



Joint EC-UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance
International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

Thematic Workshop on Elections, Violence and Conflict Prevention



Second Edition of the Thematic Workshop on Elections, Violence and Conflict Prevention

Rigging Elections – A Framework for Analysis and Prevention

Jeff Fischer

Barcelona 20-24 Jun 2011



Conceptual Consensus on “Rigging”

- **“Fraud” terminology**
- **Election fraud involves deception only and not all electoral crimes**
- **Applied understanding of fraud has differed over time and location**
- **Other terms – malpractice, misconduct, irregularities, and manipulation**



Categories of Electoral Rigging

- **Acts of deception**

- Illegal voting and ballot box stuffing
- False claims or denials of claims of citizenship

- **Acts of coercion**

- Vote buying
- Voter intimidation

- **Acts of damage or destruction**

- Theft or destruction of election materials

- **Failures or refusals to act**

- Denials of service



Denials of Service

- **Intentional or unintentional disruptions or delays that result in disenfranchisement**
 - Voting machine malfunctions
 - Hours of services shortened without notice
 - Polling station locations difficult to access
 - Long lines at polling stations



Illicit Practices

- **Practices which may not be illegal but fall short of international standards**
 - Voter suppression
 - Inaccurate campaign literature
 - Forced withdrawal of opponent
 - Facilitation payments
 - Failures of due diligence by election officials



Characteristics of Rigging

- **Magnitude and Impact on Outcomes**
- **Verifiable and Unverifiable Rigging – Impact of Observation**
- **Locations**
- **Electoral Cycle Phase**
- **Episodic or Systematic**
- **Resources – State and Illicit**
- **Relationship of Rigging and Violence**



Where are the Risks of Rigging?

- **History of Electoral Rigging**
- **Rating Levels of Risk**
 - Likelihood of Occurrence
 - Impact on Electoral Outcomes
- **Risk Stages**
 - Voter Identification and Registration
 - Political Finance
 - Election Day Balloting
 - Transport of Sensitive Electoral Materials
 - Ballot Tabulation
 - Certification



Who Participates in Rigging?

- **Individual voter participates**
 - Vote buying
 - Migratory or floating voters
 - Voter “assistance” schemes
- **Individual voter does not participate**
 - Voter impersonation
 - Fictitious names on registry
 - Marking absentee ballots



Perpetrators

- **Individual voter participates**
 - Vote buying
 - Migratory or floating voters
 - Voter “assistance” schemes
- **Individual voter does not participate**
 - Voter impersonation
 - Fictitious names on registry
 - Marking absentee ballots



Effectiveness of “Rigging”

- **“Clean” and “dirty” elections survey**
 - Electoral misconduct is effective for incumbents
 - Incumbents and dirty elections – 87 percent
 - Incumbents and clean elections – 57 percent
 - Average for incumbents – 68 percent (Collier)



Win-Loss Factors Involving Rigging

- **Rigging Tactics**

- Increase likelihood to win from 62 to 84 percent

- **Years in Office**

- Clean elections – 6.4 years
- Dirty elections 15.8 years

- **Press Freedom**

- No press freedom – 92 percent likelihood to win
- Full press freedom – 63 percent likelihood to win



Rigging and Violence

- **Violence and Rigging**

- Mindanao, Philippines (2009) – “flying voters” – attack at a voter registration site on imported applicants from another city
- Zambia – youth “enforcers” intimidating women shopkeepers



Index of Electoral Malpractice

- **University of Essex**
- **Data obtained from election observation reports (1995 – 2006)**
- **New and semi-democracies – Latin America, Eastern Europe, former Soviet Union and Sub-Saharan Africa**
- **Coding 15 aspects of an electoral process**
- **1 = no significant problems**
- **5 = gross misconduct**



Electoral Malpractice Coded Indicators

- **Legal Framework**
- **EMB Independence**
- **Contestation**
- **Voter Registration**
- **Polling Arrangements**
- **Voting**
- **Counting, Tabulation, Results**
- **Dispute Adjudication**
- **Observer Access to the Electoral Process**
- **Media Coverage**
- **Misuse of Resources**
- **Vote Buying**
- **Voter Intimidation and/or Obstruction**
- **Candidates Intimidation and/or Obstruction**
- **Overall Quality of the Election**



Malpractice Findings

- **Media manipulation and the misuse of state resources are the sub-categories in which there is the greatest amount of overall malpractice**
- **In electoral administration, voter registration and vote counting, tabulation and results are activities that are particularly susceptible to manipulation**
- **Strongest overall predictors of electoral malpractice were found to be the per capita GDP and electoral system**
 - Poorer countries more vulnerable
 - Single-members FPTP of two round systems more vulnerable
- **EMB organizations – multi-party EMBs and electoral integrity**



Strategic Approach

- **Electoral Integrity Actions**

- Prevention
 - **Structural Factors**
 - **Technical factors**
- Detection
- Enforcement

- **Electoral Integrity Agents**

- Organization
- Type



Prevention

- **Structural Factors**
- **Increase the Likelihood of a “Clean” Election**
 - Rising per capita income
 - Diverse “veto points”
 - Press freedom
 - Term limits
- **Decrease the Likelihood of a “Clean” Election**
 - Resource rents
 - Small populations
 - Low GDP



Prevention

- **Technical Factors**

- Legal framework
- Procedural controls
- Chain of custody requirements and other material controls
- Training – technical and ethical
- Political finance regulation
- Long term observation
- Mandatory audits



Detection

- **Electoral Rigging Theories**
 - Case-based evidence from witnesses and victims
- **Electoral Forensics**
 - Employing data (registration and voting figures) to identify statistical anomalies indicative of fraud
- **Election Technology**
 - Employing technology in voter identification and voting to deter voter impersonation and ballot fraud
- **Electoral Observation**
 - Parallel Vote Tabulation



Enforcement

- **Electoral Integrity Agents**
- **Organization – Centralized and De-Centralized**
- **State**
 - Regulatory
 - Security
 - Judicial – International and National
- **Non-State**
 - Political Parties
 - Civil Society Organizations
 - Media
 - Traditional Leaders



Rigging Elections – A Framework for Analysis and Prevention

Thank you...

...QUESTIONS?