Joint Task Force’s Lessons Learned on Procurement of Voter Registration

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Presentation

- Background
- Segment of the critical path
- ICT and telecommunications
- Biometric registration kits
- Asset management system
- DR Congo
- Togo
- Guinea-Conakry
- Moving forward
Background

- Training
- Maintenance
- Technical support
- Installation
- Configuration
- Supervision
- Project Management

- Combination of intertwined components
- Complex interdependencies
- Logistics
- Country specific

- EQUIPMENT
  - Computers
  - Networks
  - Kits
  - Devices

- SOFTWARE
  - Registration
  - ABIS
  - Production of electoral documents
  - Central systems

SERVICE
ICT and Telecom

**ICT**
- Laptops, workstations, servers
- Antivirus software
- Configuration and software activation require an Internet connection
- Internet access is becoming a must
- Time should be allocated for configuring the equipment

**Telecom**
- LAN, WLAN, VSAT
- Service provision should cover pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral periods
Biometric Registration kits

- Multiple interdependent components (equipment, training, maintenance, logistics)
- Interoperability between diverse providers and management of outsourced activities
- Constraints on operational planning of electoral activities
- Sustainability (total cost of acquisition, reusability, managing expectations, etc.)
Plan for staged introduction of the technology (e.g. pilot tests)

Knowledge transfer to the EMB early in the process

Opt for proven solutions

Qualitative/quantitative management of outsourced activities

Validate the operational concept

Look for synergies with non electoral activities and projects
Biometric Registration kits

- Determine the life expectancy of digital registration kits and know how to extend it prior to acquisition

- Refurbishment procedures and storage measures need to be defined including a proof of concept prior to procurement

- Refurbishing requires complex methodologies similar to the manufacturing of digital registration kits. Therefore, they need to be disclosed by the vendors in order to assess the total cost of acquisition
Asset Management

- Encourage the use of open source Inventory control systems
- Impose unique ID for procured material
- Adopt a generic codification for the procured material which can be used by election projects
- Encourage regular reporting on inventory including tracking the location of goods procured on a weekly basis
Biometrics voter registration required more emphasis on:

- Cost-effectiveness
- Administrative and legal feasibility (taking fingerprints is more or less invading the privacy of voters)
- Sustainability
- Credibility (failures of the technology have a large impact on future acceptance of the proposed approach)
DR Congo

- **Unforeseen overlapping of operational areas**
  - None of the advantages of the operational area concept could be achieved
  - Number of digital registration kits insufficient to cover the overlap leading to the use of a single digital registration kit per registration centre (no redundancy as initially designed)
  - Misuse of the equipment due to poorly trained operators

- **Unforeseen shortage of qualified digital registration kit operators**
  - Leading to costly operator relocation operations
  - Rejection of the process by politicians requesting natives of their provinces as operators
DR Congo

- Very complex hierarchical management structure poorly trained and inexperienced in complex operations increasing the data losses and inadequate use of equipments
- Virtually no inventory control leading to the loss of kits, consumables, data CD, etc.
- Political pressure leading to multiple mistakes
- Cut-off dates for registration vary according to the operational area
- Special registration of candidates outside the registration period
DR Congo

- **Dual use of the technology**
  - Identification of the military
  - Identification of policemen
  - Production of social security cards

- **Equipment loans to Togo**

- **Voter registry update**
  - Combined activity with the Ministry of Interior in order to constitute the national population registry and the civil registry
  - Appear to be very expensive
DR Congo

- Pilot testing
- Flexibility and support from selected providers
- Multiplicity of providers working in integrated manner
- Project management based on target date
- Political interferences due to the nature of the EMB
- Locked market for one specific provider
Togo voter registration was designed as an evolution of DRC voter registration.

It also served as a feasibility study for sustainability of biometrics voter registration.
Determine the life expectancy of digital registration kits and know how to extend it prior to acquisition.

Refurbishment procedures and storage measures need to be defined including a proof of concept prior to procurement.

Refurbishing requires complex methodologies similar to the manufacturing of digital registration kits.

Failure to implement appropriate quality control measures during the refurbishing process causes significant cost increases.

Performance of refurbished kits was poor requiring constant babysitting by technicians.

Public confidence on refurbished kits was very low.
Logistical issues require appropriate/adequate operational planning.

Training of registration officials and operators is of prime importance since equipment misuses significantly increase costs.

Many high tech features are useless such as barcodes on the voter card in the absence of barcodes readers.

Voters should sign the voter registration card in addition to printing the registration date in order to make the card usable for other purposes such as banking and national identification.

Multimodal biometrics are complex to handle. Further methodological developments are required.
Assisting the government in procuring (advisory role)
Monitoring of outsourced activities
Provided back up solution

Expensive refurbishing (1/3 of costs)
Not sustainable
Poor training
Guinea-Conakry

- Sustainability (ToR)
- Detailed specs that included software
- Preliminary consultations with procurement

- Absence of the EMB at the development of ToR
- Insufficient funds
- Project design
Best Practises

- Feasibility Studies
- Study Tours
- Technical Specifications drafted considering comparative experiences adapted to the country’s needs
- Software and Hardware to be adapted to the country’s electoral laws and practices
- Gradual Introduction at least 16-12 months prior to Election Day
- Divide the country on different operational areas in view of rationalizing the resources
- Accent on human resources, training, on site assistance from services providers
- Cost Effectiveness and Sustainability
- Pilot Tests, Validation Tests, Mock Registration
- Civic Voter Education aimed at increasing all stakeholders’ trust in the technology
- Plan synergies with census, civil registry and voter registration, ID for police etc..
- Consider to extend the length of the operations
The Future of Electoral Technology?

- Synergies between civil and voter registration
- Digital identities with biometric identification, digital certificates
- Polling stations disappear replaced by internet voting and/or voting via mobile phone
- Individualised voter education via internet
- Direct/digital democracy
Moving forward

- Multiplicity of providers (end to end responsibility)
- Sustainability
- Economic efficiency
- Document and share successes but also failures
- Define a framework for evaluation of the contribution of biometric voter registration to transparency of elections
- Start discussing logistics best practices. These can be share among the practitioners including the adoption of common platforms for logistics and asset management