EUROPEAN CENTRE
FOR ELECTORAL SUPPORT

EURECS

A EUROPEAN RESPONSE TO ELECTORAL CYCLE SUPPORT

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FOREWORDS

In my capacity as President of the Management Board of the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES), I am delighted to welcome the publication of this paper that outlines the lessons accumulated in the last five years by ECES in our support to electoral and democratisation processes. This paper raises some of the major opportunities and impediments to democracy and stability that I experienced first-hand, prior to becoming the President of ECES.

Acknowledging the multidimensional, complex and long term nature of electoral and democracy support, this paper elaborates on best practices from a practitioners' point of view in a field that has been one of the European Union (EU) external action priority for several years now.

In 2006, when I was in between my two mandates as Member of the European Parliament, I was fortunate enough to be appointed Chief Observer for the EU Election Observation Missions (EU EOMs) to Venezuela and Bolivia, by the then EU Commissioner for External Relations, Ms. Benita Ferrero Waldner. In this period, EU EOM recommendations were still insufficiently translated into electoral and democracy assistance activities funded by the EU and its Member States. This restricted the potential impact of recommendations and left political dialogue on electoral performance somewhat unexplored.

The EU has now become one of the most important global players in the promotion of credible and transparent elections through its election observation and electoral assistance activities. These complementary and mutually reinforcing activities are often embedded in a broader support framework including institution-building. However, the objectives of the Communication of the Commission 191/2000 on Election Assistance and Obseration which opened the modern era of EU electoral support, have been only half achieved. While the observation pillar has considerably evolved and become a key external policy instrument, the other envisaged pillar of the Communication, electoral assistance, despite the conspicuous allocation of funds from different EU financial instruments, has not benefited of an equal degree of institutional attention and related operational development.

EU election observation missions are guided by a clear, systematic and regularly updated policy and methodology, on the other hand the "EC Methodological Guide for Electoral Assistance", which makes use of the Electoral Cycle Approach methodological tool, dates back to 2006. This approach remains pertinent since it advocates for long term support, notably in the period between elections, fostering capacity development and knowledge transfer for sustainability resilience to eventual democratic setbacks.

Ten years down the line, we can conclude that the electoral cycle approach has yet to be fully implemented when it comes to long-term support in the period between elections. Furthermore, support to electoral stakeholders remains largely focused on electoral management bodies.

The need to open up the scope of support even further is patent and has been echoed in many global evaluations carried out by various actors, including evaluations that target EU-funded projects implemented by various electoral assistance providers.

Considering that the EU is one of the largest contributors and that its latest global evaluation

of electoral assistance activities was incorporated into the 2006 EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance would seem to advocate for a new review process to incorporate the wealth of knowledge gathered over the last five years. Such a process should include an evaluation of the implementation modalities of EU-funded electoral assistance that historically, and even more so in the last decade, have featured the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and other UN agencies as the main implementing partners.

Throughout this period and since the late 1980s the United States of America has funded (through the US Agency for International Development USAID), electoral assistance, observation and democracy support activities via not for profit US-based organisations. This has facilitated the emergence and establishment of several organisations that are still the main recipients of USAID funding in this end.

Given the rapid shifts in the electoral and democracy assistance sector funded by the EU and also the consolidation of European specialised non-profit organisations, including (but not only) ECES, it seems appropriate for the EU and its Member States to take stock of the lessons learned in these last years. Through the numerous projects that have been implemented it is possible to assess the efficacy of the different delivery mechanisms according to budget instruments designed to this end and built to deliver responses to different contexts. Evaluating cost effectiveness, sustainability and EU political visibility for each delivery mechanism could be another priority to help determine whether the EU and EU Member States are making the most out of their electoral support when it comes to result attainment and value for money. The final objective would be to create a framework whereby all interested European non-profit actors and interested regional, international and multi-governmental organisations are informed about the possibilities and regularly considered or invited to compete to implement EU-funded electoral and democracy support projects.

In this context, ECES has drafted this paper and are currently implementing a "**European response to electoral cycle support" strategy** known as **EURECS**. This initiatives is very much in line with the five strategic areas of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015-2019, and the call to "***strengthen long term planning and integrated deployment of all aspects of EU and Member State support to the electoral cycle, by exploring innovative aid delivery mechanisms***".

This paper was launched on 28 September 2016 as a contribution to the International Day of Democracy, celebrated at the European Parliament in cooperation with the European External Action Service and in partnership with International IDEA, the European Network of Political Foundations and the European Endowment for Democracy and the members of the European Partnership for Democracy of which ECES is part of the Board of Directors.

On this symbolic date, ECES reconfirms its commitment and readiness to implement electoral and democracy assistance activities in a tailored and holistic way.

ECES was granted copyrights for EURECS on 18 October 2016 confirming ECES global, empirical based understanding of the multiple challenges related to support throughout electoral cycles, stemming from extensive field experience from having implemented activities in more than 70 projects in more than 40 countries in the last five years. This broad presence is a testament to the resources and knowledge that ECES has in relation to electoral cycle and democracy support, as funded and therefore shaped by the European Union, its Member States and other European donors.

Monica Frassoni
President
European Centre for Electoral Support

INTRODUCTION

The launch and the copyright of the **"European Response to Electoral Cycle Support (EURECS)"** represents an important achievement for ECES since the EURECS strategy captures the very essence of what we have been implementing since the beginning. The EURECS reflects ECES history, our unique expertise and the professional background of the founders of ECES.

The establishment of ECES and the development of the EURECS are inextricably linked processes and the two can be considered as an innovative deliver mechanism for electoral and democracy assistance designed to implement projects and programs that are consistent with European values and EU policies, dictated by the political will and requests for support of the beneficiary countries receiving electoral support.

For this reason, the late **Abbot Apollinaire Muhulungu Malu Malu**[1] and I first had the idea to establish ECES to underline the powerful peace message of the EU itself while implementing electoral assistance activities in a more cost-effective manner. **That meant to dedicate less funds to international human resources and more to activities while providing appropriate visibility for the EU and its Member States in the electoral support projects and more ownership to beneficiaries' countries**.

EURECS represents ECES' deep knowledge of electoral matters coupled with extensive comparative experiences in project management with funding from the EU and its Member States. The EURECS guarantees that ECES goes beyond paying lip service to upholding EU rules, values and procedures in electoral assistance projects worldwide assisted by operational and cost- effectiveness tools.

EURECS strategy is built around several pillars and specific methodologies developed by ECES that jointly constitute and form the backbone of the EURECS.

The first pillar of this strategy is aimed at facilitating the EU electoral support activities and dialogue between the EU and the benificiaries over the **implementation of the recommendations of EU election observation missions (EU-EOMs)**.

The second pillar is designed to help prevent, mitigate and manage electoral related conflicts while the third is implemented via the cascade training curriculum called «**Leadership and Conflict Management Skills for Electoral Stakeholders, LEAD**» that emerged as a tailored capacity enhancing curriculum by and for electoral stakeholders in politically fragile environments.

The fouth pillar is our **Electoral Political Economy Analysis (EPEA) that seeks to understand how and why elections play out in a certain manner by looking at unconventional underlying causes**. The EPEA also produces recommendations and is a powerful tool to unveil bottlenecks in the electoral process.

The fifth pillar is our **Standard Operating Procedures** that outlines how we work on administrative, financial and operational matters. This implementing guide mirrors the **Procedures and Practical**

1 https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apollinaire_Malu_Malu

Guide (PRAG)[2] of the EU and comprises the specific visibility and communication plan developed to reflect EU visibility that is one important activity in itself. There are also several specific activities that ECES is implementing regularly in the context of the EURECS strategy, for instance:

- Civic & voter education,
- Media monitoring & institutional communication,
- Capacity development in quality management of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs),
- Election situation room,
- Support to political parties and parliaments in relation to electoral processes,
- Procurement of electoral material,
- Electoral graphic design including for visibility of EMBs and ballot papers.

At this stage, some more words on ECES are warrant. ECES emerged as an idea of a European organisation specialising in electoral support long before being officially founded in 2010. ECES' creation was certainly a dream that became true and that has proven its worth at the European and international level.

During my first electoral mission in 1997 working as Voter Registration Supervisor in Bosnia & Herzegovina for the Organisation of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), I discovered that the United States Agency for Development Cooperation (USAID) had established a cooperative agreement in 1995 known as the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS). The agreement includes the three key US-based organisations such as the International Republican Institute (IRI), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI).

This raised two questions: first, why had the EU not established a similar framework? Second, why there was no specialised European organisation serving the EU and the Member States mirroring EU values and EU policies?

This idea grew with my experience in the electoral world at international level while holding a variety of positions in the field of electoral assistance and observation for the EU, the UN and the OSCE. I was engaged in long term assignments in countries such as Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, West Bank & Gaza, Zambia, Kenya, Nigeria, Haiti, Tanzania, Suriname and Indonesia, There, among the different senior positions I held, I worked as Senior Election Operations Expert, Training/Reporting Advisor and Coordinator of EU Election Observers.

Over the years, I managed to develop a deep knowledge of project cycle management, particularly in the Democratic Governance field. This knowledge was spurred by experiences within the EU institutions especially by working for the European Commission at the EU Delegation level in Maputo (Mozambique) from 2001 to 2003 and at the EU Headquarters (European Commission, EuropeAid) in Brussels between 2004 and 2006 as Election Specialist.

While working as Election Specialist at EuropeAid, I was asked to coordinate and co-author the production of the «**EU Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance**». In absence of a European not-for-profit organisation specialising in electoral support, I facilitated the establishment of a partnership between UNDP and EU with the signature of the EC-UNDP Operational Guidelines for Electoral Assistance, which is meant to fill a void that existed at the time. I contributed to the establishment of the Joint EC UNDP Task Force Electoral Assistance (JTF) and oversaw its activities for the identification, formulation and support to the implementation of all UNDP electoral assistance projects funded by the EU. I, therefore, served as the first Coordinator of the JTF and Senior Electoral Assistance Advisor at the UN/UNDP Brussels Office.

2 https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-funding-and-procedures/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag_en

During this period, I had the opportunity to work with many Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs). Among these, **I met Abbot Malu Malu, former President of the Electoral Commission of the Democratic Republic of Congo for the election in 2005 and 2006, President of the Network of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) of the Southern and Central African regions (SADC ECF and RESEAC)** and founding member of the **Network of French speaking Electoral Management Bodies (RECEF)**. He had a similar idea about the need to establish a European Centre for Electoral Support that could incorporate the views and values of the EU and its member states as donors but also of the beneficiaries' countries **in terms of visibility, steering of projects, flexibility and cost effectiveness to dedicate more funds to activities instead of administration and international human resources costs**.

From this joint conviction, ECES went from being a dream into becoming what it is today, together with UNDP and International IDEA, the most important partner of the EU for implementing electoral assistance. From that point onwards, ECES has continued to grow and filled a gap that was precisely the one we sought to fill from the outset.

I personally believe that this publication embodies the most important advantage our organisation has to offer: the passion and commitment we put in our work to support electoral processes in a cost effective and flexible manner mirroring EU rules, values and procedures.

After many years working in the field of electoral support, for a variety of organisations and in many contexts, every morning I still feel blessed to have the opportunity to do this job to contribute to the work of the international community for stability, democratisation and development by supporting electoral processes world-wide.

Fabio Bargiacchi
Co-Founder & Executive Director
European Centre for Electoral Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the early 1990s, the European Union (EU) has evolved and become one of the most important global players in democracy support. In so doing, it has operationsalised its external policies in the areas of democracy and human rights. This support includes the promotion of credible and transparent elections, often within a broader governance enhancement strategy. In parallel, other civil society support and institution-building activities have emerged to complement these activities.

EU electoral support revolves around two activities: **election observation and electoral assistance**. While election observation focuses on the process close to the electoral event, electoral assistance may be provided throughout the entire electoral cycle. The essential difference lies in the fact that while election observation is based on the principle of ensuring an independent and impartial assessment of an election process; electoral assistance goes into the process, directly supporting national authorities and other electoral stakeholders, while refraining from making public comments on the electoral process as such.

Both activities, when embedded in a broader institution-building and democracy support strategy, have a political finality. Election observation is, without a doubt, "the most visible" action with the presence of hundreds of observers deployed throughout a country around Election Day. However, its longer-term impact depends on accompanying programmes such as assistance to the entire political and electoral cycle. In order to foster real and durable change, such support activities should target a broad range of electoral stakeholders[3], including but not limited to election management bodies (EMBs).

Electoral support is now a priority area for the EU and its Member States. This interest and attention is translated into funding of election observation and electoral assistance activities. Respect for democracy, the rule of law, and civil and political rights are an integral part of the EU's political dialogue with selected partner countries that receive development cooperation funds. These fundamental themes cut across all EU geographical financial instruments that fund development cooperation.

> *"Election observation is a vital EU activity aiming to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law worldwide. It contributes to strengthening democratic institutions, building public confidence in electoral processes, helping to deter fraud, intimidation and violence. It also reinforces other key EU foreign policy objectives, in particular peace-building. Election observation gives the opportunity to assess an electoral process according to international standards. The EU is a leading global actor in providing and financing electoral assistance complementary to election observation. This dual form of EU election support constitutes a significant contribution to the promotion of governance and development objectives"*[4]

A decisive step to link these two pillars from a policy perspective was finally taken in the EU Council's Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (Section III, Item 6) of June 2012. In that document, it was agreed to "*systematize the use of EU EOMs and their reports in support of the whole electoral cycle*" to ensure coherent policy objectives in support of democracy. Electoral observation represents a tool, that can also indirectly assess how electoral assistance to a country has been delivered.

3 Civil Society Organizations, Parliaments, Political Parties, Justice sector institutions, Media actors, Security forces, Local authorities, Religious groups.

4 http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/index_en.htm

On the other hand, electoral assistance becomes a necessary sequitur for electoral observation. This confirms once again that an effective EU electoral support strategy requires that both components, while implemented separately and independently, should be programmed and coordinated in a similar manner to ensure that the overall EU democracy support strategy is properly implemented.

> *"The methodological approach to election assistance was outlined in the 2000 Communication. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the funding and coverage of electoral assistance, which is tailored towards implementing long term support strategies within the framework of democratic development and support to good governance. The European External Action Service and the European Commission work closely with partner countries to follow-up on the recommendations of EU EOMs, especially in relation to strengthening the institutional capacity of election management bodies and the long term needs of civil society. However, an EU EOM is independent from any EU-funded technical assistance projects that may be taking place in the country being observed. A comprehensive overview of the role of the European Commission in election assistance is provided by the EC Methodological Guide on Election Assistance"*[5].

In parallel to the institutional aspects of electoral support, a number of dedicated European not-for-profit organisations have been working in the field of democracy and electoral support and have thus been following its evolution over the years. Taking into account the lessons learned by ECES, particularly in the last five years, has devised and are currently implementing a "**European response to electoral cycle support"**, also known as **EURECS.** This strategy encompasses a practical implementation approach to electoral support, informed by past experience also from EUEOMs. Thus, EURECS focuses systematically on EUEOM recommendations[6] or indications of EU Services and Institutions in Brussels and EU Delegations if an EUEOM has yet to be deployed[7].

The strategy builds on several key objectives, which are in line with the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019). The EU Action Plan provides clear indications on all aspects of EU policy in support of human rights and democracy, which commit the EU, until the end of 2019, to[8]:

- Action 2.a.

  Enhance the role and capacity of, and public confidence in, Election Management Bodies to organise elections....in particular through enhanced dedicated dialogue and long term support strategy with the objective to promote the integrity of the electoral processes

- Action 2.b.

  Encourage participatory and inclusive dialogue between Election Management Bodies and key stakeholders throughout the overall democratic cycle, with a view to increase participation of political parties and civil society organisations.

- Action 2.c.

  Encourage the increased participation of women and persons belonging to marginalised groups in all stages of the election process.

5 Handbook for European Union Election Observation, 3rd Edition, page 23. http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/pdf/handbook_eom_2016_en.pdf

6 In the different formats that EU electoral missions are deployed nowadays, namely: fully-fledged EU EOMs, EU Election Assessment Teams (EU EAT), EU Election Expert Missions (EU EEM) and Follow-up Missions to assess the implementation of EU EOM recommendations.

7 This was the case recently in Burkina Faso. Prior to the deployment of an EU EOM, a €7.8 million basket fund, with EU and Member State funding –including Austria, Denmark, France, Germany and Luxemburg- was established and managed by ECES from the beginning of 2015 to support the Independent Electoral Commission; see www.pacte-burkinafaso.eu

8 The EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019) is available at the following address: http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/docs/eu_action_plan_on_human_rights_and_democracy_en.pdf

- Action 3.b.

  Include a parliamentary dimension into EU and EU Member States' good governance programmes and budget support.

- Action 7.a.

  Facilitate and support structured exchanges, inter alia through sharing best practices and lessons learned, between government, members of parliament and civil society.

- Action 7.d.

  Step up EU engagement with political parties and citizen movements with a view to strengthening political pluralism and parties' role in fostering accountable institutions and practices, as well as inclusive national reform processes.

- Action 32.a.

  Support and re-commit to the implementation of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) for International Election Observation and co-operate closely with organisations that are applying the DoP in observation methodology, such as ODIHR.

- Action 32.b.

  Consolidate best practices for leveraging EU EOMs and OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Missions recommendations in EU and EU Member State political dialogues and democracy support activities.

- Action 32.c.

  Strengthen long term planning and integrated deployment of all aspects of EU and Member State support to the electoral cycle, by exploring innovative aid delivery mechanisms.

The main aim of the EURECS is to offer the EU, its Member States, other European donors and beneficiary countries an innovative delivery mechanism for electoral and democracy assistance to implement projects and programmes that are consistent with European values and EU policies. Secondly, it is built to help prevent, mitigate and manage electoral related conflicts, in line with international standards and obligations. Finally, based on the idea that elections are long-term processes, EURECS is designed to include a wide range of actors from election management bodies, civil society, political parties, local authorities, parliament, security forces and media to ensure a truly comprehensive and more sustainable approach.[9]

ECES experience ensures the knowledge and expertise required to implement a robust European response to electoral support activities geared at preventing, mitigating and managing electoral related conflicts and works at different levels within society (political leadership, elected representatives, civil society and grassroots community representatives).

ECES first introduced EURECS during the 10th EU Development Days[10] as a contribution towards a broader understanding of democracy, conflict prevention and electoral processes by demonstrating

9 International electoral standards and obligations are established by universal and regional treaties and political commitments; they provide a basis for the assessment of an election process including consolidated good practices. For more information see the publications on this subject by the EU, International IDEA and The Carter Center http://eeas.europa.eu/eueom/pdf/compendium-of-int-standards-for-elections_en.pdf http://www.idea.int/publications/international-obligations-for-elections/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageID=65167

10 Brussels, 15-16 June 2016

how seemingly diverse fields in democracy support are interconnected[11]. These fields include support to political parties, parliaments, security forces, civil society organisations, media, women, youth, religious groups and local authorities. Potential sources of conflict, or root causes that are left unaddressed are complex and difficult to tackle once they take the shape of civil unrest and violence. Since root causes of conflict are planted in the relationships between stakeholders, **a holistic approach is best suited to effectively tackle their origins**.

The discussions held during the EU Development Days on 15 June 2016 also aimed to raise awareness of the past, present and future of EU support, tailored to specific electoral cycles. As such, these debates constituted a **forum to examine the multifacetted electoral field jointly** and included several discussions organised by ECES.

During this event, ECES was represented in the **high-level panel chaired by the High Representative and Vice-president of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini with the participation of the Presidents of the Republic of Burkina Faso (Roch March Christian Kaboré) and of the Central African Republic (Faustin-Archange Toaderá).** The panel was on "Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals 2016 (SDG 16)[12] in relation with the opportunities and challenges to the security and development nexus"[13]. Thijs Berman represented ECES, while bringing in his own experience as a former Member of the European Parliament and three times Chief Observer of EU EOMs. Mr. Berman currently serves as Team Leader of the EU-funded project in support of the Electoral Commission in the Central African Republic, implemented by ECES[14].

During this session, the EU-HRVP stated that the EU must work with third countries through long term, inclusive and holistic partnerships, that should aim to reach as many beneficiaries and interlocutors as possible with each project. Furthermore, Ms. Mogherini also reiterated the importance of working with partner countries at every level of their administration, starting with local authorities as actors whose actions directly affect the lives of citizens.

11 https://www.eudevdays.eu/sessions/european-response-electoral-cycle-support
12 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16
13 https://eudevdays.eu/sessions/implementing-sustainable-development-goal-16-peaceful-and-inclusive-societies; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCxkRe-9mLw&feature=youtu.be
14 During his mandate at the European Parliament Mr. Berman was a member of the Development Committee, member of the Sub-Committee for Human Rights and Rapporteur of the legal framework for the Instrument for Cooperation and Development and of the multiannual budget for the Cooperation and Development Policy. Mr. Berman's intervention during the High-level panel "Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals 2016 (SDG 16) in relation with the opportunities and challenges to the security and development nexus" is available at the following link : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=px7LQqL-X3I&feature=youtu.be

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
ADF	African Democracy Forum
ALDA	Association for Local Democracy
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
AWEPA	Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa
CCL	Centre for Creative Leadership
CCPR	Human Rights Committee
CdM	Club of Madrid
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of discrimination against Women
CEPPS	the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
COE	Council of Europe
CRPWD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DEVCO	Directorate General for Development and cooperation
E-Day	Election Day
EC	European Commission
EURECS	European Response to Electoral Cycle Support
ECES	European Centre for Electoral Support
ECF-SADC	Electoral Commission Forum of the Southern African Development Community
ECONEC	ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European development fund
EEAS	European External action service
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EIP	European Institute for Peace
EMB	Electoral Management Body
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
EOM	Election Observation Missions
EPD	European Partnership for Democracy
EU	European Union

EUTFs	EU Trust Funds
FPI	Foreign Policy instrument
EU-HRVP	European Union High Representative and vice president
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICERD	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IEAB	International Electoral Accreditation Body
IcSP	Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
ICTs	Information and communications technology
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
ISO/TS	International Organisation for Standardisation /Technical Specification
LA	Local Authorities
LDA	Local Democracy Agency
LEAD	Leadership and Conflict Management Skills for Electoral Stakeholders
LTO	Long Term Observation
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MP	Member of the Parliament
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIMD	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
OAS	Organisation of American States
ODHIR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIF	Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie
OPDS	Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PEMMO	Principles for Election Management, Monitoring and Observation
PRAG	Procedures and Practical Guide of the EU for External Actions
QMS	Quality Management System
RECEF	Global Electoral Knowledge Network of the French Speaking countries
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SADC PF	The SADC Parliamentary Forum
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN HRC	UN Human Rights Committee
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

SECTION I
OVERVIEW OF EU ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

The post-cold war period is mainly characterised by two distinctive trends in world politics, first, an **intensified process of globalisation** and second, **intra-state conflict** that peaked in 1995 (Peters 2010: 120). Worldwide interconnectedness draws international attention to the causes and consequences of local conflicts, increasingly regarded as global concerns (International Peace Academy, April 2004: i). In the midst of these two parallel phenomena, irregular migration is both a *consequence and cause* of unresolved root causes of profound societal tension that may manifest itself in violence and conflict, or structures of inequality stemming from a wide range of socio-economic, political and territorial factors.

The classic state system as seen through international relations theory is well captured by Chandler; 'if states armed themselves for reasons of defence or attack then other states would take similar precautions, similarly if a state became too powerful relative to others, then other states would make alliances against them' (Chandler, 2010: 94). Since the reframing of a global sphere, anchored in liberal ideals, state sovereignty is challenged by 'collective interests of the international society'. The primary security threat, according to the new security doctrine, lies not in state power, but instead in 'failing states that are held to lack the capacity to secure themselves or to prevent becoming a security threat to others' (Chandler, 2010: 97).

Electoral assistance has been part of the foreign policy of several established democracies since the 1960s. Following the end of World War II, article 21 of the United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948)[15] and subsequently article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966)[16] provide the legal and moral justification for international support to the accession to independence of non-self-governing territories, such as trusteeships. It was however only after the end of the Cold War that the importance of supporting the establishment of functioning and transparent governance institutions was widely acknowledged as a priority for the creation of more stable, peaceful and economically sustainable democracies. From a system where elections were considered a pure internal prerogative of states, shielded from external scrutiny, a new modus-vivendi arose, whereby several countries were called to reform their electoral systems and processes.[17]

Electoral support activities have skyrocketed since the 1990s as countries in a number of regions, in particular in Africa and post-communist Eastern Europe, held multiparty elections for the first time. This enthusiasm for elections spread despite the fact that international assistance was very often uncoordinated and promoted inappropriate or unsustainable solutions[18].

The gradual accumulation of electoral experience as well as the consolidation of international and regional legal instruments and authoritative jurisprudence relevant to this sector, contributed to gradual shift away from narrow, pinpointed electoral support activities towards more long term, cyclical and process-oriented support.

15 Art 21: 1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. 2) Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country. 3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures. UN Declaration of Human Rights is available at http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf

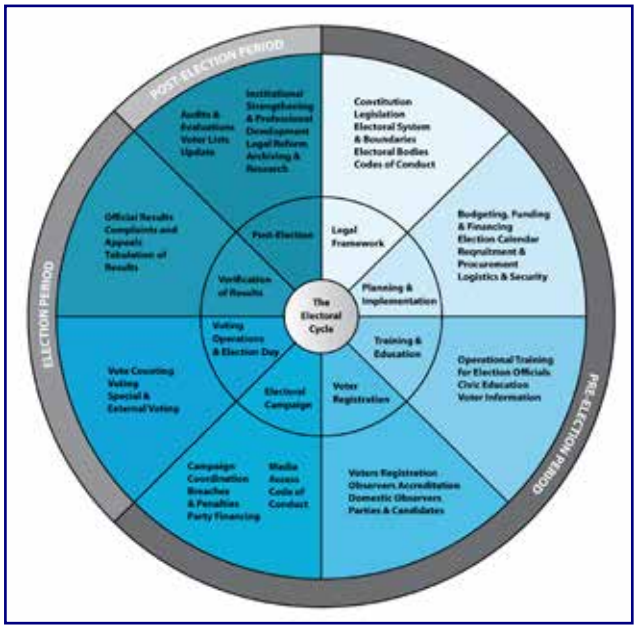
16 Art. 25 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:
(a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors; (c) To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country. The ICCPR is available at: http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx

17 The Electoral Cycle Approach: Effectiveness and Sustainability of Electoral Assistance, ISPI - Istituto di Studi di Politica Internazionale – Working Paper - Fabio Bargiacchi, Ricardo Godinho Gomes and Mette Bakken, 2011. Available at: http://www.eces.eu/en/posts/-electoral-cycle-approach

18 ACE Focus on Effective Electoral Assistance, ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, Tuccinardi, Domenico, Paul Guerin, Fabio Bargiacchi and Linda Maguire (2007). Available at : http://www.eces.eu/en/posts/electoral-assistance

In order to address criticism on the disproportionate attention given to the electoral event itself, the electoral cycle approach has become an essential tool for the programming of elections and electoral support.

Regular elections are by no means a panacea to all ills threatening democracy and stability. Nevertheless, elections constitute a key process whereby a given country's democratic maturity can be expressed and assessed, while recognising that **voters have often out-performed their elected leaders in demonstrating respect for democracy and justice.**



The contemporary **shift towards a longer-term vision of electoral support** addressed criticisms of the Election Day centric approach that for long dominated the field and gave rise to short term and ad hoc support. In hindsight, many internationally assisted elections adopting this event-based approach led (as a result of complacency) to unsustainable processes and unachievable expectations[19].

In this context, the Electoral Cycle Approach emerged as the methodology of reference in 2006. This approach was developed by electoral specialists as a collaborative effort to bring theory closer to reality in electoral process. Drawing on extensive field experience from the European Commission and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)[20], **the electoral cycle approach was crafted as a response to the lack of a coherent methodology for electoral assistance programming**. All interventions that set out to support the consolidation of democracies effectively take place during the pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral phases in a given country.

Furthermore, an electoral cycle perspective with **specific attention to the post or inter-election periods coupled with a careful assessment of local dynamics through electoral political analysis** allows for**:**

- Awareness of the multi-layered set of long term interactions among national and local, governmental and non-governmental actors involved in electoral and political processes;
- Understanding all potential triggers as well as all potential dynamics for positive change and reform;
- More targeted identification of needs, including more urgent short-term responses;
- Advance planning, to improve the overall coherence and complementarity of actions.

Larger scale EU electoral assistance projects commenced in 1994 with the technical and financial support provided to the legislative and presidential elections in Mozambique. This was followed, two years later with support to the elections in the West Bank and Gaza. Since then, EU electoral assistance has grown

19 The Electoral Cycle Approach: Effectiveness and Sustainability of Electoral Assistance, ISPI - Istituto di Studi di Politica Internazionale – Working Paper - Fabio Bargiacchi, Ricardo Godinho Gomes and Mette Bakken, 2011. Available at: http://www.eces.eu/en/posts/-electoral-cycle-approach

20 F. Bargiacchi, P. Guerin, D. Tuccinardi of the European Commission, A. Spinelli and T. Lanela of International IDEA. The Electoral Cycle approach was then explained in detail in October 2006 in the EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, in the IDEA Handbook on Electoral Management Design (December 2006) and later on also in the UNDP Implementation Guide on Electoral Assistance (November 2007).

considerably in numbers and scope. **To date, more than 200 electoral assistance projects** have been formulated and implemented with EU funding, contributing to electoral processes in over 100 countries worldwide. **Since 2004, the EU is making available between €80 and €140 million a year for electoral assistance.**

The financial instruments that the EU is currently using to fund electoral (and democracy) assistance are: the European Development Funds (EDF), European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities programme (CSO-LA), the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) and EU Trust Funds.

The EDF is the main EU instrument for providing development aid to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and overseas countries and territories (OCTs), it is also the most used to fund electoral assistance. The EDF is concluded for a multiannual period (currently for 2014-2020) and is implemented within the framework of an international agreement between the European Union and the partner countries. For the current period (11th EDF), EU Member States will contribute €30.5 billion, making the EDF the largest fund of EU development assistance . Roughly, 80% of these funds will be geographical allocations to ACP countries. The remaining 20% will finance thematic actions that should benefit many or all of the ACP countries.

The **DCI geographic programmes** aim firstly to reduce poverty, but also aim to contribute to the achievement of other goals of EU external action, including promoting democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights. The agreed overall budget for the new DCI is €19.7 billion. DCI provides funding through a geographic programme as well as two thematic programmes. The thematic programme "**Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities programme (CSO-LA)**" is part of the DCI, providing funding through geographic and thematic programmes. It focuses on EU engagement with local CSOs in developing, neighbourhood and enlargement countries. The Multiannual Indicative Programme 2014-2020 allocated €1.9 billion to this financial instrument.

The **ENI**, European Neighbourhood Instrument, provides the bulk of funding to the 16 partner countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy and it aims at promoting human rights and the rule of law, establishing deep and sustainable democracy and developing a thriving civil society. The ENI provides support through bilateral, multi-country and Cross Border Co-operation (CBC) programmes. For the period 2014-2020, the budget for the ENI is €15.4 billion.

The **EIDHR** is the only EU funding instrument focused exclusively on promoting human rights and democracy. Under the current EIDHR regulation and Multiannual Indicative Programme 2014-2017, the EIDHR's **democracy priorities**[21] for financing for the period 2014-2017 with an overall budget of €1.3 billion for the period 2014-2020.

The IcSP, which replaces the old Instrument for Peace (IfS) aims to provide support to peace-building activities. The financial envelope allocated to the IcSP over the period 2014-2020 is €2.3 billion and it is divided into three components or objectives, namely response to situations of crisis or emerging crisis to prevent conflicts, conflict prevention, peace-building and crisis preparedness and capacity building to address global and trans-regional security threats.

EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) are relatively new development instruments under the EU's Financial Regulation of 2013 allowing the EC to combine aid resources from various sources. They aim to offer a collective, but swift, flexible and coherent EU response to fragile situations. Currently, three EUTFs exist: The European Trust Fund for the Central African Republic (Bêkou Trust Fund), the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (Madad Fund), and the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa. Of these three, the **EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa is potentially the most relevant for democracy assistance** as one of its four core objectives is to support improvement of **overall governance, rule of law**, security and development (incl. border management) and conflict-prevention systems. At present, a total of €1.8 billion has been earmarked to this fund.

21 Other priorities under the EIDHR are: support to human rights and human rights defenders in situations where they are most at risk; support to other EU human rights priorities; and support to targeted key actors and processes, including international and regional human rights instruments and mechanisms.

EU funded electoral assistance has mostly, but not exclusively, been provided through and with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Over the past 12 years, the EU and the United Nations have been increasingly working together in the conceptualisation and implementation of electoral assistance. While the European Commission and UNDP have been collaborating in the field of electoral assistance since 1995, their partnership has intensified since the implementation of the Action in Support of the Electoral Processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo. **The EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance was established largely following lessons learned and close interactions between both organisations within this €165 million project in support of the 2005-2006 electoral processes in the DRC.**

The lessons from the DRC were gathered in the EU Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance published in October 2006[22] (which also contains case studies of EU-funded electoral assistance with different delivery mechanisms in Indonesia, Madagascar and the West Bank and Gaza). This partnership was also facilitated at the time by the lack of European operational not-for-profit organisations specialised in electoral assistance[23].

Since 2004, most EU funds have been allocated through direct negotiation and via contribution agreements with the UNDP through to the EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance. The terms of this partnership are regulated by the "Operational Guidelines" signed by the Director General of DEVCO and UNDP's Assistant Administrator in 2006 and reviewed for the first time in 2008. Recently, UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and the EU Commissioner for Development, Neven Mimica, signed the third revision of these Operational Guidelines.

The EU is therefore the most important UNDP donor for electoral assistance followed by several EU Member States[24]. Since 1995, the EU has contributed to over 150 electoral assistance projects implemented by UNDP **worth over one billion US dollars**[25] with 23 projects worth €84 million for the period 1995-2003, 70 projects worth €618 million from 2004 to 2010 and the remainder from 2011 to 2016.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM)[26] was awarded several EU-funded contracts in relation to their expertise in out-of-country registration and voting, particularly in difficult contexts like Afghanistan and Iraq. Several other EU-funded projects have been implemented by International IDEA. The remaining projects have been awarded to European non-profit organisations specialised in delivering electoral assistance such as Democracy Reporting International, founded in 2006, and ECES, who started to operate in 2011. The UK originated Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS)[27] was founded in 1992 and while a highly reputable organisation it terminated its projects and activities in 2014.

If we consider electoral cycle support as a part of wider democracy support and we include support to political parties, local authorities and parliaments, that unit recently were not included in the electoral assistance account, we must acknowledge that other important actors received funds from the EU and EU Member States. These other actors include all the members of the European Partnership for Democracy, the political party foundations regrouped in the European Network for Political Parties (ENOP) but also several EU Member States' Development Cooperation Agencies.

22 EU Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006. Fabio Bargiacchi, Paul Guerin, Domenico Tuccinardi, Mario Rui Queiro.

23 The activities of the EC UNDP Partnership are carried out via the work of the Joint EC UNDP Task Force established in 2007 and composed by the HQ services in Brussels and New York of the EU and UN/UNDP supported by the EC UNDP Operational Guidelines for the implementation of Electoral Assistance Projects signed between the European Commission and UNDP in 2006 and updated in 2008 and in 2016. http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=172&Itemid=178&lang=en

24 http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2016/04/15/-eu-and-undp-renew-partnership-on-electoral-assistance.html

25 http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/Electoral%20Systems%20and%20Processes/GPECS/gpecs%20JTF_VF.pdf

26 International Organisation for Migration, www.iom.int

27 Electoral Reform International Services, www.eris.org.uk

This historical overview is in striking contract with the way the USA has funded electoral assistance. Since the 1980s, the USA has facilitated the creation and maintenance of a number of not-for-profit, mainly US based organisations working in the field of electoral assistance, observation and democracy support, through regular funding by USAID.

"[…] *Towards the end of the 1980s the US started to offer electoral assistance through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of State and the National Endowment for Democracy. This development occurred after Presidents Carter and Reagan made democracy promotion a central strategy of the US foreign policy. Initially, the emphasis of the assistance was heavily placed on election observation missions and political party support - with a private foundation like The Carter Center specialising in electoral observation, and institutions such as the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) more active in political parties' development. It was in 1987 that USAID also began to consider the establishment of a more technical-oriented and professional NGO, dedicated exclusively to providing assistance to the organisation of the technical aspects of electoral processes in developing countries. This was when IFES was established as the International Foundation for Election Systems (see for a detailed account "Every Vote Counts", IFES 2007). Since then, USAID has generally maintained a sort of division between the political party and civil society organisations (CSOs) development work, generally entrusted to specialised institutions like NDI and IRI, and the technical assistance activities in support of electoral processes, that are generally entrusted to IFES. Thanks to a sound and technical-oriented approach to electoral assistance, IFES has grown in these twenty years to become the most respected NGO in this field, providing electoral technical assistance across the globe in a very large range of electoral-related activities and always dedicating resources for the professionalism and independence of Election Management Bodies.*"[28]

II. EVALUATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EU-FUNDED ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

Since the implementation of EU-funded projects based on the Electoral Cycle Approach, a set of evaluations and key lessons learned have been synthesised by key players in the field, namely the European Commission, International IDEA, DFID-UKAID and the UNDP.

In addition, the OECD-DAC Governance Network (GOVNET) invited a wider set of global stakeholders for a First Roundtable on International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems, held in Paris, in March 2010. The 34 Member States of the OECD[29] constitute the largest international donors to election support activities worldwide.

The Roundtable eventually led to a set of Draft Strategic Principles for International Support for Elections, with additional recommendations crafted by Commissioners and representatives of the Election Management Bodies of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Zambia and the Electoral Commission Forum of the South African Development Community (ECF-SADC). The draft principles were discussed at the Fifth Global Electoral Organization (GEO) meeting, held in March 2011 in Gaborone, Botswana. During this occasion, GEO brought together over 300 participants from all over the world. The conclusions of these discussions ultimately resulted in the Gaborone Declaration.

The key points of the Gaborone Declaration emphasise the universal value of electoral processes and their interdependence with an added focus on the damaging consequences of electoral mismanagement. It recommends a greater focus on strengthening and professionalising electoral institutions. The

28 ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, *ACE Focus on Effective Electoral Assistance*, Domenico Tuccinardi, Paul Guerin, Fabio Bargiacchi and Linda Maguire, 2007

29 Australia, Austria Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States.

declaration also establishes that **activities focusing on preventing election-related violence and on promoting gender equality** (in political participation pertaining to electoral processes, especially regarding, but not only limited to voting) **are equally important.** Indeed, women can become targets of violence but they can also avoid social spaces altogether and thus be indirectly affected by violence.

Several other evaluations have been carried regarding the impact of electoral support in the context of democracy assistance[30] including a study on performance indicators for electoral assistance projects[31] and a study on the perception of EU-funded Electoral Assistance from African beneficiaries[32].

The 2012-2017 **Electoral Integrity Project**, with its dedicated team of researchers from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and the Department of Government and International Relations of the University of Sydney, [33] carried out several studies whose findings are contained in three books responding to three core questions:

- What happens when elections violate international standards of electoral integrity?
- Why do elections fail? and,
- What can be done to mitigate these problems?

In their upcoming book, to be published in 2017[34], but already available to practitioners for review, the Electoral Integrity Project evaluates electoral assistance efforts of Western countries, including the pessimistic perceptions of several scholars regarding the effectiveness of actions to strengthen elections and democracy abroad. The book also reports the opinions of some election observers and populist politicians who claim that democracy is in decline or retreat, suggesting that Western countries should abandon nation-building abroad and concentrate more on their own domestic interests.

Finally, this new book presents novel evidence with respect to the pragmatic case of why international programs of electoral assistance work.

> *"Systematic research demonstrates that electoral integrity is strengthened by a series of practical projects where international organizations and bilateral donors support the efforts of local stakeholders –to reform electoral laws, strengthen women's representation, build electoral management bodies, promote balanced campaign communications, regulate political money, improve voter registration, and expand civic education. Success should not be exaggerated. Not everything works, by any means. Electoral assistance is most effective where the strengths and weaknesses of international agencies and programs match the threats and opportunities facing each society. There are good reasons for genuine doubt. Efforts are often greatest in the riskiest contexts. Expectations are inflated. Agencies need to gather better evidence to evaluate programs. But this does not mean that international attempts to strengthen elections should be reduced or even abandoned. Since 1948, the world has been committed to supporting free and fair contests*

30 Evaluation of UNDP contribution to strengthening electoral systems and processes. https://www.oecd.org/derec/undp/elections.pdf

31 Study on Performance Indicators for Electoral Assistance projects developed within the context of the EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance. Maria Macchiaverna and Mario Giuseppe Varrenti. http://www.eidhr.eu/files/dmfile/StudyonPerformanceindicatorsforelectoralassistanceprojects.pdf

32 The European Union's Electoral Assistance: Perceptions of African Democracy Building. International IDEA. http://www.idea.int/resources/analysis/loader.cfm?csmodule=security/getfile&pageid=40605

33 The project has been supported by many agencies, especially through the $2.6M Kathleen Kitzpatrick Laureate Award by the Australian Research Council, as well as by the University of Sydney, International IDEA, and at Harvard University by the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, the Committee on Australian Studies, and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. Partnerships have been developed to collaborate with many multilateral agencies, including International IDEA, the Organization of American States, Global Integrity, UNDP, The Carter Center, UN-EAD, and A-WEB. The five-year project was launched in Madrid in July 2012.

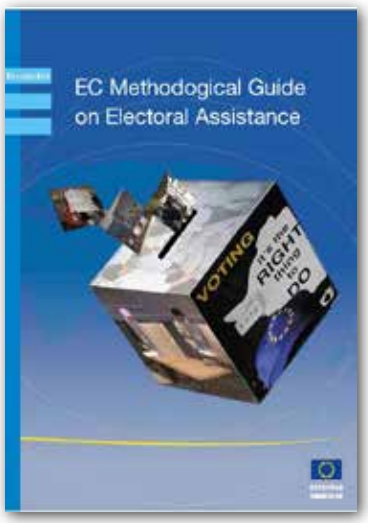
34 Strengthening Electoral Integrity: The Pragmatic Case for Assistance. Author: Pippa Norris New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017

reflecting the general will of the people. It would be a tragedy to undermine progress now by slipping backwards, withdrawing from international engagement, ignoring requests for support by local reformers, and thereby weakening fundamental electoral rights to self-determination".[35]

The book further indicates that electoral assistance in the last 20 years took on an important part of the percentage of the overall Official Development Assistance (ODA)[36] dedicated to democratic governance from Western countries. Ultimately, as recognised above, a more accurate evaluation methodology is needed to assess the real impact of democratisation processes mainly using the SWOT approach measuring strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

> "*It is important to address skeptical arguments by trying to gather more comprehensive, systematic, and rigorous evidence about the effectiveness of electoral assistance programs and projects in order to assess 'what works' in different contexts -- and also to identify what often fails. Programs in electoral assistance have expanded sharply since 1990, so it is now timely to collect a report card on experience of these initiatives over the last twenty-five years. In general, program and project evaluations seek to learn from experience, to provide the basis for informed decision-making about policy priorities, to reinforce organizational accountability to oversight agencies, and to ensure that scarce resources are rationally allocated. The danger of failing to evaluate programs is that, as Thomas Carothers notes, democracy promotion and electoral assistance agencies repeat standard programs which fail to adapt and meet new challenges*".

Given this context, now that there are many more implemented projects and earmarked funds, the EU would greatly bene t from updating the global evaluation that was part of the 2006 EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance. A rst starting point is to underline the considerable di erences in the implementation of election observation and electoral assistance activities funded by the EU. The table on the following page presents the main differences of EU election observation and electoral assistance as recorded in the third version of the Handbook for EU Election Observation[37] and in the EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance[38].



35 Strengthening Electoral Integrity: The Pragmatic Case for Assistance. Author: Pippa Norris New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017

36 The author indicates that the amount devoted to this sector tripled from around 4% to 12% during the last decade. Their estimates suggest that around $20 billion a year in ODA is currently invested in electoral assistance, which seems rather high but definitely reflects the recorded trend.

37 http://www.needsproject.eu/files/Handbook_EUEOM_EN_2nd_Edition.pdf

38 http://www.needsproject.eu/files/EC_Methodological_Guide_on_Electoral_Assistance.pdf

Election Observation	Electoral Assistance
• Funded by one budget line (EIDHR) managed by the EU HQ with the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), which manages operations, including their financing. FPI is a service of the European Commission which works alongside the European External Action Service (EEAS); • It is regulated and implemented following an updated and very comprehensive Handbook for election observation, whose third edition was published on April 2016; • The Vice President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini, in consultation with the European Parliament, is in charge of appointing the Chief Observers for EU EOMs who are in principle Members of the European Parliament; • FPI, in consultation with the EEAS, is in charge of the selection of the core team of experts for EU EOMs; • Each Member State has a focal point for the selection of their seconded long term and short-term observers; • For the last 10 years, the EU has been funding a capacity development project for EU EOM core team experts and long term observers (NEEDS first, EODS after). A tender was launched in 2016 to select the consortium that will implement the project over the next 3 years for €5 million (EODS II) • For the last 10 years, the EU has established an EIDHR funded framework contract to select service providers to support the implementation of EU EOMs. The chef de file of different consortia of the on-going framework contract for EUEOM implementation are profit-making companies, with the exception of IOM and GIZ. • The EU has deployed EUEOM since 1994 and in the last 10-12 years have invested an average of 20-25 million EURO a year for deploying the different format of missions of EU election observation. This amount is about to be increased with the launching of two new LOT for supporting EUEOM activities but it will never reach the amounts invested for electoral assistance.	• Partially funded by financial instruments managed by EU HQ such as EIDHR and IcSP. • Most of the funding comes from the European Development Fund for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (EDF) and other geographical instruments. • EU Delegations, funded through geographical instruments, are in charge of all project steps (identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and audit). • If funded with EDF or other geographical instruments, the National Authorising Officer of each beneficiary country plays a role in the decisional process for each step of the project ccyle. • Contracts are awarded on a case-by-case basis and there is no framework contract or centralized information available for every funding possibility for electoral assistance. • Most of the contracts have been awarded via direct negotiations, mostly to UNDP, which is one of the largest electoral assistance providers on the global stage and via the EC-UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance; • IOM was awarded several contracts by the EU in relation to their expertise in out-of-country registration and voting; • The remaining contracts,, following the usual EU procedures were awarded to few other multi-governmental organisation as International IDEA or not-for-profit organisations (ERIS, EISA, DRI, ECES) and very few to Development Cooperation Agencies of EU Member States and European consulting for profit companies. • There is more funding available for electoral assistance than for election observation with an average from 2004 of €80 to €140 million per year. Since 1995 the EU has invested in electoral assistance more than a billion EURO, much more than the funds invested in election observation.

In this context, and given the fast and evolving pace of the electoral support sector and the consolidation of European not-for-profit specialised organisations, the EU should commission an external global evaluation of its electoral assistance. Evaluating cost effectiveness, sustainability and EU political visibility for each delivery mechanism should be a priority of this exercise. The goal being to make sure the EU and EU Member States are making the most out of future support projects given that there is no longer neither a de facto nor a de jure semi-monopoly to justify the implementation of EU-funded electoral and democracy assistance continuously and mainly only through UN agencies.

UN agencies had, have, and will continue to play an important role in the delivery of electoral assistance projects funded by the EU in the years to come. On the other hand, the moment is ripe for the EU and its Member States to take stock of the global lessons learned from projects implemented in the last 20 years to support electoral cycles after having invested more than 1 billion EURO., The EU should assess the efficacy of the different delivery mechanisms according to budget instruments designed to this end and built to deliver results in different contexts. ECES believes that an external global evaluation of EU-

funded electoral assistance should take into account the following topics:

CONTRACTING

- The total amount invested by the EU in to electoral assistance in the last 20 years and the total for amount for each contracting-implementation modalities.
- The specificities of each budget instrument funding electoral assistance, whether it is primarily managed by EU HQ (like EIDHR and IcPS) or by EU Delegations (like the European Development Funds and all other geographical instruments);
- Contract awarding mechanisms such as:
  - Call for proposals for grant contracts for international organisations and European not-for-profit organisations;
  - Open or restricted international tenders for service contracts also open to consultancy for profit companies;
  - Direct contracts with international organisations, European not-for-profit organisations and EU Member States Cooperation Agencies.
- Assess the feasibility of establishing a framework contract or roster of specialized electoral assistance providers among international organisations and European not-for-profit organisations;
- By assessing cost effectiveness first, assess the possibility of establishing a framework contract following the lines of the ones established for the implementation of EU election observation and open these to private companies.

PLANNING

- SWOT Analyses for each delivery mechanism such as:
  - Projects funded exclusively by the EU or through multi-donor basket funds managed by international organisations;
  - Projects funded by the EU or multi-donor basket funds managed by European not-for-profit organisations and EU Member States Cooperation Agencies;
  - Service contracts implemented by consultancy for profit companies.

DELIVERY

- Project evaluations already carried out by EU Delegations on previous EU-funded electoral assistance projects;
- Translation of EU EOM recommendations into electoral assistance activities during the formulation period must be considered during evaluation;
- Assessment or surveys gathering the perceptions and operational feedback from EU Delegations, EU Member States and beneficiaries.
- Speed in mobilizing specialised electoral assistance human resources for each delivery mechanism;
- Identification and formulation methods and specific delivery mechanisms including use of the LOT 7 contract, concerning Governance and Home Affairs, within the European Framework

Contract beneficiaries for the period 2013-2017[39];

- Cost Effectiveness for each delivery mechanism focusing on costs for:
  - Human resources;
  - Procurement of material;
  - Management fees and/or profit margins.
- Quality, frequency and accuracy of Financial and Narrative Reporting;
- Implementation of EU visibility guidelines and assessment of political visibility of the EU according to the different delivery mechanisms;
- Procedures for the external project verification of expenses and external audit for each delivery mechanism.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

ECES encourages the EU services to establish an operational framework allowing EU Delegations, EU services and beneficiary countries to choose the best implementing partners for electoral and democracy assistance according to the various contexts and following the usual EU possible contractual modalities outlined in the PRAG.

There are nowadays sufficient specialised not-for-profit international and European actors that can implement electoral assistance and democracy activities. Ideally, all interested organisations should be kept regularly informed about funding possibilities and placed regularly in competition to implement projects via open calls for proposals, restricted tenders or be assigned direct contracts from the EU, EU Member States and other European donors. In this context, ECES suggests that the EU services consider the implementation of two short-term actions in the immediate future and two mid-term options following the aforementioned global evaluation:

- **SHORT TERM OPTIONS**
  - Consideration be given to the regular or even systematic **launch of calls for applications for international, regional and not-for-profit organizations following** aims at enhancing the EU's support to democratic governance in accompanying the beneficiary country in its political reform process through its full electoral cycle. The actions could specifically aims at strengthening the capacity of Electoral Management Bodies, Parliament, Political Parties, Justice Sector Institutions dealing with electoral dispute resolution, CSOs, Media, Security Forces and promoting increased political participation of women and youth.

  - Consider using the **Quality Support Groups (QSG)** organised for each thematic and geographic directorate of EuropeAid (with the exception of the two directorates for Africa who operate a combined QSG) to interact with all interested not-for-profit implementing partners as per different project possibilities. Office Quality Support Groups, known in-house as QSG, are a decision-making process that brings together staff in headquarters

39 http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consortium_members_all_lots.pdf

with colleagues in EU Delegation to ensure the European Commission funded projects are as robust and coherent as possible. During a QSG, headquarters and Delegation staff, gather to assess the potential challenges and pitfalls of a new project jointly. The core **members of each QSG** are EuropeAid staff based in Brussels in charge of the geographical coordination, sector and thematic perspectives and contractual and financial aspects. Other Commission Directorates-General and representatives from the European External Action Service are also invited to participate in QSG meetings. QSG meetings are organized in the form of videoconferences with the colleagues from the EU Delegation in charge of preparing the project or programme. Meetings are, as a rule, chaired by the Director of the geographical or thematic directorate concerned. The QSGs intervene during two specific moments of the process. Firstly, at the end of the **identification stage**, the preliminary stage of project and programme preparation, where the different options for implementing an action are examined (it is at this stage that potential interested parties should be informed of project possibilities that will be later confirmed). Secondly, at the end of the **formulation stage**, when the QSGs assess the quality of the key project or programme documents that is to be submitted for a financing decision.

- **MID TERM OPTIONS**
  - Consider the example of USAID and launch a call for applications to establish a framework or long term agreement of sorts, for European specialised organisations for the implementation of electoral and democracy support activities. Even without ensuring specific contracts or involving financial issues, such a call can help to make sure the potential implementing partners are known to all EU services in Brussels and EU Delegations in the field. In 1995 USAID established, and supervises a cooperative agreement known as, the **Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening** (**CEPPS**). As part of USAID's Acceleration Success initiative, this agreement is the principal contractor for the Office of Democracy and Government's elections and political processes program, providing technical assistance and support to USAID missions worldwide. The agreement includes key organisations such as, the International Republican Institute (IRI), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI).

  - Consider creating a **framework contract equal or similar to the ones already established over the last 10 years by the EU services for the support to the implementation of EUEOM**, which are renewed every three years. The objective of these framework contracts (FWC) which are also open to consulting for profit companies is to provide, through specific contracts, integrated logistical, financial and security support to the Commission in deploying election observation missions and other electoral mission modalities, as well as to provide the necessary support in terms of daily management, security and logistical expertise. This involves the organisation of travel (including payment for travel costs), insurance and accommodation to the election observation team, provision of necessary local services (transport, translation, etc.), office and communication facilities, security support including in case of emergency or eventual evacuation, payment of fees, per diems and allowances etc. The new FWC launched in 2016 comprises two separate lots, one for election observation (EU EOMs and EU EATs) and another for other electoral missions (EEMs, ExMs & EFMs):
    - **Lot 1**: (a) Election Observation Missions (EU EOMs) which usually deploy 50-100 observers and electoral experts in the partner country to observe the electoral process, and (b) Election Assessment Team (EATs) missions deployed in countries with a volatile security environment to observe and assess the electoral process,
    - **Lot 2**: (a) Election Expert Missions (EEMs) – small expert missions to assess the electoral process in the partner country; (b) Election Exploratory Missions (ExM) – to assess the

usefulness, feasibility and advisability of deploying an EOM or EAT; and, (c) Election Follow-up Missions (EFM) – to examine the extent to which the recommendations of past EU EOMs have been taken on-board by the partner country.

The maximum estimated budgets are of €215 million for Lot 1 and €25 million for Lot 2. This Framework Contract will be awarded for an initial period of two years, with the possibility of extension for a maximum of two additional years. It is worth noting that the EU may increase the maximum budget of the Framework Contract, not exceeding 50% of the value of the initial Framework Contract.

SECTION II
IMPLEMENTING THE EURECS

ECES can also rely on specific support and expertise from ECES' Management Unit and the high-level networks of both ECES' Management and Board Members, based on their more than 20 years' experience working with or for the different EU institutions in Brussels and in the field.

ECES recognises **the crucial value of respecting thorough financial and administrative procedures**. Projects will therefore be managed according to the best practices and **lessons learned from the implementation of over 70 projects in the last five years and mostly with funding from the EU and/or EU Member States**. Complying with ECES' consolidated current practices, all projects implemented under EURECS will undergo due diligence and robust internal verification of expenses, external audits, evaluation and setting of milestones.

EURECS aims at providing a proactive and systematic strategy towards the implementation of electoral cycle support. ECES, **behind this strategy has all the necessary technical and professional capacities to support the implementation of European policies that permeate electoral cycle support strategically in partner countries**.

EURECS enhances the inclusiveness of these interventions by recognising the importance of addressing a broad set of stakeholders involved at different stages of the electoral cycle trough multi-track political dialogue.

Due to the intrinsic conflict-dynamics of political competition, dialogue between various stakeholders is an effective tool for conflict mitigation, prevention and management. Furthermore, dialogue can contribute to ensure a better coordination among electoral stakeholders. It is essential for dialogue to be seen as an infrastructure of communication between key stakeholders and protagonists whereby ECES holds a unique potential to reach different levels of stakeholders.

These stakeholders range from *non-state organisations such as CSOs, faith-based organisations, media, women's groups, youth wings, private sector organisations and institutions with a more political connotation such as EMBs, police, security, local authorities, judges, election dispute resolution mechanisms, executive and legislative branches and local authorities, political party leaders and members, international community, and local power-holders*. It is **crucial for the EURECS to build bridges actively between electoral stakeholders on all these levels in order to facilitate their mutual interaction**.

Furthermore, ECES place a particular emphasis on the shrinking space for civil society organisations, in many contexts. Investing in CSOs is an absolute priority in order to help bridge the gap between the people/the electors and their elected institutions on the one hand, and to promote inclusiveness in electoral processes on the other.

However, comprehensive support to all electoral stakeholders as part of one single cohesive initiative is often a missing link in electoral support. Indeed, either electoral support tends to focus on grassroots level organisations and local authorities with broad horizontal reach, or on organisations, institutions and stakeholders that are more instrumental to the process as well as having more power in determining the operational and political aspects of the process, such as the electoral management bodies, political parties and the judiciary.

ECES recognise that support should not only be extended to all electoral stakeholders but equally importantly, that support should aim to bring stakeholders closer together, enhance coordination and invest in trust-building. Stakeholders worth investing in as part of a holistic approach to the support of electoral processes include the following (non-exhaustive) list:

- Political parties and candidates
- EMB
- Executive branch of government
- Legislative body
- Electoral dispute resolution bodies
- Judiciary system
- International and National Observers
- Former Heads of State
- International and Diplomatic Community
- CSOs
- Faith-based organisations
- Local authorities
- Media
- Private sector
- Regional umbrella networks
- Unions
- Women's Groups
- Youth Associations
- Donors and electoral assistance agencies

Some civil society groups that ECES work with in the majority of their projects are also widely approached as homogenous groups. As a response to the shrinking space for CSOs in many contexts, acknowledging the existing variety amongst CSOs and especially their different access levels, reach and scope may open up possibilities for greater impact of activities and more effective support. In order to understand the variety of CSOs better, it is useful to break them down into four broad categories:

1. **Grassroots level groups** – This category includes community-based organisations, self-help groups, informal citizens' groups and committees and services users' committees. It may also include informal and web-based movements that are playing a growing role in democratisation processes in many countries. These are typically all groups that divide their stakeholders between the "activists" and the "beneficiaries" of their action;
2. **Intermediate level groups** - This category includes CSOs that are mainly "shaping the environment", including foundations, think-thanks, training organisations and member-based organisations. Most often these organisations are aimed at supporting beneficiaries/actors that are "outside" the organisation itself and are characterised by the presence of professionals, by formal structures and by a stronger institutional and organisational consistency;
3. **Umbrella organisations and coalitions –** Groups within this category typically have a thematic or a geographic nature, involving "intermediary organisations" to coordinate work, to establish common agendas and intervene in sector/thematic policy settings and policy-dialogue initiatives. These organisations would then take a leadership role at the central level;
4. **General platforms and networks** – Under this category one can fit all kinds of CSOs and often even "individual leaders" participating in policy dialogue and political processes at a central level, but organised collectively, assuming a stronger voice vis-à-vis both government and international actors.

The diversity among CSOs is certainly greater than reflected in the categories above. Moreover, CSOs are often positioned in between two groupings. Nevertheless, such a categorisation can help specific projects (and in turn EU Delegations) to identify the diverse roles that CSOs can play, be it in grassroots democracy, in the setting of participatory mechanisms for the management of public services, in national policy-making formulations or democratic governance and rule of law promotion at central and local levels. At each level, not only are the organisations different, but they also function according to different modalities and assume diverse roles. At each level, challenges, development dynamics and capacity needs are therefore different. Knowing these differences will help identify the most appropriate channel to communicate and interact with them.

Activities that involve more than one stakeholder are essential to identify drivers of change. This assumption is based on the logic that change resides also in the relationships amongst stakeholders, whereas the absence of a relationship may very well become an obstacle to reform. EURECS will be able to support key stakeholders within the multiplicity of stakeholders and the nuances within broad stakeholder groups, to promote and facilitate dialogue amongst them. **Contributing to the overall confidence and trust between electoral stakeholders and, in turn, to stakeholders' trust and active contribution to the electoral process, lies at the very core of the EURECS.**

ECES harbour vast capacities with various access and influence levels related to key stakeholders, according to a multi-track approach that will be defined in accordance with each specific situation and in line with identified needs[40].

- **Track 1. Heads of States, Elected Leaders, Influential Figures and the Diplomatic Community**

  Under this category, we can include all elected leaders, presidents, prime ministers, mayors, local governors, ambassadors, but also former elected leaders and, in some cases, other influential figures such as kings or religious leaders, even though these might be in power through succession.

- **Track 2. State bodies, Legislative bodies, Security and Legal institutions, Local authorities, EMBs, Political parties**

  Legislative bodies and various ministries and bodies under state control, such as legal and security bodies, including the police, special forces, local authorities, courts and election dispute resolution bodies, EMBs. Political parties include both central committees and decentralised party structures, mid-level managers, such as campaign leaders, all the way down to local political cadres and up to candidate level.

- **Track 3. Civil society, grassroots and faith-based organisations**

  This category includes: CSOs, Faith-based organisations, National Observer groups[41], Community-based organisations, self-help groups, foundations, think-tanks, training organisations and member-based organisations, informal citizens' grou ps and committees and services users' committees.

V. ADDED VALUE AND COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES

The values of inclusiveness and bridge-building between stakeholders are also in line with the principles of the new EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019). The flexible yet distinctly European approach outlined in this document is best placed to safeguard the implementation of an inclusive approach, factoring in the complex and delicate set of interactions among different electoral stakeholders when implementing electoral support programmes. The comprehensive and effective management of these relationships requires specific skills, going well beyond the confines of technical advice.

40 https://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/conflict_prevention/docs/2013_eeas_mediation_support_factsheet_electoral_process_en.pdf

41 Using International Standards Handbook for Domestic Election Observers, Council of Europe 2014, Editor: Marie-Carin von Gumppenberg, Contributors: Fabio Bargiacchi, Tim Baker, Igor Gaon, Marie-Carin von Gumppenberg, Milica Kovačević, Mathieu Merino, Andria Nadiradze, Eva Palmans, Vladimir Pran. The publication is available at the following address : http://www.eces.eu/template/default/files/ECES%20Publications/Handbook-Internl-Standards_EN.pdf

The combined set of capabilities and competence areas can – and should - be placed at the disposal of the EU and its Member States to manage electoral support programs in an inclusive, holistic and durable manner. In this framework, the EURECS will implement activities following these characteristics:

COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

- **Take recommendations of EU EOMs, EEMs and Follow-up missions** consistently into consideration in the formulation and implementation of activities in support of a given electoral cycle. Liaise constantly with the EU Parliament, European Commission and EEAS services dealing with Election Observation at Brussels level
- **Cover all sectors of the democracy** initiatives**support field** thanks to the complementary expertise of ECES experts in working with and strengthening: parliaments/civil society, electoral management bodies, media, security forces, political organisations/ local authorities, lawyers/ legal institutions, political leadership, youth and women's groups.
- Capacity to be initiated to follow tap into ECES roster of experts complementary areas of specialisation, spanning from developing **trust-building mechanisms** for emerging stakeholders, setting-up reform-oriented dialogues, organising large scale EU events, **designing customised capacity-building mechanisms, training of security and judiciary sector staff,** delivering electoral assistance in following-up of EU EOM recommendations. In this framework, the EURECS will: and elaborating democracy development data for customised use.
- A **network of local and regional expertise** gathered from the implementation of previous projects and available on demand, as well as partnership agreements with all existing global and regional networks of electoral management bodies (A-WEB, CAPEL, SADC ESN, ECONEC, RECEF, RESEAC, ArabEMBs).
- **A holistic approach that integrates all tasks envisaged by the EU**, by joining the partners' experiences and different areas of specialisation into one single consistent operational model with a clear service-orientation.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

- ECES experts provide **long-standing, specific and complementary expertise in implementing EU democracy support actions** at both headquarters and partner country levels. The partners can thus guarantee a unique level of understanding and reactivity to all kinds of emergency situations arising during the electoral cycle.
- Mobilise Key experts for any joint project, including professional profiles with a broad over-arching perspective on the democracy support sector, complemented by an **in-depth understanding of donor procedural and operational framework** for robust response to electoral cycle support.

EU PROCEDURES (FINANCE AND CONTRACTS)

- **Proven ability to implement activities in full compliance with EU project management cycle procedures**. This is further guaranteed by the fact that have already successfully managed EU projects in the democratisation/electoral field, particularly projects managed at delegation level but also centrally at the level of EU's HQ.
- Promote Cost Effectiveness with expenses based on real costs, 7% management fees and work

on reimbursable costs for human resources with no extra costs for procurement of material at central level.

- Bring capacity to mobilise additional funds from other donors and contribute to established larger basket funds for which ECES and EPD members can start activities and advance funds following agreements with the EU or other donors, thanks to the solid financial management implemented over the years.
- Welcome External Verification of Expenses and External Audit considered as a management tool for accountability and further improvements, notably by allowing EU Delegations and EU services to select the particular audit companies.
- Bring an important capacity to co-contribute to projects.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

- Carry out assessment, identification and formulation missions with ECES resources as a request-based service to the EU, EU Member States and other donors as a contribution to specific electoral cycles given the not-for-profit nature of EURECS and the possibility of reinvesting in other projects.
- **Ensure a higher level of EU visibility in all implemented actions** in line with the Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019). This objective will be operationalised by taking into account ECES previous project best practices in implementing the EU Visibility Guidelines for External Actions including submitting dedicated Visibility Plans for approval by EU Delegations and EU services[42].
- Joint selection of experts for Project Management Unit with EU Delegation, EU services and other donors.
- Place great emphasis in maintaining and fostering a constant political dialogue with EU partner countries on democracy, human rights and the rule of law in view of jointly elaborating short, mid and long term goals.
- **Implement best practices in terms of transparency and accountability.** Drawing on the consolidated practical experience of ECES in project implementation, the joint EURECS will be able to ensure the effective and proper implementation of activities, while respecting contractual requirements in terms of reporting, procedures and evaluation of expenditures thus placing accountability as a first priority.
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- ECES provide **long-standing, specific and complementary expertise in implementing EU democracy support actions** at both headquarters and partner country levels. The partners can thus guarantee a unique level of understanding and reactivity to all kinds of emergency

42 The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Actions is available at https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/communication_and_visibility_manual_en.pdf

situations arising during the electoral cycle.

- **Covers all sectors of the democracy support field** thanks to the complementary expertise of ECES experts in working with and strengthening: parliaments/civil society, electoral management bodies, media, security forces, political organisations/ local authorities, lawyers/ legal institutions, political leadership, youth and women's groups.
- **Proven ability to implement activities in full compliance with EU project management cycle procedures**. This is further guaranteed by the fact that all ECES experts have already successfully managed EU projects in the democratisation/electoral field, particularly projects managed at delegation level but also centrally at the level of EU's HQ.
- Specific attention is given to empowering Local Authorities (LAs) and civil society groups, supporting their cooperation in order to strengthen local democracy and contribute to combat corruption, strengthen accountability and foster inclusive and sustainable development.
- Mobilise Key experts for any joint project, including professional profiles with a broad over-arching perspective on the democracy support sector, complemented by an **in-depth understanding of donor procedural and operational framework** for robust response to electoral cycle support.
- Promote Cost Effectiveness with expenses based on real costs, 7% management fees and work on reimbursable costs for human resources with no extra costs for procurement of material at central level.
- Bring capacity to mobilise additional funds from other donors and contribute to established larger basket funds for which ECES can start activities and advance funds following agreements with the EU or other donors, thanks to the solid financial management implemented over the years.
- Bring an important capacity to co-contribute to projects.
- Welcome External Verification of Expenses and External Audit considered as a management tool for accountability and further improvements, notably by allowing EU Delegations and EU services to select the particular audit companies.
- Joint selection of experts for Project Management Unit with EU Delegation, EU services and other donors.

SECTION III
EXAMPLES OF EURECS-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

A) Electoral Political Economy Analyses

The unique Electoral Political Economy Analysis (EPEA) methodology developed by ECES is designed for use in democracy support contexts at a country level. We refer to this form of analysis as EPEA given its largely electoral focus blended with political economy methodology (PEA). EPEA provides an analytical framework to identify underlying factors, frameworks (both formal and informal) and dynamics that shape stakeholder perceptions, motivations, values and ideas in relation to electoral processes. These relationships and underlying forces are traditionally understudied in the analysis of electoral processes. In the same way, electoral aspects are rarely addressed comprehensively in traditional political economy analysis.

The objective of EPEA is to suggest the most influential constraints and opportunities facing a defined question of concern with a view to promoting stability and democratic development, based on the fundamental political, economic, cultural and social pillars of any given society, its structures, institutions and individuals all within an electoral framework. This approach heightens national and international understanding of the complex dynamics and interactions between key electoral stakeholders.

EPEA provides critical insights on how to steer national reform initiatives and/or democracy support actions to better cater for the needs of a particular society at a given moment in time. Recognising potential blockages or conflict can also feed into conflict prevention and mitigation strategies. As such, EPEA is a powerful analytical framework to find the right actions, spaces and timings to affect attitudes, behaviours and dynamics in a sustainable manner. Mitigating the fears of those who perceive that they stand to lose and bolster the expectations of those who perceive that they stand to win from change. Technical solutions that are not built upon solid knowledge of the subjacent needs and interests of a society, including individuals and institutions, as well as their complex relations are unlikely to be effective.

An EPEA is structured around a leading concern, question or hypothesis pertaining to the electoral process and its impact on political stability or other over-arching concepts such as peace or democratic development. The definition of this Question of Concern contributes to focus, shape and structure the analysis throughout the process.

Essentially, an EPEA aims at identifying and understanding the Contextual Factors, the political and economic factors that shape the boundaries within which electoral stakeholders operate concerning the initial Question of Concern. These boundaries circumscribe what can be defined as the Electoral Framework, which includes both formal and informal frameworks as well as stakeholder dynamics. Stakeholder dynamics are analysed in terms of Motivations, Perceptions, Values and Ideas. Ultimately, an EPEA identifies a series of structural, institutional and individual Opportunities and Constraints regarding the concern that forms the basis of the particular EPEA analysis.

B) Prevent, Mitigate and Manage Electoral Related Conflicts

An adequate understanding of the various elements, stages and entry points within the electoral cycle is crucial to plan and respond appropriately to requests for electoral support and clarify from the outset what is achievable and needed in the short-term, as well as identify what are the objectives of mid- and longer-term initiatives. **Adding to the complexity of the inter-connected set of stages in the electoral cycle is the fact that each phase, and the transition to the next, usually comes with its own set of conflict dynamics.** This creates a third dimension on top of the electoral cycle that does not necessarily follow a clockwise direction, as the electoral cycle does. Looking at the electoral cycle from

above, conflicts resemble moving clouds (which cannot necessarily be predicted) on top of the electoral cycle.

Conflict during the electoral cycle is not necessarily cyclical or predictable. Conflict mapping and monitoring of actors and root causes can be helpful, but only if this analysis is constantly updated. Otherwise, conventional context analysis conducted at the beginning of a given intervention that is seldom updated or revised may not be very effective. A one-time context analysis could constitute a poor match to the reality of potential conflicts that may play out through the different stages of the electoral cycle and, instead of providing a useful tool to better spot potential causes of conflict, be misleading. Context analysis should therefore be replaced by political economy analysis, whenever time and resources allow, shedding light on **why conflict or political blockages emerge, as opposed to how they play out,** hence focusing more on causality and correlation. As mentioned in the previous section, ECES has developed a specific electoral political economy analysis methodology that addresses the shortcomings of conventional context analysis.

Because of the multidimensional nature of electoral support, elections are an entry point to work on crosscutting issues that are not necessarily always related to elections. An example is that **flawed elections have allowed radical groups to gain a foothold in fragile state institutions**. In contrast, the involvement of a wide range of formal and informal regional and national stakeholders working in close coordination would ideally counter-act these trends, complemented by community early warning networks, and jointly enhance the potential for positive progress, thereby preventing elections from being used for undemocratic goals.

ECES has implemented an EU-funded Project to support the prevention of election related violence in the SADC region since 2013 (with ECES' own financial contribution amounting to 25% of the total envelope). The project, abbreviated PEV-SADC (www.pevsadc) has a built-in research component that has collected data on election related conflict and violence in all 14 countries comprising the SADC. This group of high-level national researchers is in turn forming a human Observatory on election related conflict, the first of its kind in the SADC region, focusing exclusively on electoral processes and conflict prevention, mitigation and management. The Observatory's main recommendations, originating from comparative data from all 14 SADC countries, are summarized below. This unique empirical data set has been influential in honing a strategy to tackle election related conflict more effectively in the region. The EURECS is thus built as a practical response to these recommendations (see annex IV). Examples of conflict prevention activities that have been deemed to the most effective and relevant include:

> **Early Warning Systems:** The PEV-SADC project underlines the importance of Early Warning Systems to avoid or minimize violence, deprivation or humanitarian crises that threaten the sustainability of human development in the region. Researchers recognise the need to strengthen structural risk assessments/analysis and to develop early response mechanisms to address structural problems. It is worth noting that early detection of electoral violence presents wider opportunities for action but requires the genuine involvement of all stakeholders from the very early stages of the process.
>
> **Conflict typology database:** Researchers recommend the establishment of a Conflict Typology Database to facilitate the task of identifying and analysing various forms of conflict. Along with this, the development of socio-economic indicators, judicial indicators, political stability and security indicators, etc. would assist the efforts of 'tracking' conflict in the region. The paucity of data on such a fundamental problem for the region is seen as a serious concern, which should be addressed at all levels. Encouraging the development of documentation systems, knowledge management as well as information sharing and monitoring systems is a viable means of building on any existing physical libraries.
>
> **Integrated approaches to elections and conflict programming**: From a regional perspective, the research identifies the opportunities presented by the SADC's conflict prevention mechanisms. The most recent one directly relates to elections and prevention of electoral related conflict, that is, the adoption of the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections* by the regional body. PEV-SADC notes that there is an opportunity for researchers to provide a valuable information base to regional observers and conflict specialists and collaborate on many fronts

(essentially by developing methodologies that integrate conflict cycle approaches with electoral cycle approaches). The introduction of long term observation under the revised SADC electoral framework could further assist in identifying potential conflict root causes, which could be extremely useful for early warning systems and preventative diplomacy. However, such systems cannot operate in isolation and therefore the input of projects such as PEV-SADC is crucial.

A suitable response to some of the main challenges that the research has shed light on could be based on the following areas of intervention:

Strengthening post-election adjudication processes: the failure to accept results by losing parties leads to violence, especially where there is no legal recourse. Hence, in countries such as Tanzania, ensuring the strengthening of post-election adjudication processes is a key imperative. In other countries, there is a need for time-bound Electoral Courts to avoid protracted judicial processes in formal courts. Advocacy on these issues is required, as well as strategic dialogue with key decision-makers to catalyse change.

Multiparty Liaison Committees: Researchers also either note or support the establishment or strengthening of multi-party consultative forums to discuss any concerns that may arise around the electoral process. Although these have been implemented in several countries, their effects are varied and there are still good practices to be shared.

National Elections Consultative Fora: Others have called for broader multi-stakeholder fora to address issues that are beyond the process itself. Matters such as Constitutional reviews and Referenda are contentious and have direct impacts on how the electoral process is managed and adjudicated; therefore, they require inputs from all relevant sectors. The promotion of such fora is thus an imperative in such contexts.

Enforceable Codes of Conduct: One of the concerns that was frequently raised is the extent to which codes of conduct are legally enforceable. The generalised understanding is that unless they transcend the level of tacit agreements, political actors will ignore agreed codes of conduct. To be effective, these should carry a penalty in law. Promoting the tenets of regional frameworks such as those contained in the revised *SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections,* could be one way of fostering change.

Platforms for consensus-based institutional reform: Finally, according to the majority of the research reports, strategic interventions with all stakeholders are essential in matters of: electoral system reform, constitutional reviews, and the promotion and monitoring of implementation by national government of regional norms and standards at country level. Without consensus, the likelihood for post-election disputes and conflicts increases, as has been shown in many cases highlighted in the reports.

C) Leadership and Conflict Management Skills for Electoral Stakeholders

Among the different capacity-building programmes that are specific to ECES, the pioneering training program in **Leadership and Electoral Conflict Management for Electoral Stakeholders** (better known as LEAD) strengthens the long term leadership capacities of electoral stakeholders. It contributes to increasing participants' confidence, providing them with expertise in strategic decision-making, as well as extensive insights into conflict management throughout the electoral cycle.

The programme was initially developed through the close collaboration and synergies created between ECES and the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)

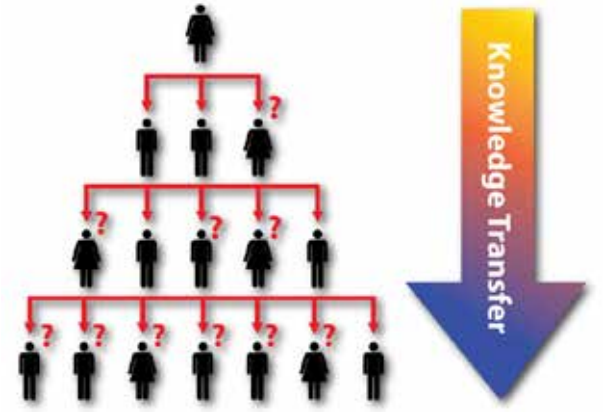
through its Leadership Beyond Boundaries initiative (LBB, leadbeyond.com). The aim was to respond to an observed need in accessible multi-stakeholder high-level training focused on election-related conflicts, election violence and intimidation, crisis management and dealing with unanticipated change within electoral processes. Indeed, conventional capacity development strategies did not provide for this type of high-level training and the work that had been carried out was mainly theoretical and not practical enough for it to be fully effective in the field. Similarly, electoral conflict and violence are recurrent concerns in many countries around the world and several key concepts of leadership were evidently applicable to help mitigate, manage and prevent electoral conflict and violence.

ECES experts together with those from the Centre for Creative Leadership-Leadership Beyond Boundaries began developing a curriculum in 2009 to respond to these identified needs. This curriculum is the basis of what is now the LEAD. The initial contents and methodology were tried, tested and refined and are still regularly improved and updated, through different training sessions and workshops carried out around the world.

The LEAD program is built around the core values of inclusiveness and the value of exchanging specific experience and knowledge between electoral stakeholders. LEAD is designed for representatives of electoral management bodies, civil society, NGOs, political parties, bodies entrusted with delivering electoral justice, academics, security forces, the media and media regulatory bodies.

The objective of this specific training methodology is to strengthen the management and leadership abilities of electoral stakeholders and improve their conflict management skills while giving them the necessary resources and skills to replicate the key training contents in their own formal and informal networks, thereby enhancing sustainability. LEAD is a flexible learning tool that is consistently tailored to the specific context, needs and interests of the target group of participants.

Indeed, the LEAD training program is inspired by one key objective, the sustainability of all knowledge transfers. The rationale behind the LEAD system lies in a commitment to the **long term strengthening of capacities.** The creation of a pool of national LEAD trainers ensures that they themselves have the capacity to train other future participants in an autonomous manner. To this end, the program focuses on the appropriation of its contents through the implementation of a comprehensive training cycle,



A message is generally gradually lost as it is widespread. Thanks to the LEAD certification system, the message is always given by a trusted source and therefore never distorted

which includes three different stages of certification. All LEAD trainings are supervised by a Certifying Facilitator to guarantee the highest standards in terms of content and delivery; and partly delivered by an ever-expanding pool of semi-certified and certified trainers.

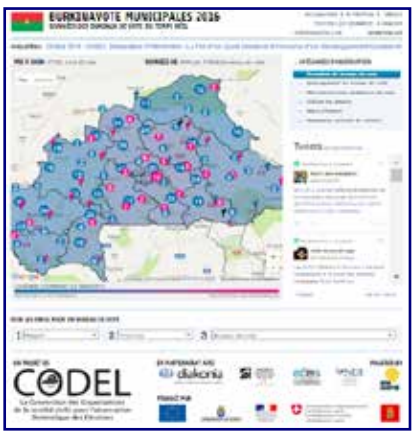
LEAD is not only groundbreaking in terms of its contents; it also employs cutting-edge learning tools to maximise sustainable appropriation. All trainings are focused on the participants and their collective learning needs, employing innovative techniques in adult education. The effective use of case studies, comparative examples, group work and role-plays immerse participants into the actual challenges they face, enabling the group to arrive at their own conclusions and solutions. See ANNEX III: LEAD AGENDA.

LEAD also incorporates relevant audio-visual materials, including the Sundance Film Festival nominee "An African Election" (nominated for the Grand Jury prize), directed by Jarreth Mertz. Its fascinating depiction of the Ghanaian elections in 2008, with rising electoral tension and powerful displays of how leadership skills can be applied to electoral conflict management and prevention, is one of the foundations upon which LEAD trainings are built. LEAD training courses include sessions on:

- The application of leadership skills to electoral processes
- The electoral cycle and its potential fragilities
- Electoral crises, conflicts and violence
- Leading principles behind conflict management
- The application of leadership skills in the prevention of electoral crises
- Individual and organizational leadership
- Mediation and conflict prevention
- The core values of leadership, tolerance and development

Experience has shown that these training sessions, when delivered in the pre-electoral period to representatives from different electoral stakeholders in common workshops, enhance the potential for improved understanding, communication and collaboration between different actors. The positive effects of these interactions are often visible during subsequent electoral processes.

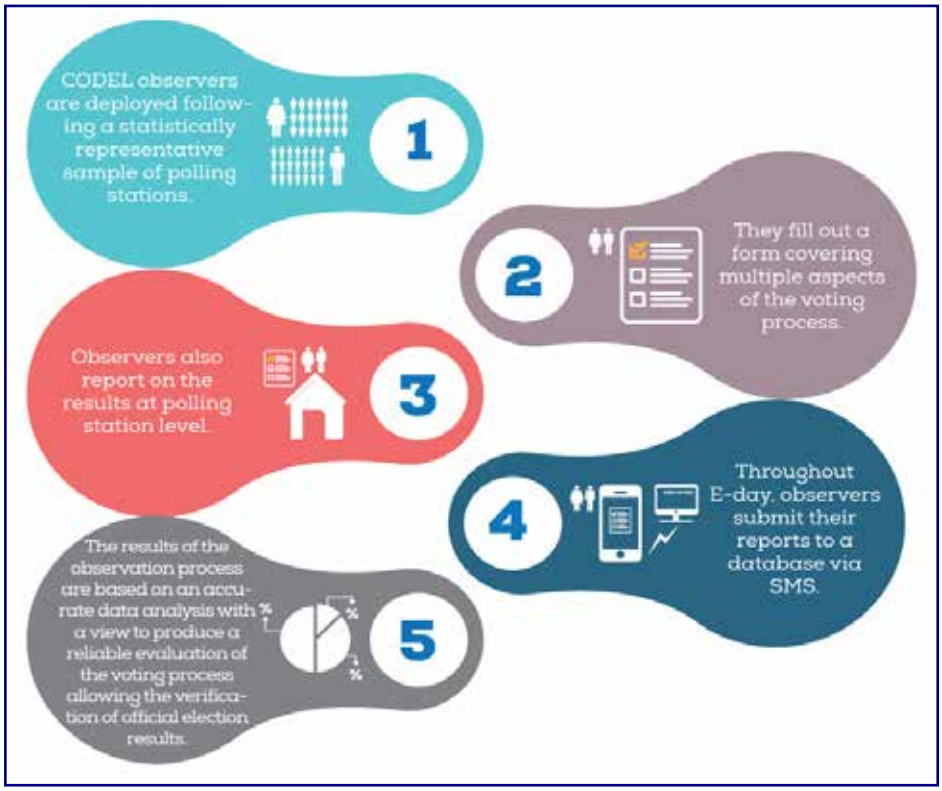
D) Election Situation Room and Conflict Mapping



A certain level of antagonism might appear between EMBs and civil society organisations engaging in citizen electoral observation. This is often the result of a lack of understanding of the specific role of each respective group. Yet it is clear that both key stakeholders contribute, in their own manner, to the credibility of elections.

For ECES, civil society organisations engaged in national electoral observation are crucial stakeholders within the electoral cycle. In this context, capacity-building activities for the benefit of national electoral observation platforms are an integral part of ECES' electoral support strategy.

In Burkina Faso, ECES, Diakonia and OneWorld supported the interest of CODEL (Convention of Civil Society Organisations for Domestic Observation of the Elections) in carrying out a Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) to provide independent verification of official election results. PVT are extremely sensitive technical exercises, which if done inaccurately, can undermine the electoral process. However, if done right, they can further enhance the credibility of the electoral exercise.



As part of its engagement in the electoral process, the CODEL initiated an electoral monitoring system in order to bring together the initiatives of civil society organisations and positively contribute to the electoral process. This innovative device, called the **electoral situation-room (ESR), is an information-sharing platform among civil society members involved in the electoral process**.

Composed of three interdependent departments, the ESR processed information received from the field to keep the National Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) of Burkina Faso informed in real-time, contributing to prevent and mitigate problematic issues, which might arise during elections. For example, on Election Day, thousands of CODEL observers deployed in the field, were in direct contact with the technical department, composed of data processing experts. Observers used their phones to send all relevant information concerning the situation at polling station level. This information was then processed by the technical room and sent to the intermediate room composed of experts in charge of analysing data and reporting it through in accordance with their area of expertise. Finally, the analysis room took appropriate decisions according to the data that was reported, and communicated outstanding issues to the INEC, which was therefore able to address them in an effective and timely manner.

By providing critical technical and operational support for the implementation of the PVT and the ESR, ECES and OneWorld demonstrated their commitment to support civil society efforts aimed at facilitating the acceptance of election results and contributing to a peaceful political landscape. Furthermore, OneWorld has enabled CSOs in different countries to adopt, refine, and implement several groundbreaking managerial, information and communication technology (ICT) innovations that have transformed election observation in Senegal from a traditional, slow paper-and-pencil activity to a state-of-the-art iterative and responsive process. The OneWorld platform merges age-old observation approaches with the latest data collection, analysis tools and techniques. Election observers send their

observations by text message (SMS) or through a tailor-made smartphone app; messages are instantly de-coded, verified, aggregated and published. Easy-to-read charts, maps, and spreadsheets give civil society leaders a real-time picture of what is happening around the country at the local, regional, and national levels. Organisations can decide which data is made public, for the whole world to see, while sensitive data can be kept offline, to be shared exclusively with trusted and authorised partners.

Following the 2012 national elections in Senegal, OneWorld has supported the implementation of this election observation platform in four countries, which had all experienced significant recent dysfunctions in their electoral or political processes: Sierra Leone (2012), Mali (2013), Guinea-Bissau (2014) and Burkina Faso (2015) in collaboration with ECES as mentioned above. For the historic elections in Myanmar held in November 2015, OneWorld launched New Niti, a smartphone app to help young people understand the democratic process and to hold their elected representatives to account after the election.

E) Political Party Support

Political parties are key democratic and electoral stakeholders. Through EURECS holistic approach, it supports the organisational, programmatic,campaigning and mobilisation capacities of political parties, aims at promoting political parties to take up their democratic roles and become crucial actors of change and reform. In so doing, EURECS aspires to enhance national ownership of democratic and electoral processes. Furthermore, in order to secure shared democratic values and principles, EURECS supports political parties in accepting the rules of the political game and conducting responsible politics. Some of the key activities include:

1) **Facilitate National Political dialogue**: Support the organisation of inclusive round tables on fundamental issues concerning the democratic and electoral process aimed at strengthening the adherence of political actor to core democratic principles and values;

2) **Interparty dialogue**: It is crucial for political parties to recognise the importance of an enabling environment where they can work together and discuss the rules of the political game. These interparty dialogue platforms provide a safe and informal meeting space where dialogue can start and where politicians of all political denominations canmeet and build trust and confidence at interpersonal and interparty levels. Once a basic level of trust and confidence is in place, parties can deliberate on issues of national interest and formulate a national reform agenda. This entails assisting the parties in making an analysis and formulating a common agenda for democratic reform. Interparty dialogue activities are crucial to establish common and shared democratic practices thus reducing potential political conflicts and tensions. In line with identified needs, interparty dialogue platforms can be formal or informal, temporary or long term.

3) **Capacity strengthening of political parties**: A democracy needs democrats. Political parties are often poorly organised and lack the skills and experience to fulfil their key roles within the political and social life of their countries and become responsible and accountable players. Customised support can be provided to these actors in order to strengthen their strategic planning, policy analyses and enable them to effectively communicate with voters. Activities can also be envisaged to assist political parties in the identification of their strategic priorities and in subsequent planning for their implementation. In line with the specific needs of the beneficiary, capacity-building activities can focus on developing internal procedures and political programmes as well as on strengthening capacities in carrying out policy analysis. In addition, training and technical support for parties can also be implemented with the aim of supporting these actors in developing clear

and realistic policy positions as well as alternatives that are encapsulated in manifestos or electoral programmes.

4) **Political Education**: In order to sustain reform processes from within, investing in strengthening the capacities of the next generation of politicians is crucial to make them actors of democratic change. Democracy schools are designed as places for learning, debate, discussion, networking, and exchanging ideas, and aim to give to people involved in politics the knowledge and skills for working in a structured democratic culture. Participants can practice and consolidate the democratic skills and behaviour that are required to work in a multiparty democracy. Important issues addressed at these schools are the concepts of democracy and the rule of law, democratic principles and practises, equality,, social justice, human rights, ethics in politics and democratic and leadership skills. These schools can either, focus on training young politicians, or target mixed groups consisting of (aspiring) politicians and representatives from civil society organisations.

5) **Facilitating best practices and peer exchange among political parties**: Learning from peers has proven to be one of the most effective approaches for sustainable change. In order to promote best practice exchange among political parties, conferences and workshops at national, regional and international level on specific themes pertaining to political party functioning, can be organised. In addition, specific thematic exchanges between political parties from different countries can also be organised to facilitate networking as well as the sharing of experiences and ideas.

6) **Promoting political participation of women, youth and other marginalised groups**: Inclusive democracy requires that all citizens should feel represented and their voices heard. However, many political parties around the world structurally exclude women and young people, as well as minorities and marginalised groups. As a result, the political representation, participation and political leadership of women, young people, and members of indigenous and other marginalised groups remains low. Working with political parties on their internal party regulations is crucial to enhance inclusiveness, as is the fostering of an open political culture at the local and national levels. There is also a need to address unwritten rules and practices that exclude women and other groups from participating in the political arena.

F) Parliamentary Support

Parliaments are at the core of democratic systems and of sustainable democratic reforms. As the institutions in charge of federating and representing the interests of different societal groups in a country, parliaments are the place where citizens' needs and expectations meet national decision-making. Therefore, EURECS' comprehensive approach puts great emphasis in empowering parliaments to exercise their functions and roles effectively while strengthening their relations with constituents and civil society. Importantly, Parliaments play a key role in ensuring that the legal framework for elections guarantee a level playing field for all competitors.

1) **Capacity Building for Parliaments and newly elected parliamentarians**: In order to allow parliaments to carry out their legislative, representative and oversight roles effectively, elected members need to be aware of their roles and responsibilities. Induction seminars for recently elected parliamentarians can help to provide them with a sufficient knowledge base to settle into and function optimally in the early stages of the legislature. These seminars can focus on:

a. parliamentary processes and procedures;

b. the representative and oversight functions of parliamentarians and scrutiny and formulation of draft laws.

Thematic seminars and conferences can also be organised to deepen parliamentarians' knowledge on specific issues, thereby facilitating the inclusive balancing of interests and decision-making within parliamentary committees. Additional targeted activities can also be envisaged, such as trainings on the role of parliamentary oppositions in a multiparty democracy, the role of MPs in peace-building and conflict prevention, and the need for an electoral legal framework that guarantees equal competition, free and fair balloting and independent electoral institutions.

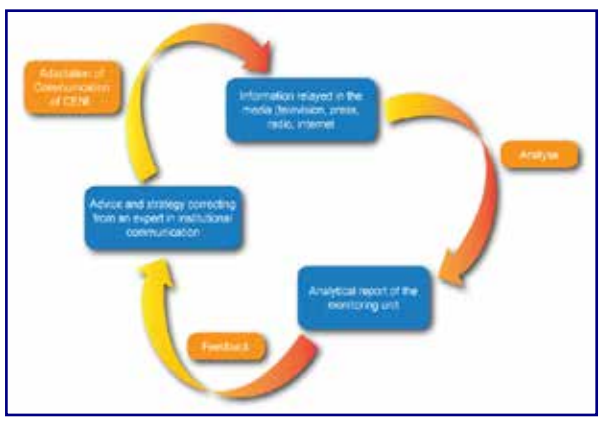
2) **Institutional strengthening of the Parliamentary Administration**: A professional administration that is capable of providing adequate support to parliament is crucial in order to ensure its smooth functioning. Capacity-building activities can be organised in line with specific identified needs such as Hansard, legislative drafting, human resource management, etc.

Training on the use of social media and communication and information tools can enhance parliamentary communication strategies and visibility. Such activities contribute to reduce existing gaps between the institution and citizens while improving the overall transparency of parliamentary work.

3) **Supporting women in parliament**: Representing roughly half of the electorate, promoting the voice and interests of women in elected institutions needs attention. Activities advocating for the political participation of women in parliament and other political institutions must be considered, developed and implemented. Enhancing the political representation of women requires mainstreaming successful examples and stories from around the world.

4) **Connecting the parliament with citizens**: Strengthening the link between citizens and elected parliaments contributes to more inclusive policy-making and greater accountability. Consultation mechanisms can be set-up, to enable constituents and civil society organizations to deliver input on Bills. Specific events such as Open Door days can help to strengthen these links, allowing citizens to meet parliamentarians and become acquainted with their work.

G) Media Monitoring and Institutional Communication



Media monitoring and institutional communication at the service of all electoral stakeholders and elected institutions are key activities within EURECS.

The media play a crucial role in voters' awareness and information, they are also a determining factor regarding how people form opinions that will influence their choices when voting. To ensure the respect of the free will of the voters, it is essential to observe and analyse media coverage all along the electoral process -not only during the election campaign, but beforehand. It is equally important to monitor the institutional communication of electoral management bodies, to keep a track of how they are perceived and portrayed in the media in order to take timely and opportune measures.

Media monitoring is at the heart of any assessment of media coverage of electoral processes. This implies the supervision of all (or key) media broadcasts, following a systematic, objective and standardised methodology to monitor their output and analyse their content. All forms of media can be monitored, be they audio-visual such as radio or television, written press or online sources.

Media monitoring is a long term activity, which requires committing qualified human resources. It is not a goal in itself, but rather a tool that will only be effective if it has clear objectives. We can distinguish between four different types of media monitoring objectives, although they may also be intertwined:

1) **Media monitoring at the service of public and institutional communication**. The aim being to support electoral management bodies' communication strategies and assess their visibility, as well as understanding of technical aspects of the electoral process, in order to adjust public communication depending on the actual needs and goals.
2) **Monitoring incitement to violence**, through the media. This generally implies hate speech and any other message that incites violence, discrimination, social and political tensions, etc.
3) **Monitoring related to electoral campaign regulations**. This serves as a complementary tool to verify campaign spending, abuse of public resources and the use of any banned symbols during the campaign (e.g. national flags and symbols).
4) **Monitoring political pluralism**; to verify whether the press, primarily state-owned media, ensures equitable coverage of political actors (or equal coverage, as established in relevant regulations concerning the role of the media during electoral campaigns).

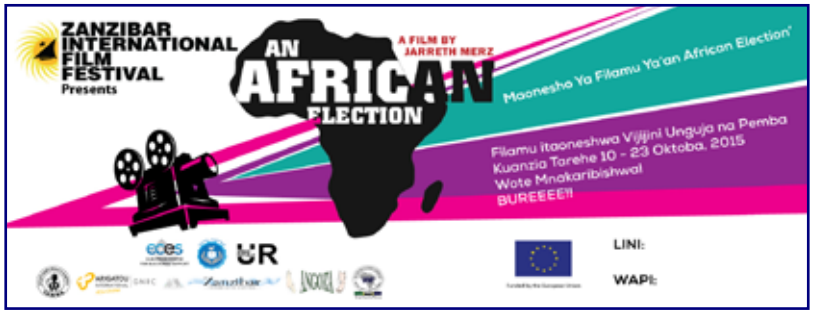
Both media monitoring and institutional communication tools can be put at the service of all electoral stakeholders and adapted to the identified needs of the beneficiary. These powerful tools are also useful for elected institutions at the national and local level.

Concerning Media Monitoring and Institutional Communication activities, ECES collaborates with the Osservatorio di Pavia, a top of the field research institute specialised in media analysis at the theoretical and empirical level. The Osservatorio's media monitoring approach and methodology regarding media coverage in elections has been adopted by EU and OSCE/ODIHR election observation missions, and many of the media monitoring experts in these missions are trained by the Osservatorio. Furthermore, Osservatorio di Pavia pioneered media monitoring methodology applied to electoral assistance with the aim of implementing a long term observation of the media coverage of electoral and political processes.

H) Civic and Voter Education: Nation-wide Sensitization Campaigns

ECES and Urban republic, an LA-based film production company created by film-maker Jarreth Merz, entered into a partnership in May 2012. The aim of the partnership was to promote innovative democratic development through the creation of visual content, in order to raise awareness and create pro-peace incitements of all the actors involved in the electoral processes, especially youth in urban and remote areas. The main principle was to make the visual content, namely films on democracy and electoral processes, available and accessible to all. The first collaboration translated into the launching of the project "A Political Safari". The project was specifically designed at reaching the places where people do not have access to electricity, internet and cinema and presenting the inspirational documentary "An African Election" to people who want to, and must, be part of the political process including youth.

In August 2012, with financial support from the EU, a truck was equipped with a projector and generator - effectively transforming it into a movie theater on wheels. The truck travelled through 10 different regions in Ghana to screen this film and an inspiring vision for African democracy. A Political Safari is currently working with international partners and local democracy trainers to create non-partisan voter education workshops and training tools, specifically designed for youth, women, and marginalised communities in Ghana. This is an unique and exciting collaboration that relies on local expertise and supports self-determination and effective dialogue across ideological, socio-economic and ethnic lines. "A Political Safari: An African Adventure in Democracy Building" is essentially an adaptable outreach campaign initiative that can be delivered all across Africa in order to raise awareness of the role of different electoral stakeholders play, including young people and first time votes in upholding peace and respect for the process.



A few more words about the movie "An African Election" that is used, it chronicles the 2008 presidential elections in Ghana and follows the presidential candidates in the unpredictable months leading up to the final night and the announcement of the election results and depicts the "heated" electoral race between the two front runners as well as the vision and strategies used by the EMB to ensure that the electoral and democratization process remained on track. As such, the movie provides an unprecedented tool for inspiring and educating African stakeholders and electorates in how a well-implemented electoral process can bring about peaceful change of power and democratic continuity where the result could have been an open conflict. Using this educational tool, the Political Safari is a mobile-cinema with specific voter education potential that supports Africans that engage in promoting democracy and peaceful electoral processes.

This activity can also be used to create space for dialogue and aims to support local peacemakers to promote democracy, provide real-life examples of people bridging divides, showcases African media that helps prevent electoral conflict, facilitates voter education and engaged a wide range of groups including in particular women, youth and ethnic minorities. Local CSOs and youth groups, women groups or FBOs can be brought onboard in preparing the Political Safari campaign and moderate discussions that should follow. By demonstrating the linkages and ownership of youth wings and women's organisations in carrying out this campaign, a possible positive result of the campaign could also be that of raising the profiles and increase leverage to underrepresented groups in political and electoral processes. The Political Safari has so far been delivered in Ghana 2012, Kenya 2013, Madagascar 2013, Comoros 2015, Guinea Conakry 2015 and Zanzibar 2015, , implemeted predominantly by ECES with financial support from the EU.

ECES and Urban Republic has also produced several street interview documentaries that captures citizens fears and aspirations before and after the most recent elections in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Madagascar.

The General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, (OAS), together with the electoral authorities of the Western Hemisphere, has been making inroads in the area of electoral quality management since 2006. The collaborative efforts between electoral authorities and international organisations in favour of quality and continuous improvement have placed EMBs in the Americas at the forefront of this process. Beginning in 2007 and based on the requests of its Member States, the OAS began providing technical accompaniment to those countries that requested it through the implementation of quality management and certification systems under ISO 9001 norms. Since that initiative, nearly ten years ago, the OAS has become a pioneer in the field of quality management systems applied to the electoral field and has been at the forefront of the momentum behind the creation of an ISO electoral standard under which electoral authorities across the world could be certified.

This new technical specification, developed essentially by a joint working group of representatives from regional EMBs, provides a valuable guide for the design and implementation of quality management systems within electoral authorities. The standard also establishes the minimum requirements for implementation, providing a standardised baseline for the evaluation of electoral processes.

In February 2014, ***"ISO/TS 17582:2014, Quality Management Systems – Particular requirements for the application of ISO 9001:2008 for electoral organizations at all levels of government"***, was published by ISO. It is designed for use by electoral bodies to focus on the quality of the services provided by an EMB and the satisfaction of the electorate.

ISO/TS 17582:2014 involves eight key electoral processes: voter registration, registration of political organizations and candidates, electoral logistics, vote casting, vote counting and declaration of results, electoral education, oversight of campaign financing, and resolution of electoral disputes. This process complements the international obligations-based approach and allows EMBs:

- to identify operational vulnerabilities;
- highlight opportunities for improvement;
- place a greater emphasis on leadership communication and management of change;
- create a framework to evaluate services provided to citizens and all electoral stakeholders;
- inculcate a culture of continual improvement.

In May 2015, the OAS established the **International Electoral Accreditation Body** (IEAB), as an Office within its Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (DECO). The IEAB's mission is to promote transparency and quality in elections by supporting the certification of election management bodies against international electoral standards. The ultimate objective of the IEAB is to guarantee the integrity of the certification process with the ISO/TS 17582:2014 by ensuring that

standard criteria are used in certification assessments and that "Lead assessors and auditors" possess the requisite knowledge and abilities to carry out assessments, and to ensure that certification decisions are the product of consensus[43].

ECES and IEAB are collaborating to spread the knowledge and comprehension of ISO/TS 17582:2014 and the IEAB Assessment Methodology. The majority of ECES Senior Staff have been trained by IEAB enabling ECES to support and accompany electoral management bodies in their certification process. **ECES and IEAB are collaborating jointly to support certification processes for interested EMBs in Africa, the Middle East and other regions or countries where ECES implements activities and projects**. This process guarantees transparency through audit and certification, builds confidence among the electorate and stakeholders and consolidates the reputation of certified EMB among the international community.

ECES believes the EU could consider supporting EMBs in adopting a quality management approach regarding their work, with the aim of improving and revising their institutional objectives. Indeed, quality management systems for EMBs are **geared towards the improvement of internal processes and procedures, including the management of information in decision-making, and the promotion of an organisational culture oriented towards continual improvement in the services provided to citizens.** One of the key advantages of implementing a Quality Management System (QMS) in an electoral context is that it allows international organisations to harmonise the criteria with which they evaluate performance while also engendering a level of transparency that generates greater levels of confidence in the electoral process among stakeholders, crucially political parties and citizens.

The implementation of ISO/TS 17582:2014 adheres to and contributes to the aim of enhancing "**the role and capacity of, and public confidence in, Election Management Bodies to independently and effectively organise credible, inclusive and transparent elections, in particular through enhanced dedicated dialogue and long term support strategy with the objective to promote the integrity of the electoral processes"**, as established in the EU Action Plan for Democracy 2015-2020.

The implementation of a quality management system for EMBs **can facilitate the regulation of areas as diverse as procurement, training, logistics, the formation of polling locations, citizen outreach, and electoral and civil registries**. The regulation of each process and procedure can lead to a higher level of accountability, generating further institutional development and minimising the potential for undue influence by individual personnel. The management and certification of quality has a direct impact on the transparency and the modernisation of an electoral authority, as certification demonstrates the firm commitment of the electoral management body to improve and to achieve the highest standards of quality. Additional benefits of quality management for electoral processes include:

With respect to transparency and accountability:

- **Improvement of the internal procedures and processes within the institution**: Quality management systems allow for the detection of irregularities and for promoting the introduction of improvements, which, when implemented correctly, guarantee continuous improvement for the institution. Based on diagnostics of the specifications of each institution, QMS provide a clear frame of reference through which electoral authorities can better and more efficiently carry out their functions, responsibilities, management structures and citizen services. With better documentation and supervision of processes, it is possible to achieve stability in management and a reduction in the number of actions that do not provide value.
- **Better flow of information in the management of decision-making**: A quality management system allows for: disseminating objectives to those areas that have direct contact with citizens, providing a better flow of information and more visibility for the administration, integrating processes to achieve a better provision of services and higher levels of citizen satisfaction.
- **Generation of a culture of continuous improvement**: QMS facilitate the continuous

43 www.ieab-oas.org

improvement of both internal and external structures, demanding certain levels of quality in management systems as well as in products and services. The application of a quality management focus provides the opportunity to improve various processes simultaneously within a holistic framework, instead of solving them on an ad hoc basis. The priority for those organisations developing QMS is to improve the electoral authority's capacity to comply with client requirements.

- **Building citizen confidence**: The assessments that are part of the certification process demonstrate the clear willingness of the organisation to be evaluated by an external entity. Furthermore, the certification process itself engenders trust among citizens and political parties. In a similar fashion, external assessments provide a visible display of the institution's compliance with pre-established quality norms.

With respect to modernization:

- **Satisfying citizen demands**: The implementation of quality management systems constitutes an effective way to modernise electoral management bodies. The objective is to guarantee continuous improvement in relation to efficacy, efficiency, transparency, credibility and equity. As a result, these systems need to focus on the needs and expectations of electoral clients (citizens), who are the principal beneficiaries. Given that the concept of quality encompasses the provision of goods and services, while taking into account the satisfaction of citizen demands, the implementation of QMS is a useful tool for the promotion of the full exercise of political rights.

With respect to professionalising public service:

- The implementation of **QMS standards can foster the professionalisation of EMB staff and engender improved performance by introducing incentives that positively affect the services provided to citizens**. Employees in every institution represent a key component of services and their performance is crucial for client satisfaction. As a result, their links to institutional goals are strategic elements that influence the quality of service.
- The implementation of a QMS **leads to the professionalisation of the civil service, by allowing every public servant to have a clearly defined role within the chain of command so that managers can exercise greater control over the quality of their work**. Greater control is achieved over work and organisational capacities by empowering employees through training, as well as by aligning processes, procedures and the provision of tools. These processes foster positive attitude changes amongst personnel.

J) Procurement of Electoral Material following EU Procedures

Procurement of electoral material and services represent one of the most important and costly parts of an election. As such, it merits particular attention given the consequences of any mischief or misperceptions. Delays or shortcomings in the procurement of services or in the distribution of electoral materials can have an extremely negative impact on an election, damaging credibility and transparency. Some key attributes of a successful procurement process are worth highlighting as guiding principles:

- *Timely disbursement of funds available for procurement purposes*
- *Staffing the procurement unit with competent staff. Staff should have a clear understanding of materials and services required. When foreign consultants are working on procurement, they should possess country specific knowledge such as, for example, the need for water resistant, solar energy/ long lasting batteries/generators for remote areas, language requirements, and so forth;*
- *Coordination between the various actors involved, local stakeholders, especially the EMB, and including international organisations (if providing technical assistance to the procurement process);*
- *Ensure that the procurement process complies with the legal framework of the country;*

- *Clear and early development of requirements and specifications (where politically and legally possible) for electoral goods and services ensuring confidence among all stakeholders that the procured items are appropriate;*
- *Achieving the support and buy-in of all stakeholders for the procurement process;*
- *Familiarisation with published and approved practices developed within the particular area;*
- *Consideration of potential technological and skill transfers to EMBs, rather than only seeking "total" solutions;*
- *Cost-effectiveness through a transparent and competitive process;*
- *Exploration of long term sustainability and its relation to operational cost effectiveness and quality assurance, and possibly alignment with other similar national initiatives and expertise;*
- *Well planned and well organised management of the supply chain, including transportation and delivery in-country, packing, in-country distribution, interim warehousing at both central and regional level for various types of material, as well as secure storage in-between elections;*
- *Consideration of environmental aspects, including disposal;*
- *Avoidance of unrealistic expectations that cannot be met in a timely fashion, or in subsequent elections*[44].

Considering these principles, there was an understandable hesitation from EU services and EU Delegations to follow EU procurement rules for service, supply and work contracts in the electoral field[45]. However, in the last five years, ECES has repeatedly demonstrated that through scrupulous respect of PRAG procedures it is possible to carry out effective procurement exercises for electoral material and services.

For example, through the basket fund managed by ECES in Burkina Faso (PACTE-BF)[46] which included contributions from the EU, Austria, Denmark, France, Germany and Luxembourg, ECES provided support to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) of Burkina Faso. Among the different areas of support, ECES contributed to develop the technical specifications and procurement of a substantial quantity of electoral material. The collaboration with the INEC and donors enabled the identification of needs and the development of the most appropriate management methodology and calendar taking into account the challenges related to the overall electoral calendar.

The effective organisation of tenders by ECES through the adoption of broader technical specifications, allowed for inclusive competition, which resulted, in turn, in competitive offers

44 Procurement Aspects of Introducing ICT Solutions in Electoral Processes: The Specific Case of Voter Registration, Operational Paper, Joint EC-UNDP Task Force and International IDEA. Multi-authors: Richard Atwood, Mette Bakken, Fabio Bargiacchi, Anne-Sofie Holm Gerhard, Chris Kyriakides, Linda Maguire, Victor Margall von Hegyeshalmy, Niall McCann, Frick Olivier, Dunia Ramazani, Francesco Torcoli and Domenico Tuccinardi.

45 Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-funding-and-procedures/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag_en

46 http://www.pacte-burkinafaso.eu

being submitted that produced significant savings, especially concerning the supply of: ballot boxes, security seals, secured envelopes, boxes for the transport of filing cardboard folders and lamps. The effective management of this tender allowed for **35% savings** from the initial budget, or an equivalent sum of €**957,901** on the initially foreseen unit costs calculated on data received from procurement processes carried out for previous electoral processes in Burkina Faso with different specifications. The savings allowed the project to broaden the financial support to additional INEC activities, in agreement with PACTE-BF donors.

In this regard, two additional tenders were launched, allowing the INEC to acquire computing and electrical equipment for the Communal Results Compilation Centres and visibility vests for its entire polling station staff. Furthermore, to guarantee full respect of INEC specifications, ECES organised a visit to the site where ballot boxes and security seals were being produced, to oversee the quality of the products, implement timely changes and correct production when necessary. Given the very tight deadlines within the electoral calendar, tenders were launched with a suspensive clause immediately after signature of the project contract between ECES and the PACTE-BF donors. This measure proved to be crucial in order to abide by and respect the electoral calendar in Burkina Faso and the EU's procurement rules.

As established in PRAG, an evaluation committee was responsible for the selection process for each tender. Chaired by the PACTE-BF Expert in EU Procedures, the committee included both INEC and ECES representatives, as well as donors' representatives and the relevant Burkinabe governmental institutions as observers. Representatives from the different tenders were also present during the opening of their offers. In order to ensure the confidentiality and neutrality of tender evaluations, ECES, INEC evaluators and donor observers signed the necessary documentation in this regard. To enhance transparency and inclusiveness of the public contract awarding process and in order to ensure equal opportunities among tenderers, all relevant tender information was publicly accessible on relevant websites and in local and international media. In addition, PACTE-BF organised two information sessions on EU procedures for the local awarding of supply (mid-June 2015) and service (mid-June 2015) contracts in its premises in Ouagadougou. The following materials were acquired in the framework of tenders launched by ECES for the PACTE-BF project:

Polling Station Material:

- 28 000 ballot boxes
- 28 000 ballot box lids
- 154 560 hard cover paper folders for the presidential election
- 77 280 hard cover paper folders for the legislative elections
- 30 912 cardboard boxes (for transport) for the presidential election
- 14 546 cardboard boxes (for transport) for the legislative elections
- 26 600 lamps with batteries
- 20 420 electoral visibility vests (produced in Burkina Faso)

Material for Communal Results Compilation Centres:

- 383 generators
- 383 laser printers
- 383 scanners
- 383 voltage stabilisers
- 383 inverters
- 383 electrical current and overload protection devices
- 4 FTP servers
- 50 8-port switches
- 1487 toners

Sensitive Material:

- 480 000 secure seals
- 38 000 non-tamper envelopes

Public contracts for a total value of €3,476,000 were signed with the selected suppliers after the awarding process. It is worth to highlighting that ECES successfully ensured the procurement of electoral materials without charging any additional costs to the usual 7% of the total amount of the project as administrative fees, foreseen by the PRAG. Furthermore, other international organisations carrying out electoral procurement, including for the EU, are allowed to charge an additional 5% on the total amount of the related public contracts according to their internal standard procedures.

ECES organised the procurement of 584 pallets of electoral material for polling stations and ensured delivery follow-up until the handover of all materials from different suppliers at the INEC warehouses in Ouagadougou. In addition, ECES ensured the procurement and delivery of all materials for the electronic transmission of results destined to the Communal Results Compilation Centres. Material handover was organised on an ongoing basis, as it became available, allowing the INEC to deploy it promptly to the field.

ECES experts provided continuous support to the INEC coordinated activities from the beginning of the project, and most particularly during the sensitive phases of electoral operations. The contributions of the project's experts focused on the identification of storage sites, the recruitment and training of warehouse personnel, improving warehouse operational procedures, operational advice and consulting, etc. Assisting in the development of "election kits" was one of the most significant operational contributions. These kits contained all the necessary materials required for the proper functioning of individual polling stations. The aim being to ensure that all polling stations around the country received all the materials they required. The development and implementation of the deployment plan to ensure the delivery of electoral materials to polling stations remained INEC's responsibility.

K) Ballot paper Design and Transmission of Results, Technical Considerations for Political Affairs

Ballot papers security and transmission of results are two of the most critical elements in all electoral processes.

When it comes to ballot papers, the design and method of production are fundamental for the transparency and professional conduct of an election. Research on different ballot paper components and its effect on voter behavior indicate that the order of candidates, the fonts used and the type of logos or photographs employed are perceived as value-laden to voters hence not neutral. Candidate placement on the ballot paper in general is determined by randomisation to ensure that all candidates received equal treatment. To further guarantee candidates' equal treatment all logos are designed according to a common set of rules regarding backgrounds, basic colors and templates. Different methods of the security features of ballot paper are available. Drawing on past experiences allowing comparison between methods in effectiveness, ECES may propose various options to electoral management bodies of how to ensure the security of the ballot papers, notably:

1. Photochromics: The use of special ink whereby the color changes depending on the light. This is a relatively common technique that indoors, with little light, the color is green yet turns yellow when exposed to daylight. The advantage is that this technique does not require any specific instrument for verification.
2. Thermochromic ink: This technique also uses special ink, although in this case it changes color depending on the temperature.
3. Microprinting: A very popular and effective technique, which involves incorporating a minuscule component, be it a text or background that is only visible with an extremely precise magnifying lens. Any photocopying or scanning of these ballot papers would render the microprinted element untraceable. Although effective, this technique requires highly performing printing houses.
4. Watermarks: Incorporating a text or an image that is only visible when the ballot paper is held up to the light.
5. Two colours technique: This technique uses two special inks that are visible only through a specific instrument. Although not very well known by the general public, it is a highly effective technique for securing ballot papers. Numerous organisations around the world employ this technique to protect sensitive documents.

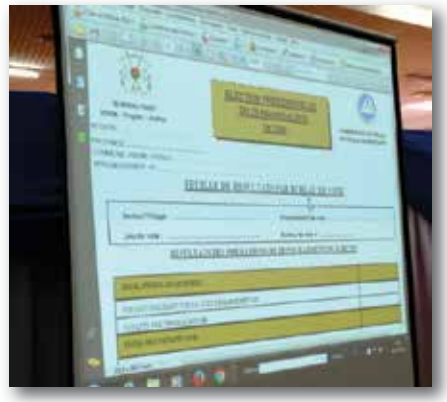
For instance, in Burkina Faso, ECES was heavily involved in the designing of the ballot papers for the latest 2015-2016 elections where the Independent Electoral Commission of Burkina Faso (INEC) requested ECES to contribute to their security by ensuring that duplication or any other form of fraud pertaining the ballot paper would be impossible. Among the solutions proposed, the INEC opted for securing the ballot papers and ensuring their authenticity through micro-impression.

This method was coupled with the use of photochromic, i.e. changes colors in accordance to the light. In order to further strengthen the ballot paper's security, an additional security element was added to the back of the ballot paper using a logo with two colors technique, which can be validated only by using a specific instrument.

Four printing houses, selected through an open tender, were entrusted with the production of the ballot papers. Ensuring coherence and consistency in terms of quality proved to be a challenge. Production was supervised 24/7 at each printing house by four Burkinabe graphic designers with the support of the ECES Ballot Paper Design Expert. The transfer of documents towards the printing houses followed strict security procedures outlined by the INEC.

Accurate election results are a crucial element for credible elections. If this is not ensured, the entire process can be put into question and post-election violence break out. At the request of INEC Burkina Faso ECES provided support to:

- Develop an efficient, reliable and fast software for processing and transmitting election results; -
- Procure technical and computer equipment to the Communal Results Compilation Centres (CCCR, see above in the procurement section).
- Coordinate the results management and transmission procedures including the INEC collaborations with several other international partners, such as USAID/IFES and UNDP that were also providing support on the results transmission. Coordination among INEC, ECES, UNDP and IFES was therefore critical in order to implement the results transmission system adequately.



The security of the results transmission system was ensured through a permanent double control process operated in the presence of polling station, observers, candidates and candidates' representatives. In this context, a very specifc role was given to each CCCR member in advance. This division of labor was set forth in clear procedures that were disseminated through trainings around the country and included in a handbook delivered to every Communal Centre for Results Compilation (CCCR). The security of the software used for the transmission of results was further enhanced by an encrypting system.

Technical support centres were established and manned in every province to provide assistance if required. Various scenarios were already anticipated and responses planned accordingly in order to react quickly to different situations.

The result transmission system was presented by the INEC Director of Information Technology and Voters roll, Nouroudine Tall and ECES experts in results transmission, to presidential and legislative candidates, donors and members of the European Parliament on several occasions. During these presentations, practical cases of results transmission were simulated. These mock-exercises, which contributed to enhance the overall transparency of the system, were greatly appreciated by representatives of civil society organisations and by presidential and legislative candidates. As stated by Françoise Toe, a presidential candidate, these presentations contributed to the overall acceptance of results, "When there is trust in the software and the processes, there is no room for challenges." The real-time publication of results, locality by locality, also contributed to enhance confidence in the system, and to determine trends throughout the process in full transparency. INEC's goal, as stated repeatedly by its president, was to publish the results of the presidential elections on the day after election-day.

The challenge was to reduce the tabulation time compared to the 2012 elections, and thus the uncertainty, to the absolute minimum within a particularly sensitive political context. Although a very ambitious challenge, INEC full-filled its goal thanks to the good performance of the results transmission system. The same process was followed, with the same success, for the legislative elections.

SECTION IV
ANNEXES

ANNEX I: ABOUT ECES

ECES is a not for profit private foundation headquartered in Brussels with a global remit. ECES promotes sustainable democratic development through the provision of advisory services, operational support and management of large projects in the electoral and democracy assistance field. ECES works with all electoral stakeholders, including "electoral management bodies, civil society organisations involved in voter education and election observation, political parties, parliaments, media, security forces, religious groups and legal institutions confronted with electoral disputes resolution".

ECES has crafted and copyrighted its strategy called "A European Response to Electoral Cycle Support - EURECS". This is an innovative and alternative delivery mechanism to implement electoral and democracy assistance activities that are consistent with European values and EU policies and targets the implementation of the recommendations of EU election observation missions and it is built to help prevent, mitigate and manage electoral related conflicts.

EURECS is implemented via specific methodologies and tools developed by ECES, such as its Standard Operation Procedures, the Communication & Visibility Guidelines, the Electoral Political Economy Analyses, the project approach to contribute Preventing Electoral Conflicts and the cascade training curriculum called "Leadership and Conflict Management Skills for Electoral Stakeholders, LEAD".

ECES is a member of the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and is part of its Board of Directors. EPD is the most important network of European civil and political society organisations working on democracy assistance. It comprises fourteen members of European foundations and civil society organisations from eleven EU Member States working in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Latin America with funding of EU and EU Member States.

ECES is also a member of the Federation of European and International Association established in Belgium (FAIB) and is part of the EU Transparency Register and of the Transnational Giving Group.

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ANNEX III: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF ELECTORAL RELATED CONFLICT IN THE SADC REGION

ECES launched the research component of the project for the Prevention of Electoral Related Violence in the Southern African Development Community (PEV-SADC) in 14 countries[47]. The research was aimed at systematically gathering data on electoral related conflict and providing empirically grounded insights into the root causes and trends in violent episodes during elections in the region. ECES' ultimate goal was to establish an Electoral Observatory designed to monitor the electoral cycle and to serve as an early warning mechanism.

Research was conducted by ECES in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. ECES also commissioned a combined report on SADC/Botswana, which questioned the manner in which regional normative frameworks interacted with national jurisdictions to forestall electoral related violence. ECES assembled a carefully selected group of country-based researchers with proven research credentials and substantive knowledge of electoral processes and conflict in their respective countries and the region more generally. The research was exposed to regular peer review processes and concluded by a technical LEAD workshop held in Gaborone, Botswana, in December 2015.

The key focus of the research was:

- Understanding the key drivers of electoral related violence in the SADC region;
- Mapping trends of electoral related violence in the region;
- Identifying key factors in preventing electoral related violence.

Researchers were encouraged to adopt mixed methods in exploring this under-studied phenomenon and to propose tangible steps for dealing with it nationally and regionally. They generally encountered difficulties in gathering data on violence for a variety of reasons – the main ones being the paucity of current information in state and non-state repositories. In several cases, neither the electoral management

47 www.pevsadc.eu

bodies nor the security forces had a specific pool of information dedicated to electoral related violence. Indeed, this type of violence was generally deemed to fall under the penal code and classified within crime typology databases. Given this situation, data was collected from various sources including libraries, government documents, newspapers and electronic sources as well as through key informant interviews, discussions and direct observations. Qualitative data was complemented by quantitative data from the Afro-barometer, in order to illustrate public perceptions of electoral related violence, its drivers and causes. The regional report on SADC employed the Social Conflict in Africa Database (SCAD) in addition to Afro-barometer data.

The different studies are not informed by any single theory of electoral related violence. Indeed, they generally acknowledge that no specific theory can explain the complex nature of this problem. Instead, they embark on several approaches of theoretical testing, inevitably converging around consensus-based definitions of electoral related conflict and violence. The PEV-SADC research underlines the notion that electoral violence –a subtype of political violence– falls within three broad categories of violence analysis: the metaphysical (micro-analytical level), structural (macro-analytical levels), and cultural explanations to violence. Proponents of metaphysical explanations posit that violence occurs because of individual pathologies. The micro-analytical explanations for violence focus on the psychological characteristics of perpetrators, driven by social disaffection and feelings of relative deprivation and frustration. The structural explanation assesses environmental factors, the socio-economic conditions that bring about those frustrations and disaffections. Most researchers approached the problem from the prism of structural theories to violence, largely considering the social conditions under which violence is triggered.

- Firstly, it is critical to note that regional and national research generally shows that electoral related violence is a symptom of much deeper social and demographic root causes, which need to be comprehensively researched and understood in order to devise short and long term mitigation strategies.
- Secondly, while each country has experienced various forms of electoral related violence, these appear to be sporadic or episodic –and quite often a result of political engineering.
- Thirdly, from a regional perspective, we find that the Southern African region has been, in relative terms, the most peaceful geographical area on the continent. Its most violent episodes occurred during transitional elections in the early and mid-1990s. The analysis of data on conflict from the Social Conflict in Africa Database (SCAD) shows that only three of the 15 SADC countries feature within the '*Top ten most violent elections*' held between 1990 and 2010, i.e. elections where fatalities were registered. These cases were those of South Africa in 1994 [239 deaths]; Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2006 [42 deaths]; and Zimbabwe in 2008 [114 deaths]. However, data from country researchers does show a much broader perspective, particularly in the case of Zimbabwe, where non-governmental organisations invested in independent documentation processes on violence since the early 2000s. We note that after the dawn of the 21st century, the region saw unprecedented levels of violent conflict in Lesotho, Madagascar and Zimbabwe, which required protracted negotiations and facilitated consociational arrangements by the regional body – the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Eventually, this led to relative calm and to the restoration of democratic processes, or a re-modelling of legal and constitutional frameworks. Concerns about the tenuous environment in Mozambique, where two former self defined liberation movements-turned-political parties [Frelimo and Renamo] persistently appear to be on the brink of an armed conflict, are presented as well, underlining the delicate nature of conflict management measures deployed in that country. More broadly, several of the sampled studies recognise that the foundations of political violence (and implicitly its sub-type, electoral related violence) are manifold and necessarily rooted in historical, structural and cultural contexts. Furthermore, underlying causes exist at various levels, including informal patronage systems, the distribution of wealth, rights, privilege and power elicited by exclusionary politics. Ethno-religious tensions, socio-economic exclusion

and inequality are also identified as significant catalysts.

As stated earlier, these studies show that the early 1990s, when many African countries were experiencing transitions to multiparty democracies, were the most violent, particularly in 1992/1993; and later in the 2000 and 2005 periods. The research consolidates the following statements:

- Countries with a history of civil war or civil discord will exhibit the highest levels of electoral conflict;
- There are a wide range of causes of electoral related violence, including: high youth unemployment, land disputes, ethno-religious tensions; nepotism; cronyism; patronage; partisan politics; competition over access to resources and horizontal inequality (Small, 2015; AU/IPI. 2015; PSC, 2015).
- Additional root causes can be found in: institutional weakness; attempts at unconstitutionally extending presidential term limits; politicisation of state and security institutions; unequal access to state resources by political parties; inequality; social exclusion and lack of autonomy of the Electoral Management Bodies.

ANNEX IV: THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE: PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN DEMOCRACY BUILDING: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS[48]

Effective electoral assistance, which contributes to democracy building primarily means long term institutional strengthening and capacity development. In its numerous policy documents, the EU clearly articulates its electoral assistance institutions in the context of democratic governance, for instance, by focusing on parliament, the media and civil. However, observers and the general public have noted that the electoral cycle approach is not always taken, and assistance is based on the electoral event rather than sustainable and long-term. The task of ensuring continued progress and sustaining electoral processes beyond the electoral event is undoubtedly 14 more challenging than the transition to democracy, but the EU seems committed to such an undertaking. Nonetheless, the EU should be more pragmatic in translating declarations into actions, and be more proactive in addressing the misconceptions about its role in electoral assistance and democracy building in Africa. It is imperative that the EU takes responsibility for ensuring that the objectives of its electoral assistance programmes support the longer-term objectives of a democratization strategy in the partner countries. Equally, recipient counties should take responsibility for ensuring the alignment of these programmes with the priorities and plans articulated in national development assistance programmes. This should serve as the basis of EU-partner government electoral assistance cooperation, which is perceived as benefiting democracy-building endeavours.

The recommendations set out below are intended to guide the implementation of the EU's electoral support framework in African countries and provide input into positively promoting its electoral assistance activities.

- The EC must clearly identify and more comprehensively, align the democratization policy objectives in the African recipient country with those of the electoral assistance framework.
- There is a need to develop a focal point at the European Commission for electoral assistance in support of delegations and national authorities.
- There is a need to ensure synergies with electoral assistance activities and other activities in the area of democratic governance. Although policy documents emphasize the electoral cycle approach, focus on the long term institutional strengthening and capacity development of EMBs, political parties and civil society in a sustainable manner, rather than focusing solely on training needs for procedures related to a given electoral event is required.
- More information and education are required about the EU's electoral assistance in recipient countries. It is recommended that the EU continue to take the initiative to organize national, regional and continental meetings on its election assistance operations. This could also have the effect of redressing some of the misperceptions about the EU's work in this area.
- Partnerships should continue with existing development agencies, electoral assistance providers and other stakeholders in recipient countries. The objective should be a coordinated effort to deal with current and future electoral support needs.
- More collaboration with partner country implementing agencies and institutions is still required to ensure constant support for reforms.
- The EU must deepen its cooperation with the AU in the electoral field, in particular on initiatives, which strengthen the capacities of African observers, by providing appropriate training and invitations to observe elections in Europe. Cooperation with the AU's Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit should be increased.

48 http://www.idea.int/resources/analysis/loader.cfm?csmodule=security/getfile&pageid=40605

ANNEX V: STUDY ON PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS DEVELOPED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE EC-UNDP PARTNERSHIP ON ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE; CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS[49]

As one of the leading actors in electoral assistance worldwide it is essential for the EU to dispose of a methodology capable of demonstrating the effectiveness of such support. Existing indicators measure basic project inputs and outputs or focused on far-reaching overall objectives, without giving proper consideration to expected results/outcomes. There is a perceived need for indicators to measure the actual effectiveness of support programmes to electoral cycles in given countries. The present study addresses this need through the development of quality indicators that can measure results/outcome of electoral assistance programmes. In order to do this, it identifies nine focus areas in electoral assistance in which possible results/outcome indicators are defined (both quantitative and qualitative). The study focused on the identification/measurement of the positive impacts of specific electoral assistance projects in the various phases of an electoral cycle/process. For each of the focus areas, the study offers a methodology of finding the most adequate logical indicators, which were then reproduced in the tables. The study underlines the fact that the identification of indicators requires giving careful consideration to a number of issues when assessing performance. These are rendered below in a series of recommendations which are intended as operational suggestions:

1. In the initial stage of project design, optimally during the identification phase (conducted to decide the appropriateness of support to a given electoral process and propose a possible strategy and approach) it is necessary to ensure that the programme logic is in line with the intended outcomes.
2. A matrix or set of indicators should be established, together with the means of attaining them. If indicators are not immediately available, it is suggested that a parallel "small size project" in coordination with local academics or CSOs be integrated in the overall support project design to identify indicators.
3. A performance assessment should be integrated within the project design and implementation. The performance assessment should be mid-term and allow for adjustment to planned support activities, if necessary.
4. A final evaluation (or a series of evaluations for each support activity foreseen in the programme) should also be included in the programme design.
5. While designing an electoral assistance programme, realistic targets should be set, knowing that all actual electoral cycle activities are country owned and the State's responsibility. When defining objectives and expected results/outcomes, the project designer should avoid overly-ambitious formulation. Electoral assistance activities should be clearly outlined as support and contribution to national efforts.

49 http://www.eidhr.eu/files/dmfile/StudyonPerformanceindicatorsforelectoralassistanceprojects.pdf

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Fabio Bargiacchi is the Executive Director of ECES and member of the ECES Management Board since August 2011. In this period, he led ECES into becoming an important actor in the field of electoral support, both at a European and a global level. He has a wealth of experience from many years active work in the field and in different senior positions, such as: Senior Election Operations Expert, Training/ Reporting Advisor and Coordinator of EU Election Observers and through long term assignments in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Suriname, Tanzania, West Bank and Gaza, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Fabio has a deep understanding of project cycle management, particularly in Democratic Governance, through his long-standing experience working for the European Commission at the EU Delegation in Maputo (Mozambique) from 2001 to 2003 and at EU Headquarters (in EuropeAid) in Brussels between 2004 and 2006. From January 2007 to December 2010, Fabio contributed to the creation and served as Coordinator of the "Joint EC UNDP Task Force On Electoral Assistance" and as Senior Electoral Assistance Advisor at the UN/UNDP Brussels Office. During this period, he contributed to the establishment of the Joint Task Force and oversaw its activities regarding the identification, formulation and support for the implementation of all the EC-UNDP electoral assistance projects. He was also at the forefront of the conception and delivery of all the Joint EC UNDP IDEA effective electoral assistance, face-to-face and distance e-learning trainings between September 2005 and February 2011.

Fabio was, thus involved in more than 70 UNDP projects, for a value of €600 million in EU contributions to UNDP between 2004 and 2010. From January 2011 to February 2012, he worked as Chief Technical Advisor for the EU-funded "Project in Support of the Electoral cycles for the six Portuguese-Speaking Countries in Africa (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe) and Timor-Leste", implemented by UNDP (www.propalop-tl.org). PROPALOP was the first trans-national electoral assistance project that focused exclusively on capacity development. Overall, with his experience for the EU, the OSCE and the UN, he has worked in the identification, formulation, implementation or evaluation of more than 100 electoral assistance projects in more than 50 countries since 1997.

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Martina is serving as Programme Advisor at ECES HQ in Brussels since 2015. Before joining ECES, Martina worked as research assistant for International IDEA, contributing to the publication "International Obligations for Elections: Guidelines for Legal Frameworks". She has also authored research on "International and Regional Obligations and Jurisprudence for Democratic Accountability in Service Delivery". Previously, she worked for the EU-funded NEEDS Project, the International IDEA West Africa Office, ULB-CEVIPOL and the European Parliament. She has taken part in several international electoral observation missions organised by the European Union, The Carter Center and Democracy International, and she actively collaborated with the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network. Martina holds a B.A. in Political Science and a postgraduate degree in Development.

VERA LOURENÇO, ECES SENIOR PROGRAMMES ADVISOR

Vera joined ECES Headquarters in 2016 in the role of Senior Programmes Advisor after collaborating with ECES' projects in the field. Over the past nine years, Vera has participated in a number of election observation missions with the EU and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), including as a core team member, mainly in Africa (Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Togo and Tunisia). Within the context of these missions, she trained and coordinated all international observers deployed in country. More recently, Vera worked as Gender and Youth Analyst for NDI and as Political Analyst for the EU. Vera has also worked in electoral assistance missions in Guinea and Sierra Leone. Throughout these field experiences, she has accumulated significant expertise in analysing and reporting on election administration, legal frameworks, political parties and candidates, human rights, the media and civil society. Within the Project in Support of the Credibility and Transparency of Elections in Burkina Faso (PACTE-BF), Vera participated, in the role of LEAD facilitator, to implement an intensive training process in Leadership and Conflict Management that contributed to train more than 460 electoral stakeholders across the Burkinabe territory. Furthermore, she also contributes to the implementation of activities of the Project "Participate" in Cape Verde and in the Programmes in Support of the Credibility and Transparency of Elections in Guinea (PACTE-Guinea I and II) as Senior Electoral Expert. Vera has a B.A. in Political Science, and a Master's degree in Applied Political Science from the Institute of Political and Social Sciences of Lisbon University (Portugal).

EVA PALMANS, ECES HEAD OF PROGRAMMES

Eva Palmans is the Head of Programmes at ECES and has been working in the area of elections, democracy and governance for the last ten years. With a masters degree in "Governance and Development" from the Institute of Development Policy and Management and a PhD on Elections in Burundi from the University of Antwerp, Eva conducted substantial field research on elections in Africa (especially in post-conflict countries), building strong relationships with research networks and key actors in the area of elections. She published several articles on political and electoral processes and on the role that media and civil society organisations play in these processes. Eva held several management and coordination positions in organisations that specialised in capacity building programmes for electoral stakeholders (including Electoral Management Bodies, political parties, civil society organisations and media). For two years (2008-2010) she was the regional coordinator in Central-Africa (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda) for a Belgian NGO (Coalition of the Flemish North South Movement – 11.11.11) managing projects with local organisations in the field of elections and democracy (civic education, election monitoring and observation). In collaboration with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA), she provided capacity building programmes for electoral stakeholders, and contributed to the creation of the platform of domestic observation organisations in Burundi. In 2011, Eva worked as a political programme officer at the Madagascar office of EISA where she was in charge of implementing the "strengthening electoral and democratic processes programme". She provided training and technical assistance in the areas of civic and voter education, election observation, election conflict management and political party strengthening and established a network with international and regional organisations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), EU, UNDP and OIF. She has extensive experience working in election observation missions with the European Commission and EISA both as an observer (Mozambique 2009, Togo 2010, Ivory Coast 2010, Seychelles 2011, Tunisia 2011) and as a political/country expert (Burundi 2010, Ivory Coast 2011). Eva is an accredited BRIDGE trainer facilitator. She conducted several training programmes and provided technical assistance to domestic observers, electoral management bodies and political parties. She entered ECES as a Senior Election Advisor and was appointed Head of Programmes in September 2013.

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The crafting of this paper started out as a lessons learned exercise for ECES to capitalize on the solid foundation that we stand on today, having grown in both number and competences over the last years. This process, requiring both introspection and looking beyond the confines of our work, eventually came to unfold as a creative and collaborative process driven by the strong engagement and passion for our work that brought us to form in the first place.

A special thank to ECES President Monica Frassoni and ECES Board member Lino Francescon for supporting ECES with their experiences matured at the European Parliament and European Commission. This, has brought a greater understanding and responsiveness from the network to the challenges to produce this paper in describing, at both implementation and policy level, what the EU is facing when providing democracy and electoral support in partner countries.

In addition to that, it is important to remember that the preparation of this paper also served as a reminder of some of the most valuable partners that have enabled ECES to harvest its experiences stemming from all over the world and contributing indirectly but greatly to this paper whose first concepts were introduced during the EU Development Days organized by the European Commission in Brussels in June 2016. We have also benefitted greatly from the partnership of several global and regional organisations such as the Election Support Network of Southern Africa, Chaired by Steve Duwa and co-Chaired by Rindai Chipfunde Vava. The Association of World Election Bodies, (A-WEB), operate at global level and their partnership has constituted a rich forum for exchange. The ECONEC, Network of Electoral Commissions in West Africa is another regional body that especially ECES has had the pleasure of collaborating with. Together with long-standing partner RECEF (Network of Francophone Electoral Management Bodies), ECES has contributed to several of their training and conferences and the same goes with the SADC Electoral Commission Forum.

The external evaluators of ECES' projects over the last five years have brought important ideas and suggestions for improvements on how to deliver electoral assistance and finally we also wish to collectively thank the donors to ECES' projects over the years, whereby the European Union and its Member States are worth mentioning as the most important contributors and partners.

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