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Joint Training on
Effective Electoral Assistance

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Overview of Voter Registration Methodologies
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VR: a cornerstone of credible elections

- Always the most controversial aspect of an electoral process
- An accurate and accepted voter registry is pivotal to a credible electoral process
- For most countries it is the largest, most complex, costly and time consuming component of the electoral process
- Crucial display and test of the EMBs operational capacity and credibility
**VR Process**

**electoral period**

- E-Day - Voter List used to identify and admit voters to polling

**post-electoral period**

- VR Audits
- VR legislation in place

**pre-electoral period**

- Voter List Production and Display for Claims
- Operational Plan, Procurement and Training
- Data Collection exercise in the field and data processing

**Voter Lists and Cards distribution**

- Production of final Voter lists and eventual voters cards
- Voter List used to identify and admit voters to polling
- Virtual Reality (VR) Audits
Three conceptual systems:

1. Stand-alone “ad hoc” / periodic voter registration (active)
2. Stand-alone continuous / permanent voter registration (active)
3. Civil registration-based voter register (passive)
Three levels of technological methodologies:

- **Low-Tech**
  - Data on paper - locally based - Timor 1996, OCV Afghanistan 2004

- **Medium-Tech**
  - Paper into database - centrally based - West-Bank/Gaza 2004

- **High-Tech**
  - Direct to computer - centrally based - DRC 2006

-> Endless variations of VR methodology
Low - Tech Approaches

It generally entails the manual transcription of voters’ data on lists at voter registration centres and are kept at the local/provincial level. Registration forms are taken to the central level and data-entered in a central database, most preferred in post-conflict scenarios.
Optical Mark Recognition (OMR)
First used in large scale
Electoral Assistance Mission
Bosnia and Herzegovina 1997
Mid Tech Approach

- Official Photograph
- Polaroid Instant camera
- Fingerprint
- Polaroid film
- Laminating Pouches
- Pencil
- Photo die cutter
- Voter’s card
- Photo-fix
- Mid Tech Approach
- Official Fingerprint pad
- Registration Forms
- Completed OMR Forms
- Batch Header Form (one per day)
- Transport to data centre
- Envelopes
Hi-Tech Approach

Usage of electronic forms and data-entry performed at the local level on laptop computers, Information transmitted in real time to a centralized processing facility or stored electronically for periodic delivery through external memories. Might involve biometric features (digital pictures, fingerprint or iris capturing) and on-site production of voters cards.
Local Capture of Information
The application contained can capture data manually inserted in the Vanguard. This data can be, voters information, as well as Voting results.

Transmission of Data
The kit is capable of transmitting all data and results from distributed locations to a central site.

Digital Camera
The digital camera is embedded onto the unit’s Official Panel and may be used to capture a voter’s digital photograph during registration.

Color Touch-screen
A touch-sensitive, full-color LCD screen displays easy-to-use controls for PenCom officials to use to incorporate or edit data.

Signature Pad
The signature capture device may be used to capture a user’s signature in electronic format during registration or authentication.

Fingerprint Reader
The main fingerprint capture device may be used to capture a fingerprint in digital form during registration or authentication.

Printer
The attached printer can be used to print a voter registration card.
TA to Voter Registration

• Increasing demand for high-tech VR systems
• Feasibility studies and design, global as well as local

• Pilot projects
• Procurement of new technology
• Operational planning & procedures
• Training and voter education
• Implementation
Support to EMB to design and introduce a new model or system of voter registration

To begin at the end of the previous electoral cycle

In any event not later than 18 months before elections.
Type and Timing of TA

- Support to EMB to conduct a specific voter registration process which requires the introduction of a new technology or system upgrades

- Assistance to provided between two years and one year before the elections

- In any case, not later than one year
Type and Timing of TA

- Simple procurement of voter registration material
- Between one year and six months before the elections
- Technical support to groups observing voter registration (between 1 year and six months before elections).
Technology might reduce costs and improve sustainability

It opens up risks for donors and assistance providers to become hostages of the vendors

Cost-effectiveness depends on the re-usability of the hardware for other elections administrative purposes

Technological changes are not accompanied by adequate training and voter education efforts
The Future of Voter Registration

- Western countries have moved to computerized and permanent voter registration systems
- Increasing demand from EU partner countries to use EC Development Funds for digital voter registration
- Lack of adequate feasibility studies. Possible synergies with civil registration are not explored before planning
- Open debate between models: independent voter registration versus the civil registration based voters register