



Voting Day Operations

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Organized within



In collaboration with





Outline

- Checklist on EMB state of preparedness for E-Day
- What could go wrong & What remedies exist (Endogenous vs. Exogenous Risks/Threats)
- Word of advice: Bring all EMB attributes to bear on E-Day
- Key EMB Do's on E-Day



Factors to consider when planning for E-Day

Country context:

- Level of peace and stability in the country/state, province/region, constituency/district, voting area/polling station, where polls are taking place – *post-conflict or not?*

- Type of electoral system and practice:
 - constituency-based or “whole country as single-constituency” elections?
 - Single central (national) EMB or multi-EMBs running the polls?
 - External and special voting allowed?
 - Type of polls: general (presidential or parliamentary) or by-election



•Checklist for EMB Readiness on Voting (E-) Day:

We assume the following are in place:

1. **No pending legal challenges** to derail voting (elections) process
2. **Staff** recruited, trained (incl. rehearsals), and agreement reached on conditions of service
3. **Voting logistics, including ballot materials** procured/printed and ready for roll-out
4. **Voter registers** produced, disseminated and validated by key electoral contestants
5. **Transport** secured to deliver materials and staff
6. **Voters, political parties and candidates informed** about balloting process (procedures, times, and venues) via the media and through party liaison structures



- **Checklist for EMB Readiness on Voting (E-) Day:**
- *We assume the following are in place:*


7. **Observers, monitors and poll watchers duly accredited**, briefed about the balloting process
8. **Security forces mobilized** to foster climate of peace and security on voting and have in place a comprehensive well-rehearsed plan in case of emergency or violent outbreak
9. **Media duly briefed and informed** about the E-day activities (including programme for scheduled media briefings on E-day and beyond)
10. **Special arrangements made for special voting:** election staff and commissioners, VIP voters (presidential candidates), absentee voters, special voters
11. A comprehensive **scenario-based “Plan B” in place** and endorsed by stakeholders, in case things

What could go wrong and what remedy exists?



ENDOGENOUS FACTORS			
Risk	Remedy	Precaution	Follow-up remedy
Human Factors			
Staff no-show/boycott	Appoint reserve personnel/negotiate/seek court interdict/use Police	Agree with parties/observers on Way Forward/secure budget for unplanned expenses	Ensure that staff-related grievances are resolved earlier so as not to derail elections
Fraud & crime by staff	Report incident to Police and other stakeholders	Where practicable, have parties vet key staff appointments	Consult the law and stakeholders to consider implications, including re-run of elections
Staff incompetence (bona fide errors)	Report incident to parties and consider Police action	Avoid the use of same staff in future	Ensure proper training is done to all staff to avoid mistakes

ENDOGENOUS FACTORS


Risk 	Remedy	Precaution	Follow-up action
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Logistical Factors

Ballot paper run-out	Supply more. If more time was lost, consider extending voting hours to affected areas. Stakeholder consultation needed	Agree with parties/observers on extra print and also secure budget for this expense	Adjust print to growth in voter population since last registration. Localized transport/warehousing to ensure speedy deliver
Ballot papers/Voter register misprint	Correct error. Report incident to parties and observers, and reassure the public.	Be proactive to avoid emotions running high or misrepresentation	Consult the law and stakeholders to consider implications, including delayed closing of polls or re-run

Transport breakdown	Report incident to parties and find alternative transport	Avoid using unserviceable transport	Ensure proper planning is done to avoid breakdowns
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ENDOGENOUS FACTORS

 Risk	Remedy	Precaution	Follow-up action
Logistical Factors			
Lack of information/dis-information	Proactively engage the media/party liaison committee to rectify situation	Do not be alarmist and do not create more confusion	NB: for the EMB to have active in-house Communications/PR unit
Lack of cooperation from observers, monitors, and poll watchers	Use persuasive powers to remove such from election venue	Use of force could spark more controversies	Agree in advance with stakeholders on actions to be taken in such eventuality
Systemic malfunction, lost keys/pass word, ink or power outage	Always keep spare equipment/facilities, UPS, on hand	Agree on this budget with relevant stakeholders	Test equipment, and have reference on supplies

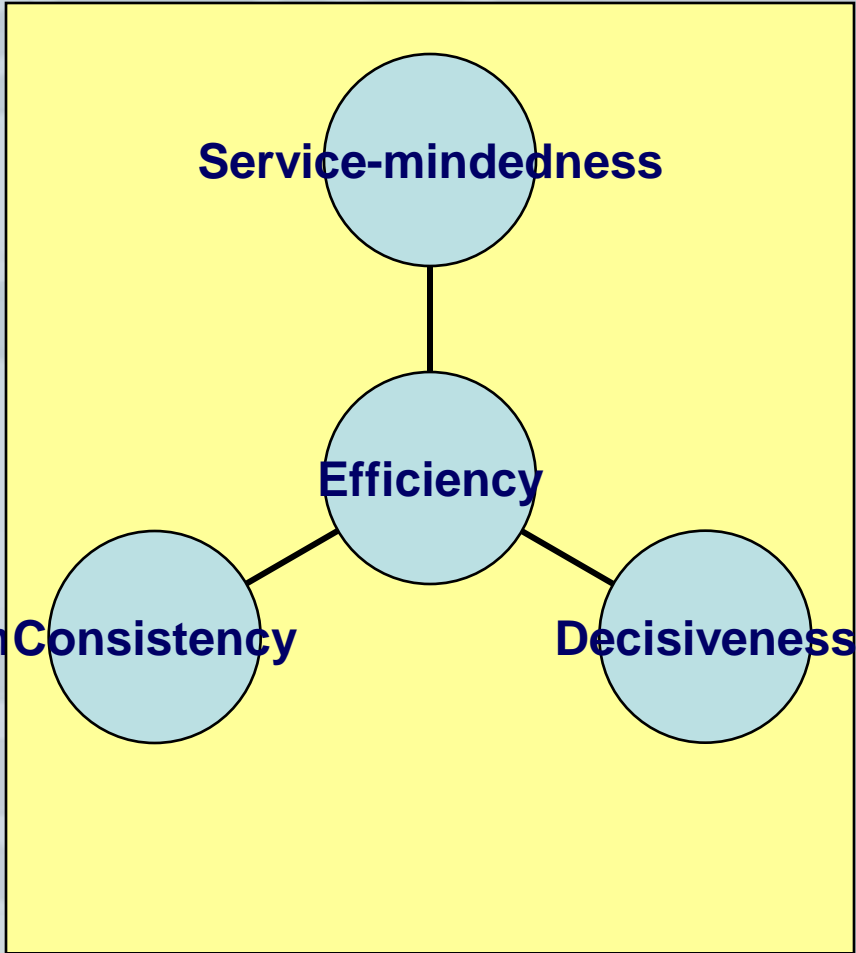
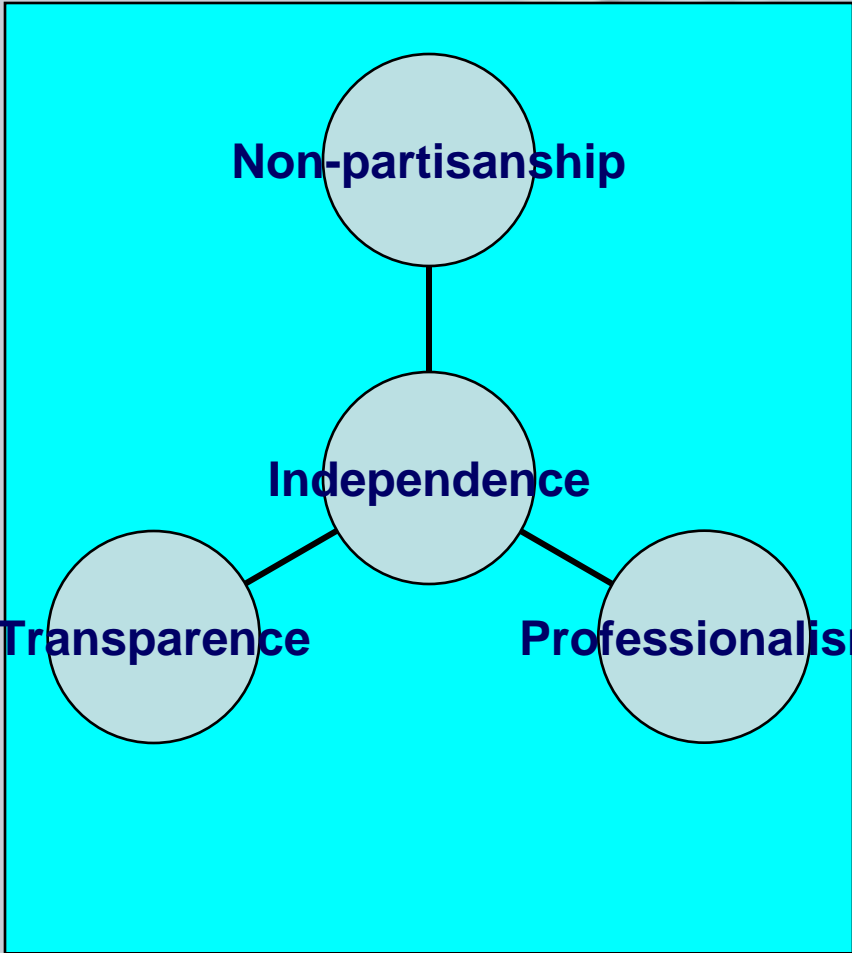


EXOGENOUS FACTORS

Risk	Remedy	Precaution	
Weather & Natural factors	Respond decisively: prolong, delay polls, cancel polls but consult stakeholders before final decision	Carefully consider the pros and cons and consequences of each option (political vs. financial costs)	Avoid holding elections during the rainy session or any time when the weather is likely to interfere with the polls
Violence	Respond decisively: remove unruly elements, postpone or cancel polls, but consult stakeholders before final action	Consider the political and financial costs and stakeholder opinion before final decision	Address any concern before they escalate into violence, and if need be, avoid holding elections if they are likely to exasperate existing conflicts. Provide adequate training of staff, media, and Police
Legal challenge of the polls	Consult law and decide whether to oppose or not, and inform stakeholders of decision	EMB should avoid being seen as taking a partisan position in case of a court interdict. Be seen as independence and fair at all times	Learn from previous election lessons taking into account recommendations from election observers. Timeously effect legal framework reform



Bring EMB Attributes to bear on E-Day





CONCLUSION: Five EMB Dos on E-day

1. **Follow the law** and not your intuition on E-day
2. **Have a Plan B** in place in case things go horribly wrong
“If you failed to play, then you have planned to fail.”
3. **Think on your feet:** have the “what if” question in mind when planning and managing E-Day operations. Think and improvise, but within the parameters of the law and logic.
4. **Give stakeholders a sense of partnership/ownership of the E-day:** be accessible and allow them to call you about any concern they may have about elections. Address problems immediately
5. Remember, to **commend stakeholders** for their support during elections