training of trainers
- Face-to-face teaching/alternative methods for adults, illiterate
- Media Centre
- Avoid duplication, but support complementary initiatives
Thank you!