



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

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

**DAY 2**

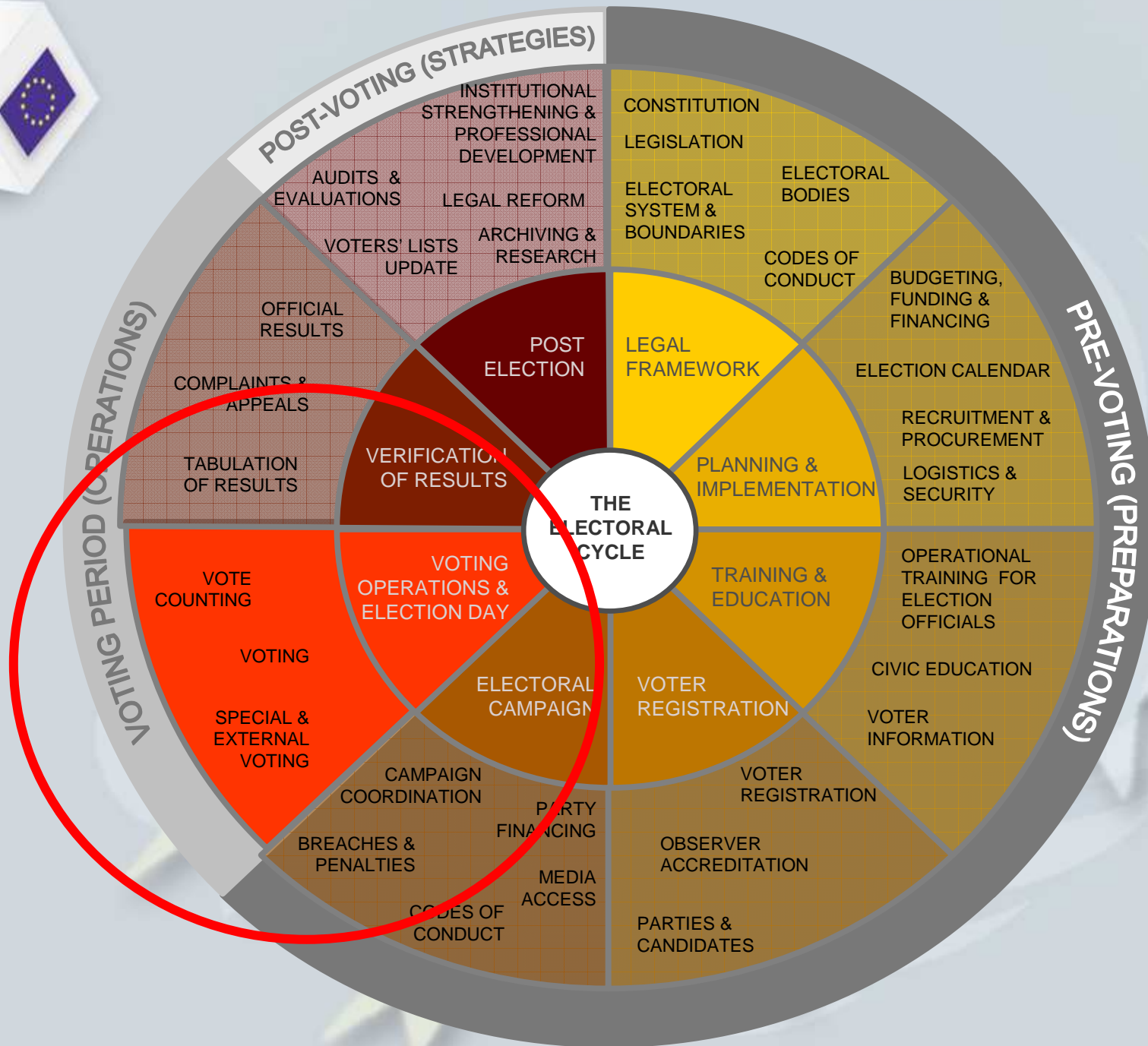
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# Voting operations & Election-Day

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Joint Training on  
Effective Electoral Assistance  
Day 2





# Voting Operations

The culminating stage of every electoral cycle

- ➔ The many spinning wheel of the electoral process must fall in place and become one well-oiled functioning machine **delivering on one specific day**
- ➔ Immediate **return on investments** on planning and training





# No zero risk exercise

- Well-prepared elections usually lead to “quiet” E-Day
- However the EMB does not control all parameters to conduct peaceful elections
- In particular the **Human Dimension** of the electoral process is instrumental in achieving successful elections





By the time voting operations start  
all election-related activities  
must have been **planned** and **put in place**

**But on E-day EMBs may face disruptive  
factors**

**External factors**



**Weather**

Wise decision when setting  
up the electoral agenda

**Violence**

Inclusiveness and  
voter information

**Internal factors**



**Logistics**

Established and tested  
distribution / collection plan

**Training**

Well-equipped polling staff



# RISK FACTORS

## -PERMANENT MARKER PEN



## -INDELIBLE INK MARKER PEN



- Assess all **risk factors** and come up with a contingency plan
- Anticipate problems that could arise from mishandled E-day operations

Even a minor issue may lead to a major crisis situation -as was the infamous ink problem in Afghanistan in 2004



# Election Management Challenges

## Activities

- Timely distribution of all materials
- Polling staff recruited and well trained
- Voters well informed on where and how to vote

## Challenges

- Late or missing materials
  - Poorly trained or biased staff not following procedures
  - Disenfranchised voters
    - not showing up at the right PS or not properly casting their ballots
- = Flaw in the process







# Some E-day contingencies

- Late or delivery of materials; especially secure materials such as ballots and voter lists
- Mistakes in materials -indelible ink-
- Use of inappropriate or non-sustainable technology
- Inaccurate voter allocation on the Voter Register
- Unprofessional behavior from Polling staff
- Ineffective queue control
- Political contestants challenging the election
- Security incidents
- Weather conditions



# Challenges for TA on E-day



- Limited possibilities to intervene  
*"the train already left the station"*

- Prepare for contingencies in advance;  
→ in particular for **emergency delivery / collection mechanisms** -Plan "B"
- Consider to **"pay"** for contingencies where there are no other options...  
→ Last minutes decisions are costly
- Apply political multi- and bi-lateral **pressure** where appropriate and effective





# Learn from the exercise

Prepare for the post-election period and the next cycle to correct shortcomings and conduct capacity building initiatives

→ Instrumentalize observation findings





# External Voting Out-of-Country Voting

## Definition

OCV provides the means for citizens residing abroad to participate to their countries' elections







# External voting

## A two dimensions exercise:

### Expatriates

Set-up of PS in Embassies/ Consulates and/or postal voting remain a prerogative of the State and the EMB

Legislation may restrict franchise to citizens residing in-country

Technical assistance is not advisable

### Refugees

A phenomenon related to **post-conflict** environment

Protection of refugees' voting rights has become a standard feature of large scale operations in the past decade



# OCV = A focus on refugees

## Challenges

- It represents an « **election within the elections** »
- It often requires the launching of a separate TA and extra funding
- Who is a refugee?
- Enforcement a specific legal framework
- Establishment of specific operational plan and logistics arrangements
- Conduct of targeted voter information
- Tallying of OCV results into national ones



## Is it worth investing on OCV?

### Political perspective

- The complex eligibility issue: “who?” and “why?”
- Politically emotional issue, especially in post-conflict
- The political impact: a biased diaspora?
- The legitimacy and pertinence of expatriates interfering and intervening in the nation-building from abroad

### Technical perspective

- Operationally complex
- Excessively and unreasonably expensive
- Often unsuccessful due to low turn out, lack of interest and fear of repatriation