European Commission
United Nations Development Programme
International IDEA

Joint Training on
Effective Electoral Assistance

DAY 3
Brussels, 22-26 October 2007
Two main categories of e-voting

- E-voting in controlled environments (EVM or DRE voting)

- E-voting in uncontrolled environments (internet voting, PDA or mobile telephone voting)
E-voting in uncontrolled environments

- Internet voting is being piloted in more than 30 established democracies.

- Estonia, October 2005, first country-wide elections with the possibility to vote through internet.

- Tests on Internet voting have not given yet a definite answer on how to ensure the secrecy of the vote and eliminate the potential coercion exerted on remote voters.

- Internet voting will soon be available for countries which enjoy a deep trust in their respective EMB and have a relatively conflict-free society, where the secrecy issue has a more limited weight than in other younger democracies, where the trust in the institutions and in the EMB might not be a given.
E-voting in controlled environments

- More than half billion voters in the world already use this form of voting in two of the most populous world democracies (India and Brazil).

- Does not present the same range of advantages normally attributed to uncontrolled internet e-voting (better turnout, enable voters’ mobility, facilitate disadvantaged categories).

- It does not endanger the fundamental requisite of the secrecy of the vote.

- It does offer some important answers on the issue of transparency through a development of various forms of auditing mechanisms. Possibility to introduce Voter Verified Audit Trails (VVATs).

- Increase in requests by EU partner countries.
Indian Voting Machines
Brazilian Voting Machines
US voting machines 2
The Venezuelan voting machines

- Touch Screen to support multiple electoral races
- Printer Attached to produce VVAT
- Two memories available
The Venezuelan context

High level of mistrust in the EMB from various sections of the society

Introduction of a number of transparency measures to obviate the lack of trust

Massive effort in the VVAT allowed the EU EOM to express a solid evaluation on the genuineness of the results
The Venezuela Paradox

- The extreme sophistication and high reliability of the voting system does not make up for the lack of trust in the EMB among several stakeholders.
- The huge investment in technology has not been yet matched by a similar effort in capacity building and voter information.
- The higher the distrust in the EMB, the higher the need for transparency and security measures.
Main consideration in favour of e-voting

- Longer-term cost reduction
- Speed and accuracy of the results
- Potential turn-out increase
- Fraud prevention
Main consideration against e-voting

- Lack of transparency
- Increased training and voter information needs
- Vendor “dictatorship”
- Increased potential for central manipulation
Issues for Discussion

- There is an inverse relationship between the degree of sophistication and security measures applied to EVM and degree of trust enjoyed by the EMB.

- The key role played by independent auditing procedures.

- What role observation can play in electoral processes using e-voting in controlled environment?

- E-voting in controlled environment with touch-screen machines producing VVAT appears to be the most reliable and transparent way forward for e-voting in developing countries. It will not be the cheapest option.