European Commission
United Nations Development Programme
International IDEA

In collaboration with
International Organization for Migration
Canadian International Development Agency
Organization of American States

Joint Training on Effective Electoral Assistance

VOTER REGISTRATION CASE STUDIES
DRC, Togo, Guinea-Conakry, Zambia & Benin

Accra, 2 July 2009
Introduction

- Past versus present situations
- Practical issues on the ground forcing situational analysis leading to short term solutions because of political pressures
- Government versus EMB responsibility for voter registration
2005-2006:
- First large scale use of digital registration kits in a Sub Saharan context
- Voter cards are also interim National ID cards
- Dos and Don’ts of biometric registration (lessons learned)
- South to South cooperation giving a second life to kits & military and police registrations

2009-2010:
- Reusability of digital registration kits in a subsequent electoral cycle
- Review of energy solution (solar panels)
- Voter registration operation implemented in cascade (5 operational areas), from 20 June 05 to 20 February 06

- 10,000 digital registration kits; 9,105 registration centers; 47,000 registration staff + more than 18,000 policemen involved

- A total of 25,712,552 voters registered at the end of the operation. 292,353 were excluded from the voter roll for multiple registration based on fingerprint duplicate search.
2007:
- Total solution versus technology transfer to EMB
- Lessons learned in DRC helped reducing technical issues related to digital registration
- Costly refurbishment: 1/3 of the total cost of acquiring new digital registration kits

2009:
- Government has acquired the new digital registration kits without consultations with the EMB
- Voters’ register update delayed by the political context
- Set the baseline for updating biometric database of voters
2007-2009:
- Pilot testing well appreciated by the population
- Financial issues (out of country registration)
- 4.2 million registered voters on mid June 2009
- No sufficient coverage of the capital city and islands
- Possible end date around December 2009
- Interesting lessons to be learned from this process
- 2005 system
- Replacement for the Polaroid
- Integration civil the civil register
- Capacity building of public administration to create a national identification system conversant with the voters’ register
Benin

- Complexity of harmonising long term and short term requirements
- Pseudo administrative population census prior to registration
- Updates required for upcoming consecutive elections
Common issues

- Project management
- Mistrust of political parties and civil society organisations
- Sustainability
- Administrative feasibility