



**European Commission
United Nations Development Programme
International IDEA**

***Joint Training on
Effective Electoral Assistance***

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Civic and Voter Education

Maputo – 23-27 June 2008



In collaboration with: International Organization for Migration



Canadian International Development Agency



Promoting Credible Elections
and Democratic Governance in Africa



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 we support these activities?



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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**



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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

What is Democracy and why do we need it?

Ghana is a Democracy. This means that people have some control over decisions that affect the way their community works. Without democracy, one person or a small group of people could take control and make decisions that affect people's lives without listening to their views.

Because countries are large, it is not possible for everybody to make decisions together. For this reason, the people choose a group of individuals to represent them and make decisions on their behalf. This means that the elected individuals are answerable to the people who voted for them. If they do not behave in the way that the voters wish, the voters will not choose them again at the next election.

Groups of people living together, whether in a village, a city or a whole country, need rules or laws to govern their everyday lives. These laws can make sure that the people have certain rights and freedoms as well as responsibilities.



How does Democracy work in Ghana?

Ghana is a particular kind of democracy called a Republic – its full name is the Republic of Ghana. This means that its chief of state, the President, is elected by the people of Ghana. To make sure that one person does not have all the responsibilities, power is divided into three parts:

- One part discusses and decides laws (Parliament)
- One part puts them into practice (President and Council of Ministers)
- One part checks and changes the laws if necessary (Supreme Court)

1 Week **Democracy and Elections**



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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



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Voter Information

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!



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