European Commission
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International IDEA

Joint Training on
Effective Electoral Assistance

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Domestic Observation

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Domestic Observation/Background

- Increasingly important since 1990
- Can be single groups or coalitions
- Can put their lives on the line
- Can focus on whole election process or elements of election process
- Generally built around large scale mobilisation of volunteers
- May also be involved in civic and voter education
- Increasingly receiving significant attention by media, domestic stakeholders and international community
Domestic Observation/Strengths

- Often mobilise thousands of observers and have very large coverage of polling stations
- Day to day knowledge of the political, electoral and cultural situations
- Knowledge of local languages
- Can observe on a permanent or long term basis
- Can have greater legitimacy than international observers
- Can be at the cutting edge of election observation
- Can play a role in advocating improvement to the framework and conditions for elections
## Domestic Observation/Weaknesses

- Observers can be poorly trained and not very attentive.
- Knowledge and application of methodology and standards can be poor.
- Reporting can be unfocused and lacking rigour.
- Can struggle to be seen as independent.
- Can struggle to get significant attention, particularly if international observers are present.
Domestic Observation/Key Challenges

- Long term aim should be to replace international observation
- Improve training of observers and increase networking among observer groups
- Improve knowledge of and use of methodology and standards
- Improve reporting, particularly preliminary statements
- Increase capacity to advocate for improvement to election conditions and follow-up on recommendations
- Make greater use of technology such as SMS
- Increase liaison between international and domestic observers