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United Nations Development Programme

THE ROLE OF UNDP

IN SUPPORTING
DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN AFRICA

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The idea to produce this publication was conceived at a UNDP regional workshop on “Elections and Conflict” in July 2011 in Praia, Cape Verde. Those present felt strongly that UNDP – in conjunction with its many partners – was doing a great deal to promote democratic elections in Africa, yet these activities were not well known, in part because they were not documented in an easily accessible and digestible manner. Those who attended the Praia meeting therefore deserve credit for inspiring the production of this document.

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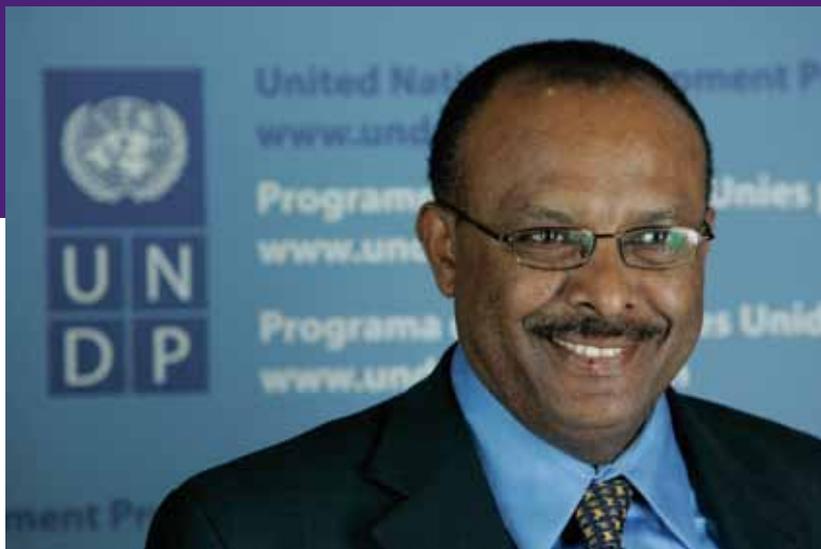
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FOREWORD

Countries throughout Africa and around the globe are working to build democratic institutions and improve electoral processes in order to meet their citizens' aspirations for democratic governance and advancing human development. Many African countries have made substantial progress in recent years in consolidating democratic practices. In support of these efforts, UNDP has actively pursued its mandate to assist in improving electoral processes.

For the past three decades, UNDP has been actively supporting elections all over the world, both in countries in transition from authoritarian rule and in stable democracies. During this period, UNDP assistance for elections in Africa has grown. In addition to government institutions, support has extended to civil society, the media, political parties and parliaments. The development and adoption of the "electoral cycle approach" to assistance by UNDP and its partners has sought to ensure support for all phases of an electoral process – before, during and after election day.

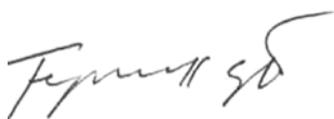
This publication provides an overview of more than three decades of UNDP support for democratic elections in Africa. It highlights moments in history when the organization rose to its mandate of fostering partnerships, mobilizing resources and sharing knowledge to promote institutional capacity and popular participation in democratic elections. It documents some of UNDP's key achievements in fostering democratic elections on the continent, sets out the bases on which assistance has been provided and describes the development of good practices. In addition, the publication describes



some of the continuing challenges in supporting elections in Africa and some of the lessons learned from years of work in the field.

This publication is intended to inform national actors, development partners, regional and sub-regional institutions. It portrays UNDP's support to elections across the continent as part of a large, systematic, collective intervention that is making a real contribution towards progress in addressing the democratic challenges the continent still faces. The report also provides an interpretation for electoral practitioners of common problems, possible solutions and good practices.

Ultimately, the quality of any election is the responsibility of national authorities and the credit for successful elections belongs to national actors, including electoral management bodies (EMBs), parliaments, political parties, media, civil society and an engaged citizenry; all have vital roles to play. UNDP can contribute by marshaling resources, providing expertise and promoting sound principles and best practices. Often, such support has made a crucial difference in the quality of elections. UNDP has been able to play this role thanks to the good will and support of many international development partners, as well as regional institutions, which have contributed so much to assist in making democratic elections possible in Africa.



Tegegnework Gettu
UN Assistant Secretary-General and
Director, UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa

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ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy (UNDP)
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DGD	Democratic Governance for Development Project (UNDP-Nigeria)
DIP	Democratic Institutions Project (Ethiopia)
DPKO	Department of Peace Keeping Operations (UN)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community
EC	Electoral Commission (Ghana)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMB	Electoral management body
EU	European Union
GPECS	Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (UNDP)
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IDP	Internally displaced person
IIEC	Interim Independent Election Commission (Kenya)
INEC	Independent National Election Commission (Nigeria, Togo)
ICT	Information and communications technology
MEC	Malawi Electoral Commission
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MONUC	United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NEBE	National Election Board of Ethiopia
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission (Nigeria)
PACAM	Common Action Plan for Media Support (Burundi)
RBA	Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP)
REC	Regional Economic Community
RGP	Regional Governance Programme (UNDP)
RC/RR	Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
STAE	Secretariat for Administration of Elections (Mozambique)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN EAD	United Nations Electoral Assistance Division

INTRODUCTION





BOX 1: THE PUBLICATION

This publication presents UNDP's unique role in supporting democratic elections in Africa. It sets out UNDP's vision for free and fair electoral processes underpinned by rigorous strategic planning; guiding principles based on a mission for change; and practices informed by national development objectives.

Africa has made great strides in recent years in building democracy, enhancing the rule of law, consolidating good governance, improving human security and promoting and protecting human rights. Since the early 1990s, a majority of African countries have undergone momentous transitions from one-party, military or autocratic rule to multiparty democratic systems based on majority rule and popular participation. At the very heart of these democratic transitions has been the holding of periodic, multiparty elections. Elections in Africa, like elsewhere in the world, have become a powerful tool for democracy, accountability and, ultimately, human development.

A significant number of elections have succeeded in placing countries on a firm path of recovery and peaceful transition following years of civil conflict. These include elections in Namibia which led to independence in 1989; elections in South Africa which ushered in majority rule and the end of apartheid in 1994; and elections in Mozambique in 1994, Sierra Leone in 2002, Liberia in 2005 and DRC in 2006, all of which marked an end to decades of civil conflict. Over the past two decades and more, countries such as Botswana, Cape Verde, Ghana, Mauritius, Senegal, and Zambia have had successive elections leading to peaceful transfers of power. On the other hand, Africa has also seen elections in a host of other countries that have stalled democracy and precipitated political instability: for example, Côte d'Ivoire in 2000, Kenya in 2007, Zimbabwe in 2008 and Guinea Bissau and Mali in 2012.

There remain many difficult challenges to free and fair elections in Africa. Some of the problems often highlighted include political intolerance, lack of inclusiveness, inadequacies of electoral management bodies and post-electoral violence. Although democratic processes in Africa remain fragile, democratic elections are a vital requirement for the advancement of stability, peace, democratic values, sustainable human development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

LEFT: A voting station in Liberia,
Presidential Run-off Elections, 2011.
Photo: UNDP

Over the past few decades, UNDP has played a major role in supporting democratic governance around the globe, including in post-conflict situations. In Africa, UNDP has played a catalytic role in democratic transitions, through the provision of electoral assistance and related strategic interventions aimed at nurturing and consolidating democratic environments. All these efforts were based on the organization's strategic goal of improving electoral institutions, laws and processes as key elements of strengthening democratic governance. Over the years, in seeking to achieve this goal, UNDP has worked with other partners within the United Nations (UN) system such as the UN Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of the Political Affairs (UN EAD), the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO), the United Nations Office for Project Services, UN Women and other departments and agencies. Partners outside the UN system have included bilateral and multilateral development agencies, regional institutions and national actors.

This publication provides an overview of UNDP's role in supporting democratic elections in Africa. It aims to make basic information on UNDP activities in this field readily available to practitioners, national and international partners and other readers, in a short and easily accessible form. It presents the basis for UNDP assistance, highlights experiences, good practices and key lessons learned that are informing UNDP's strategic interventions in electoral assistance and provides examples of success stories.

The document is composed of five sections and an annex:

- Following this introductory section, Section II sets out the contextual background for the publication and highlights UNDP achievements and challenges in supporting democratic elections in Africa. It also sets out the objectives and scope of the study.
- Section III, which makes up the bulk of the publication, addresses the many aspects of UNDP assistance to democratic elections in Africa, with a particular emphasis on its strategic programmatic role and its guiding principles.
- Section IV provides a listing of some key lessons learned and emerging trends with a view to improving future UNDP interventions.
- Section V provides a general perspective as a conclusion.
- The annex sets out a number of brief case studies that illustrate various types of UNDP interventions and their impact.



Photo: Oscar Gutierrez, IEC

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE





For many years, UNDP has been at the forefront of providing support to countries undergoing democratic transitions around the world including in Africa. This UNDP role has been grounded in key international instruments seeking to promote democratic practices based on, *inter alia*, competitive, credible and genuine elections.

There are many United Nations instruments dealing with elections that guide the work of UNDP. The most prominent are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), both of which affirm that the basis of the authority for government is the will of the people, expressed in periodic and genuine elections with universal suffrage. Other important UN instruments relevant to elections include the International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.¹ These treaties and others create legal obligations on state parties to implement their provisions.

In addition to UN standards, African states have elaborated a range of regional and sub-regional standards aimed at guaranteeing democratic elections; these standards can also inform the basis for policy development and international assistance on elections. Especially notable is the African Union (AU) Declaration of Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, which is incorporated into the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.² Sub-regional organizations, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), have also elaborated standards on elections.³ Taken together, these UN and regional instruments provide a sound and detailed foundation to guide the implementation and assess the impact of electoral assistance.

1. Links to the texts of all these UN treaties are available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/>. Also of special note is General Comment No. 25 of the UN Human Rights Committee, which explains and elaborates the electoral rights set out in the ICCPR; the text is available at <http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/d0b7f023e8d6d9898025651e004bc0eb>.

2. http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/AFRICAN_CHARTER_ON_DEMOCRACY_ELECTIONS_AND_GOVERNANCE.pdf.

3. See in particular the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance available at <http://www.comm.ecowas.int/sec/en/protocoles/Protocol%20on%20good-governance-and-democracy-rev-5EN.pdf>, and the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections available at <http://www.sokwanele.com/files/Documents/Elections/SADC/sadcprotocolelections.pdf>.

LEFT: Elections in Guinea.
Photo: UNDP

Over the past two decades, UNDP has assisted more than 80 countries through coordination and management of about 342 electoral projects requiring more than USD 2.5 billion in expenditure.⁴ Most elections held in Africa as part of democratic transitions of various kinds – from military, one-party, one-person rule – have benefitted in one way or another from UNDP assistance. Apart from supporting many of the initial elections that ushered in democratically elected governments in African countries, UNDP has also increasingly supported second and third generation elections. However, the level of UNDP involvement has varied greatly in different elections, depending on particular circumstances.

Through most of its country offices in 46 African countries, under its Democratic Governance practice area, UNDP has provided support not only to most general elections but also local elections and referendums. Such support has covered multiple phases of the electoral cycle ranging from constitutional and legal reform, capacity-building, electoral institutional reforms, boundary delimitation, dispute resolution, and civic and voter education, to voter registration and procurement of balloting and other materials. UNDP support has targeted many key players in the field of elections, including electoral management bodies (EMBs), the media, political parties, the judiciary, and civil society, including youth and women's organizations.

In many instances, UNDP has registered notable success in undertaking this work over more than one generation of elections. UNDP electoral support, either directly or in conjunction with other development partners, has resulted in capacity enhancement of national electoral institutions and processes across the African continent. In some African countries, albeit few, elections now take place with minimal external support.

In most African countries, however, UNDP and other external support continues to be needed for elections. In some instances, the need for electoral assistance has actually increased. In other situations, especially in post-conflict settings, UNDP and other international actors have been criticized for supporting elections without ensuring broad-based commitment by contesting parties to accept the election outcome, resulting in resumption of conflict and instability. Some election analysts and observers hold the view that much UNDP support to elections is technology-intensive and thus unsustainable under current socioeconomic conditions in Africa. These concerns underscore the need for constant monitoring and assessments to ensure that UNDP support leads to increased national capacity and the sustainability of national electoral processes and institutions.

Apart from supporting national actors, UNDP has collaborated with regional institutions, such as the AU, the Pan-African Parliament, and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), in an effort to strengthen their capacity to promote democratic elections on the continent, mainly through support to activities such as the development of norms and standards, election observation and monitoring, technical assistance, and advisory services.

This publication tells the story of UNDP electoral support to Africa over several generations of elections, highlighting a number of success stories. At the same time it is designed to document the organization's efforts to enhance the relevance, appropriateness and sustainability of its electoral assistance. To this end, the publication reviews and draws lessons from UNDP's key strategic intervention areas. It should therefore contribute to UNDP's global efforts to provide policy guidelines and options to policymakers and practitioners working in electoral assistance in general, and electoral cycle support in particular.

⁴ Evaluation Report on UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes, 2012.

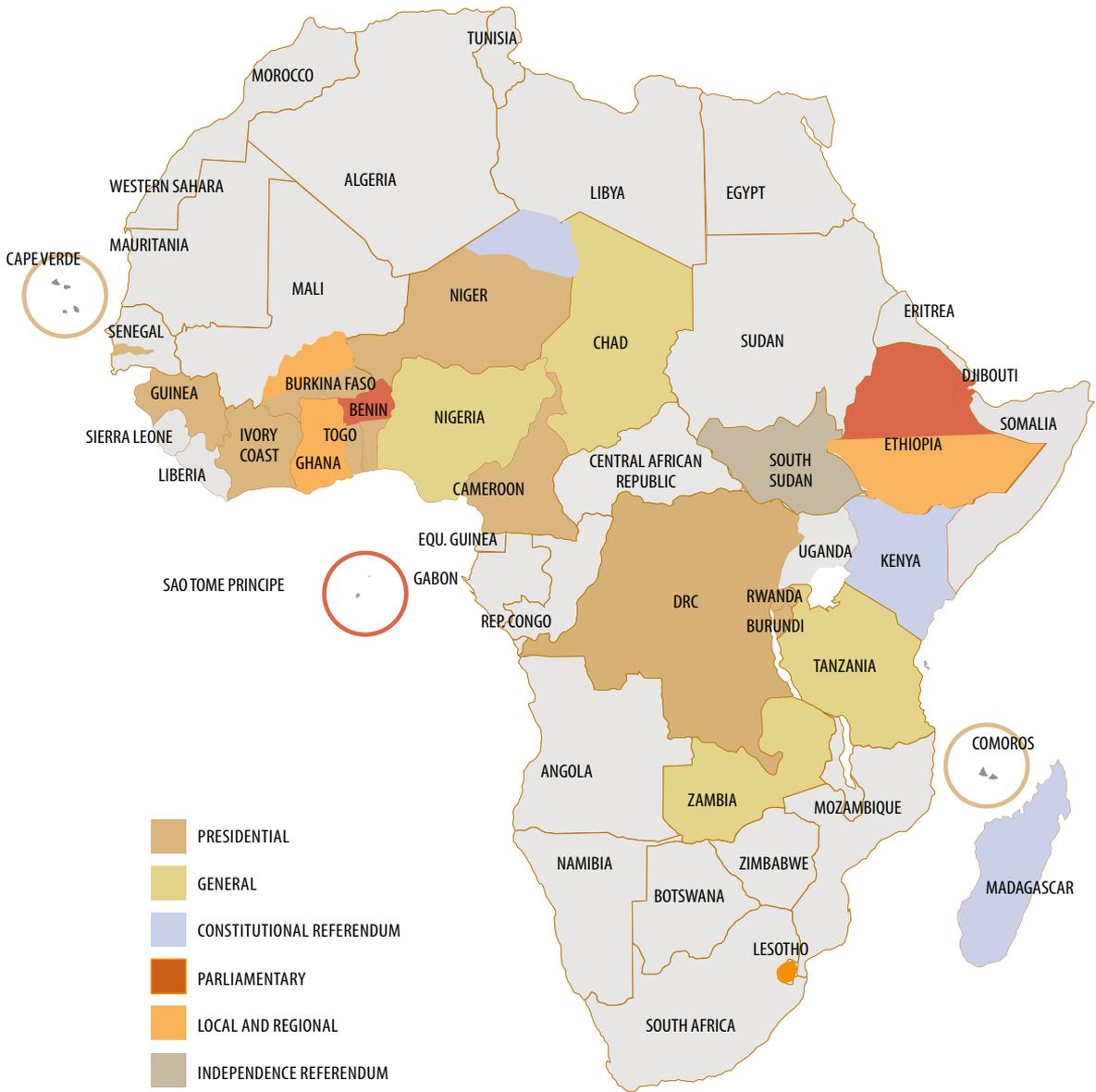


Figure 1: UNDP's electoral assistance in 2010-2011

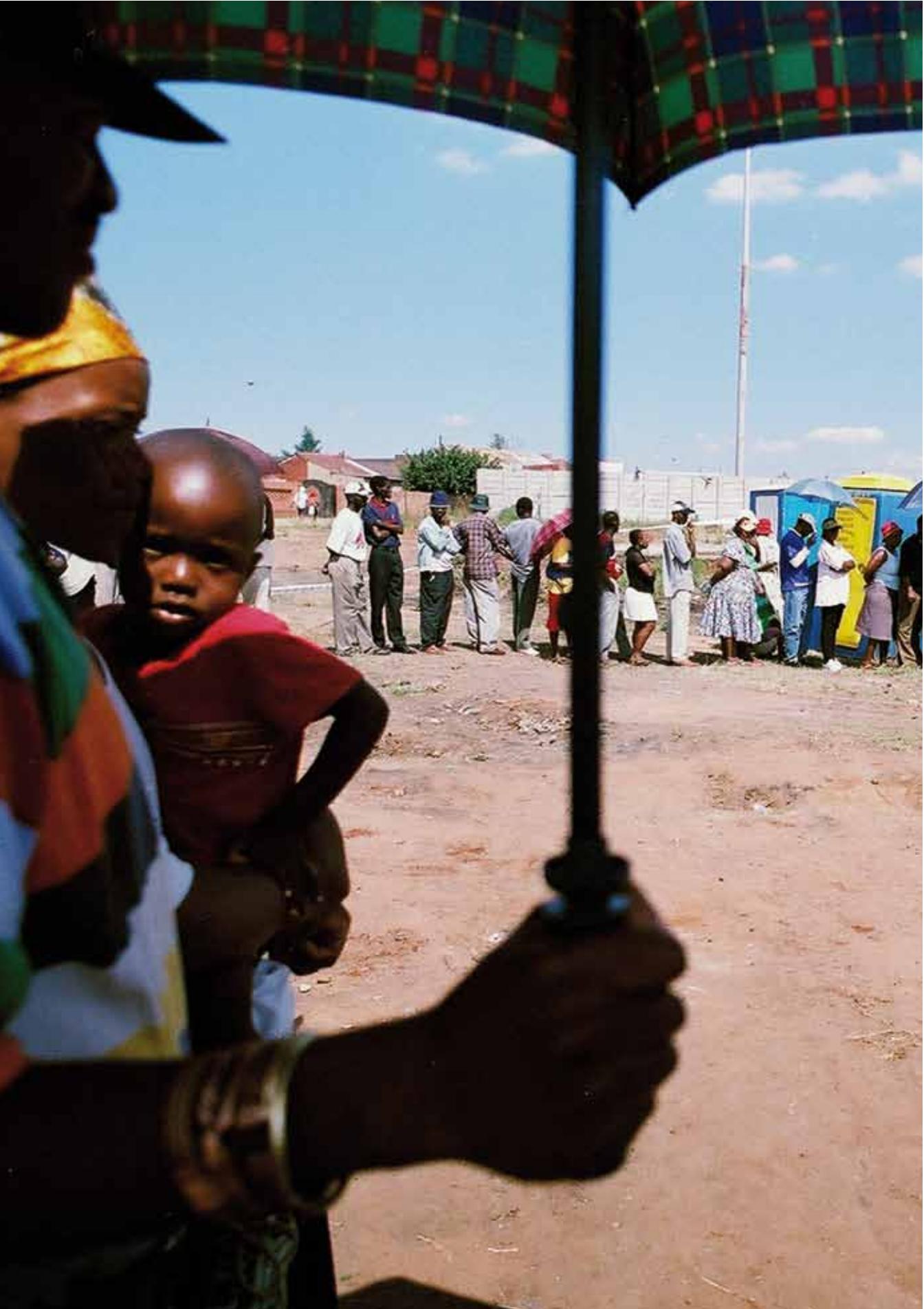
The overall aim of this publication is to highlight UNDP's work and experiences in supporting and strengthening electoral systems and in consolidating democratic and participatory governance in Africa, with a view to improving the nature and quality of support. To this end, it articulates UNDP's role, contributions, guiding principles, practices and challenges in fostering democratic elections on the continent. It also showcases UNDP's strategies in conceptualizing, developing and implementing good practices on which to base electoral assistance and formulate policy guidelines, as well as options for policymakers and practitioners working on elections in Africa.

The publication aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

- Review the strategic role played by UNDP in promoting democratic elections in various contexts, including post-conflict settings, in Africa.
- Explore and document UNDP's philosophy, practices and experiences in:
 - i. coordinating donor support and working with other partners;
 - ii. providing programmatic support to national stakeholders including EMBs, civil society, political parties, and media;
 - iii. building or strengthening institutions and accountability;
 - iv. promoting the role of women, youth and other groups in elections; and
 - v. strengthening the interface between elections and broader democratic governance support.
- Identify the challenges faced by UNDP and other actors in supporting elections in Africa.
- Draw lessons learned and identify best practices from UNDP's electoral assistance.

The methodology used to produce this publication entailed a review of existing literature and information especially on UNDP electoral support at country level. Seventeen countries⁵ where UNDP was actively involved in electoral support over the last 10 years were selected as the primary examples for inclusion in the study, taking geographical balance into consideration. The information received from UNDP country offices was systematically reviewed in order to address the points set out above.

⁵ Benin, Burundi, Chad, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Togo.



UNDP'S SUPPORT TO DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN AFRICA





3.1 PROVIDING STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE IN AFRICA

UNDP support to elections in Africa started in the early 1990s with the re-introduction of multiparty politics throughout much of the continent. At this time many countries were experimenting with multiparty competitive elections for the first time and thus lacked the experience to manage such processes to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. Newly-created political parties in particular did not have the resources to compete on equal basis with the ruling parties. Under these conditions, ruling parties often tended to abuse or benefit unduly from incumbency privileges. In most instances, elections were managed by state institutions which lacked independence, professionalism and, at times, the financial and material resources to conduct credible elections.

The absence of independent media and independent judiciaries, as well as the paucity of vibrant civil society, meant that electoral malpractices often went unnoticed and unchallenged during what has been called “elections without democracy”.

LEFT: Ivory Coast elections.
Photo: UNDP

BOX 2: UNDP DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE PROGRAMMING

Electoral support projects are anchored in broader democratic governance programming that includes:

- Support to parliamentary development
- Promotion and protection of human rights
- Conflict resolution and peace building
- Strengthening justice institutions
- Strengthening institutions of accountability
- Democratic institution building
- Public administration reform
- Strengthening political parties
- Support to civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media
- Decentralization and local governance

Against this background, UNDP and other development partners considered that providing support to improve electoral institutions and electoral processes was a key to fostering democratic consolidation and human development. UNDP programmes sought in particular to promote professional electoral administration and inclusive public participation as fundamental elements of elections that could lead to stable and legitimate governments premised on the will of the people. This was considered essential for sustainable development, human security and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

UNDP takes the approach that democracy is always a work in progress. Strengthening democratic institutions and promoting truly democratic elections is central to overcoming democratic deficits and fostering the link between democracy and human development. It is therefore a UNDP priority to focus on building the longer-term capacity of electoral institutions such as EMBs and processes such as voter registration and voter and civic education.⁶

In most instances, UNDP, together with other development partners, provides a programme of strategic electoral support as part of a broader country or regional programme. Such assistance is anchored in democratic governance support

frameworks, which are in turn based on countries' own development plans.⁷ UNDP's long-term field presence, supported by robust logistical infrastructure, solid country knowledge and tested impartiality, often give it a comparative advantage over other organizations in delivering assistance. This advantage enables it to work effectively with governments, bilateral partners, non-governmental organizations and political parties, and has been a *sine qua non* for the effective implementation of the overall mandate of the UN electoral assistance.⁸

UNDP interventions are tailored to the recipient country's or region's needs, ranging from deepening the democratic environment in politically stable countries to targeted programmes aimed at introducing and enhancing democratic practice in countries in transition or in post-conflict situations. Support to free and credible elections is often an essential component of these broader programmes to strengthen democratic governance.

6 UNDP Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note, 2004.

7 UNDP has sought to support democracy and elections in most countries through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and/or the Country Programme Action Plan.

8 Joram Rukambe, Regional Electoral Advisor, "Promoting free and fair elections in Africa: The role of UNDP and other international partners", UNDP Regional Service Centre for Eastern and Southern Africa.

Another important area of UNDP interventions is the promotion of dialogue among electoral stakeholders, including government institutions, political parties and civil society, aimed at prevention or peaceful resolution of election-related conflicts and ensuring broad acceptance of election results. Many UNDP country offices have undertaken this role with some success by facilitating dialogue between institutions and electoral stakeholders through the personal involvement of the RC/RR. Fostering such dialogue has been especially important in post-conflict environments such as DRC, Guinea, Lesotho, Liberia, and Mozambique. UNDP has been able to take on this type of role in part because of its long-term presence on the ground and its impartiality. Creating a process of dialogue on election issues and challenges has helped to enhance public confidence in the electoral process, defuse political tensions and mitigate conflicts. Moreover, UNDP country offices are often in a position to draw on the expertise and involvement of UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, as well as the assistance of UN political offices such as the Department of Political Affairs and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, to assist in conflict prevention or resolution.

UNDP's methodology for electoral assistance is based on an assessment and analysis of the prevailing political situation in a country and grounded on the principles of early and inclusive planning, involvement of a broad range of stakeholders and national ownership. UNDP works closely with UN EAD, which has the mandate for UN system-wide policy leadership for elections. As part of this role, UN EAD leads country-specific electoral needs assessment missions, in order to ensure that the political dimensions of elections are taken fully into account and that UNDP interventions are in line with broader UN policy on elections and electoral assistance.

3.1.1 Programmatic leadership and assistance

There are four broad areas of UNDP strategic intervention in electoral assistance in Africa:

- Institutional capacity-building
- Enhancing civic responsibility and citizen participation
- Providing strategic planning and guidance
- Coordinating international support and mobilizing resources

These broad areas encapsulate the traditional UNDP entry points for electoral assistance, which include:

- Electoral system reform
- Drafting legislation and regulations
- Electoral boundary demarcation
- Strengthening and capacity-building of electoral administration
- Training election staff and officials
- Procurement
- Logistics
- Use of technology
- Civic and voter education
- Support to domestic observation

- Working with political parties and parliaments
- Media strengthening
- Increasing participation of women, youth and marginalized groups
- Election results management
- Electoral dispute resolution
- Conflict mitigation and prevention

Most assistance activities implemented by UNDP under the four overarching intervention areas are complex and must be adapted to the different African contexts and realities. Project elements are expressly developed to meet changing demands in volatile political settings and difficult policy environments. UNDP has developed common indicators to assess progress in light of these complexities, as illustrated by Figure 2 below. These indicators for strong electoral institutions and processes include:

- The existence of a sound national legal and regulatory framework on electoral processes that provides for the conduct of elections in line with international standards.
- Electoral management that is effective, impartial and transparent (frequently through the existence of an independent EMB).
- A rigorous implementation of pre-electoral activities which include constituency/ward demarcation, the establishment of an inclusive and accurate voter registry, efficient procurement processes and activities related to civic education and training of stakeholders.
- A free, fair and peaceful election campaign during which human rights are respected and in which parties and candidates have equitable opportunities to convey their messages to voters, including through equitable access to the media.
- A rigorous implementation of electoral procedures during the elections (voting day operations) and the post-election period (election results management and dispute resolution).
- Active participation by well-informed voters.
- Assessments by domestic or international observers that the conduct of elections was in line with international standards.

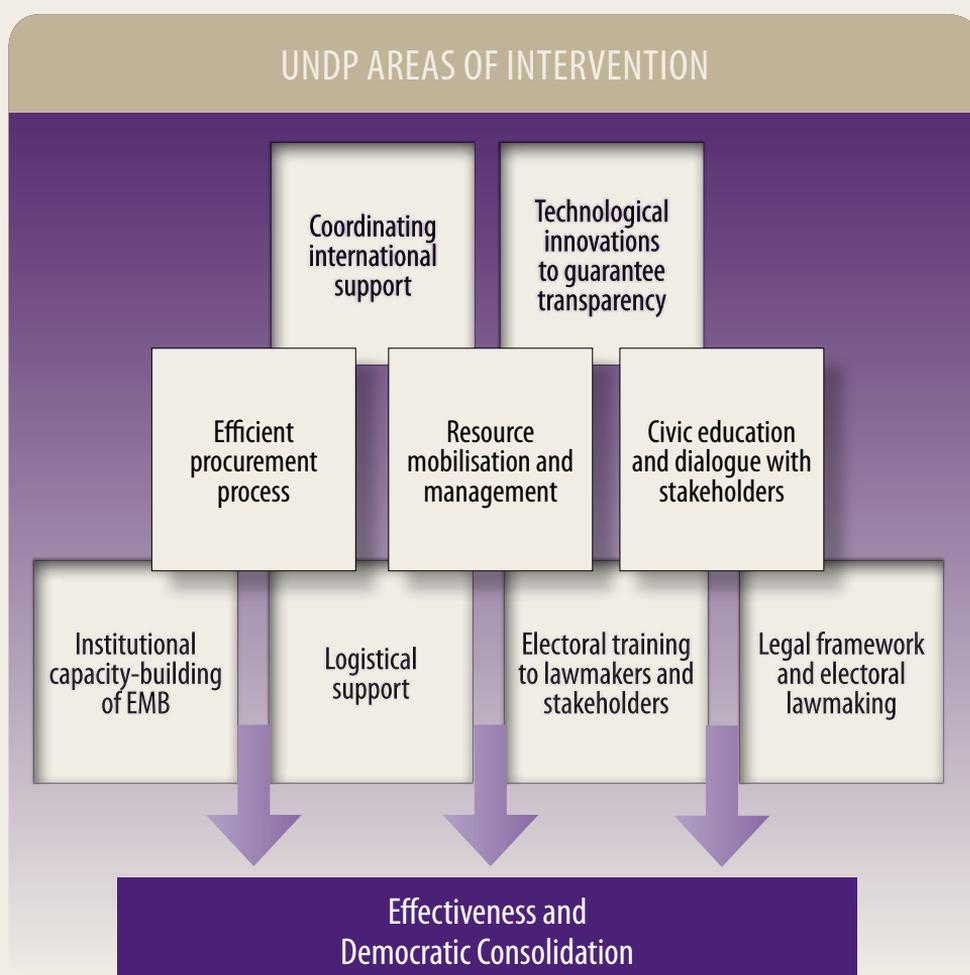


Figure 2: UNDP Intervention Chart – The role of UNDP in electoral assistance in Africa

The types of interventions listed reflect the evolution of UNDP assistance from an event-based approach to a more holistic approach. The early years of election support tended to target critical activities for election day such as voter registration and polling day activities. This has evolved into a more comprehensive approach that supports activities during the pre-electoral period, on election day and in the post-election period. This has been particularly true for UNDP support for second/ third generations of elections in Africa. This approach is generally known as the “electoral cycle approach” since it addresses all phases of the election process – before, during and after elections. The electoral cycle approach also looks at electoral activities in the context of the broader democratic consolidation agenda. While the initial approach was aimed at holding a single successful election, the electoral cycle approach is aimed at building sustainable institutions and long-term capacity to conduct elections and contribute to democratic consolidation.

This shift of strategy was driven by lessons learned from some countries where a need existed for continued UNDP support, especially in between elections, in order to foster enhanced capacity for credible, fair and peaceful elections. In some instances, elections were marred by irregularities. When this was due to the weak capacity of the national institutions responsible for the conduct of elections, it called for a shift from an event-driven approach to longer-term capacity-building. A broad-based approach was therefore implemented, with a view to be in conformity with UNDP's principle of sustainability.

With the second and particularly the third generation of elections, electoral cycle assistance became the norm, especially in post-conflict countries or in countries confronted with post-electoral violence or political crises (including Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger and Sierra Leone). This shift has confirmed UNDP's pioneering leadership role in the transformation of electoral assistance around the globe to a longer-term methodology aimed at building sustainable national capacity to conduct democratic elections. This holistic approach also takes into account the key role played in electoral management by other institutions and processes of democratic governance. In Kenya, for instance, constitutional reform support has had a direct impact on elections.

3.1.2 Coordination and partnerships

UNDP has placed emphasis on building strong partnerships and collaboration with a broad range of domestic and international actors. It has played, and continues to play, a leading role in the coordination of development partners involved in electoral assistance, resource mobilization and financial management. This is particularly important in Africa, where in most instances countries rely heavily on development partners for election funding and there is an imperative to align support from different development partners with national priorities. In many instances, UNDP has been able to bring together development partners to support long-term programmes based on the electoral cycle approach, ensuring alignment with country priorities, reducing duplication and ensuring complementarity of effort. UNDP has demonstrated its ability to mobilize external (donor) resources, often within a very short period of time.

As a result of UNDP's multilateral status and its presence in more than 166 country offices across the globe, the organization has built a strong reputation in coordinating and mobilizing resources and managing multi-partner basket funding for elections. Its solid financial management procedures are often seen by donors as the most suitable to deal with complex electoral assistance projects. UNDP is also valued by governments, EMBs and other stakeholders for its experience and expertise in procurement of goods and services in support of elections.

Most basket funds are managed through a steering board with representation of both national actors and donors as a mechanism for transparency and accountability. In addition, UNDP has established a well-regarded practice of convening periodic meetings among national and international partners to provide all stakeholders with a forum for exchanging information and for in-depth discussions on issues such as the electoral budget, the electoral administration and process, voter education and election observation. These meetings have also provided a vehicle for government representatives and civil society groups to consult with the donor community as a whole on needs for electoral assistance, to identify gaps and to prioritize based on funding constraints.

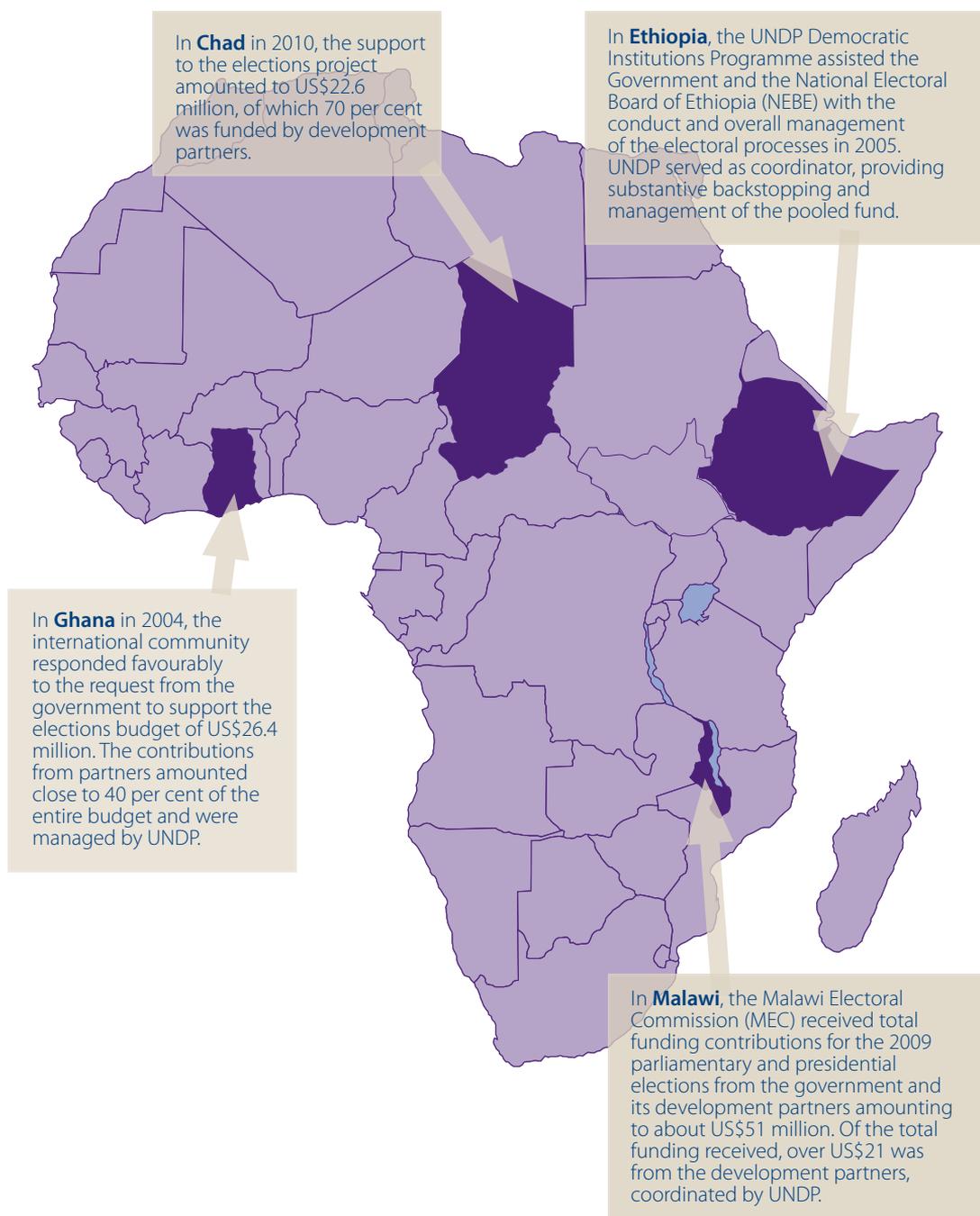


Figure 3: Examples of funding partnerships managed by UNDP

Sources: DIP final MTE report 2010; PACE Chad PRODOC; UNDP electoral support to Ghana (2 page summary); Malawi support to Elections terminal project report, June 2009.

Managing basket funds is a complex undertaking that has presented numerous challenges, such as the need to ensure proper reporting to different partners with different accounting mechanisms, meeting procurement deadlines without violating UNDP rules or donor stipulations, living up to varying national and donor expectations, and demonstrating that funding for UNDP management costs is well spent and represents value added in project implementation. Host governments and donors have come to rely heavily on UNDP for financial management in many African countries which are perceived to lack the institutional capacity to manage large electoral projects, particularly in post-conflict settings.

3.1.3 Institutional development strengthening

An important component of UNDP electoral assistance in Africa is capacity development, which has been undertaken on both the regional and national levels.

Strengthening regional institutions

On a regional and sub-regional level, UNDP has provided support for institutions such as the AU, the RECs, and other sub-regional electoral networks, including the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC Countries. Over the past several years, UNDP has facilitated the training of observers for the AU and various RECs (mainly ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Economic Community of Central African States, all in an effort to improve the quality and credibility of elections on the continent.

In an effort to improve the effectiveness of election observation by regional institutions, UNDP has collaborated with the African Union Commission to transform its election observation methodology with the aim of adopting electoral cycle-based observation. With the EAC, the focus has been the revision of its methodological approach to election observation and evaluation to increase its impact and efficiency. This support has seen the training of more than 100 observers and their accreditation as AU observers.



ABOVE: UN and AU collaboration in action: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon flanked by Jean Ping, former AU Chairperson and current AU Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma at high-level event on the DRC in New York, Nov 2012 . *Photo: UNDP*

Strengthening the institutional capacity of EMBs to deliver credible elections

Many EMBs in Africa face difficulties due to such factors as their non-permanent nature, high staff turnover, paucity of resources and need to operate in politically charged and at times violent environments. These circumstances highlight the need for increased support to enhance the capacity and standing of EMBs as independent and professional bodies.

Through a range of initiatives, including individual country projects and the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), UNDP has undertaken training programmes to enhance the capacity of EMBs to promote democratic elections. Such training has covered a broad scope of professional and specialized functions for EMB members and staff, including on such topics as voter registration, the use of information and communication technology (ICT), electoral budgeting, procurement, strategic planning, team building, conflict mitigation, and gender mainstreaming. Many of these capacity-building and training initiatives embraced the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE)⁹ methodology and provided countries with opportunities for the training of trainers. In addition, UNDP has frequently been called on to contribute to cascade training for election day poll workers.

As part of its capacity-building approach, UNDP has fostered South-South cooperation. For example, it established contact between the Nigerian and Indian election commissions to exchange expertise and strengthen local electoral processes in Nigeria. In another instance, UNDP mobilized the support of Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in sending a team of experts from Ghana to visit Togo for experience sharing on peacebuilding and human rights promotion for credible elections.

BOX 3: TANZANIA 2010: VOTER REGISTRATION SUCCESS



Nearly 20 million people registered to take part in the general elections in 2010, in a process supported by UNDP. The registration of these voters was one of the success stories of UNDP's partnership with the two electoral management bodies in Tanzania, the National Election Commission and the Zanzibar Election Commission. The related voter education project on registration used small grants to local CSOs to reach remote areas of the population, first-time voters and those who traditionally do not vote. Innovative methods helped to reach and motivate potential voters through theatre groups, rural community radio targeting women's groups, and voter information in Braille for the blind.

Source: UNDP support to the Electoral process in Tanzania – Country office contribution 2012.

⁹ BRIDGE is a professional development programme that focuses on electoral processes. Five organizations are BRIDGE partners: The Australian Electoral Commission, International IDEA, the International Foundation for Election Systems, UN EAD and UNDP. See www.bridge-project.org.

BOX 4: SUPPORT TO THE EMB IN MALAWI



UNDP provided substantial support to the MEC to conduct the elections in 2009, which were held on schedule and were applauded by both international and domestic observers as free and credible.

The project contributed to the success of the 2009 elections. Specifically, the project supported the MEC to: (a) mobilize over US\$17 million for the parliamentary and presidential elections; (b) ensure that all the key positions in the MEC were filled; (c) establish the Integrated Financial Management Information System for the efficient public financial management of the MEC; (d) register over 90 per cent of eligible voters and computerize the voter rolls; (e) achieve a voter turnout of over 70 per cent of all eligible voters during elections; and (f) effectively manage the election results culminating in very few complaints.

Source: Malawi terminal project report. Support to Electoral Reforms and elections, June 2009.

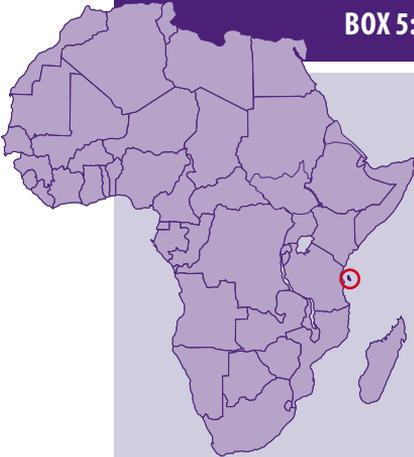
One illustration of the UNDP approach to electoral assistance has been in Ghana, where UNDP centred its efforts to support an effective electoral system and process through building the institutional capacity of the Electoral Commission (EC) and its stakeholders including political parties, civil society organizations (CSOs) and governance institutions, while promoting collaboration among stakeholders. UNDP was able to assist the EC to achieve a strong reputation in the region for relative efficiency, professionalism and conflict-resolution capacity. The EC's strategy of working with political parties in defusing potential flash points was highly commended by international observers.

In addition to training, UNDP has worked to build the capacity of EMBs by providing advisory services, expertise and technical backstopping, which fostered increased public confidence in the electoral process. Such assistance has been offered in countries where UNDP has active electoral support programmes and in others where it does not.

In Tanzania for instance, UNDP supported the institutional capacity-building of the National Electoral Commission and the Zanzibar Electoral Commission through the transition from single party to multiparty electoral management. This transition brought with it an increased demand by stakeholders for transparency, dialogue and accountability. In Ethiopia, UNDP provided capacity development support to the EMB, the NEBE, over the course of several elections, following the electoral cycle approach. Assistance included capacity-building on a range of issues from strategic planning to dispute resolution. Election observers reported that the NEBE was technically well organized, while civil society was mobilized and women's participation in elections increased.¹⁰

¹⁰ Ethiopia, Final Report, House of People's Representatives and State Council Elections, May 2010, European Union Election Observation Mission, http://eueom.eu/files/pressreleases/english/final-report-eueom-ethiopia-08112010_en.pdf.

BOX 5: ICT AND POLICE PRESENCE IN POLLING STATIONS



In Zanzibar, UNDP's procurement of modern communication equipment enabled the police to reduce radically their presence at polling stations from 15-20 officers per polling station in 2005 to a maximum of two per polling station, and only when needed, in 2010. This greatly contributed to a peaceful environment on election day. The establishment of a police Communications Command Centre for election day with a companion incident reporting system resulted in smooth information flows and well-informed police responses to incidents.

Source: Electoral support to Tanzania – Country office contribution, 2012.

Introducing effective and appropriate technology

The introduction of technological innovations such as computerized voter registration systems and results management systems has played a significant role in enhancing efficiency, transparency and effectiveness in the overall management of elections. UNDP has played a leadership role in providing advice and expertise in the selection and procurement of electoral materials and information technology. This assistance has been noted as a contributing factor to the success of the elections in DRC in 2006, in Kenya in 2007 and in Burundi in 2010, among others.

UNDP has also assisted with other areas of technological innovation in the management of electoral processes, including mobile phone messaging systems that allow voters easy access to election information, such as locations of polling stations and registration status, as was done in Tanzania. Other innovations have included modernized election results management systems that improved and gave greater transparency to the vote tabulation process. ICT innovations have also enhanced the ability of voter information and education programmes to foster increased civic awareness about the right and responsibility to participate in elections, including through the use of social media outlets.

In countries such as Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania, the use of social media has contributed to enhanced transparency in the monitoring of election campaigns and election results, especially by civil society groups. Improvements in technology have also led to more effective parallel vote tabulations and related tools in recent elections. UNDP has supported institutional strengthening and capacity-building for CSOs in these countries, especially CSOs which undertake election monitoring.

Despite the many advantages that may result from the use of ICT in elections, UNDP counsels caution to ensure that any new technologies adopted are affordable and sustainable. This is especially the case for certain ICT solutions used in the conduct of voter registration, such as the procurement of biometric technologies, which can be expensive and difficult to maintain and update. This is especially the case for certain ICT solutions used in the conduct of voter registration, such as the procurement of biometric technologies, which can be expensive and

difficult to maintain and update. By the same token, the introduction of electronic voting can involve the purchase of prohibitively expensive hardware and may not increase transparency or public confidence in the election process. Among the main challenges noted in the use of election technology has been the need to avoid supplier-driven (either partners or vendor-driven) purchases or event-based uses of technology in elections, which can be expensive and unsustainable. Moreover, UNDP encourages EMBs to use open-source or “built” software rather than proprietary or “bought” solutions, and to enhance national ownership of technology by introducing security measures to protect data. When computerizing voter registration, UNDP has found it can be a good practice to explore ways to link voter registration to the civil register (where one exists), which can increase cost effectiveness and avoid unnecessary duplication.

UNDP has noted that there is a need for sound planning and broad-based consultation with stakeholders to ensure they support and understand the reasons for the introduction of any new election technology. Another important consideration when adopting new technology is the need for systematic training of staff.

UNDP has made significant efforts to promote greater South-South and regional co-operation with respect to hardware, software and the technical expertise necessary for ICT in electoral processes. For example, UNDP helped organize a loan to Togo of biometric registration kits in 2007 from the DRC, as well as a loan of the same from Togo to the Central African Republic for the parliamentary and presidential elections held in 2011. Similarly, support was given to the strengthening of the Independent National Election Commissions (INEC) in Burkina Faso and Guinea on the basis of the experience of Togo.

3.1.4 Supporting other actors

Civic empowerment through education and information

UNDP has extended its electoral support directly to citizens at large through civic and voter education. The purpose of such interventions is to foster increased participation of a well-informed citizenry in democratic processes, including elections, as a way of influencing decision-making on matters that affect their lives. Almost all electoral support projects carried out by UNDP across Africa include elements of citizen empowerment to encourage participation in elections on a full and equal basis. Voter education is generally aimed at short-term results, i.e., encouraging citizens to register and vote, and ensuring they understand how, when and where to do so. Civic education is a longer-term and more comprehensive concept, encompassing programmes that seek to instil a culture of democracy and an understanding and appreciation by citizens of their roles in the democratic process.

These projects have contributed immensely to increased understanding, reduced tension and readiness of citizens to accept election outcomes in various countries, including in post-conflict settings such as the DRC, Guinea, Mozambique, Nigeria and Togo, as well as Kenya during the referendum in 2010.

Civic education has tended to serve two goals. In the short term, it has sought to defuse tensions and promote a culture of peace, as in Guinea and Togo in 2010. In the long term, civic education seeks to instil democratic values among citizens, especially young voters, as was an aim of the UNDP election project in Mozambique in 2011. In Ethiopia, following election

violence after the 2005 general elections, UNDP assisted the NEBE to develop a civic and voter education manual aimed in part at conflict prevention and consolidation of a culture of peace. This was part of a massive programme of civic and voter education implemented through the NEBE, the media and CSOs that contributed to peaceful elections in 2010.

During the 2004 and 2010 elections in Tanzania and Zanzibar, civic and voter education projects helped to bolster a democratic culture through efforts to sensitize electoral stakeholders on the importance of women's participation in the electoral process. It also targeted voter education of groups with special needs including people with disabilities and the illiterate. These projects encouraged and supported dialogue among political parties and special groups on the legal and institutional framework for elections. One result was the enactment by the parliament in 2010 of a new law to curb corruption during campaigning and polling, the Election Expenses Act. The enactment of this law, which reinforced democratic values, followed protracted discussion among political stakeholders facilitated through the UNDP elections support project. In addition, UNDP used small grants to local NGOs to reach remote areas of the population, first-time voters and those who traditionally do not vote. Innovative methods helped to reach and motivate potential voters through theatre groups, rural community radio targeting women's groups, and voter information in Braille for the blind.

Fostering capacity of other national electoral stakeholders

UNDP electoral support projects most often involve a comprehensive approach that addresses not only EMBs, but also a range of electoral stakeholders including CSOs, the media, political parties and the judiciary, among others.

Working with CSOs has generally been a central element of UNDP electoral assistance projects in Africa. UNDP has sought to empower CSOs in a number of ways. In some instances, project activities have been aimed directly at strengthening CSOs. The most notable of such activities have been aimed at building or supporting non-partisan domestic election observer organizations. UNDP has provided funding, training and technical expertise to enable domestic observer organizations to recruit, train and deploy observers, as well as to analyze election results and produce quality reports. Examples of such support are Tanzania, where UNDP assistance enabled the deployment and training of some 7,000 domestic election observers; Sudan, where in 2010 a UNDP project supported the training and deployment of some 4,000 observers; and Ethiopia, where UNDP provided support for the deployment of some 40,000 election observers through a coalition of 11 CSOs representing youth groups, women's groups, professional associations, trade unions and others. UNDP has also supported regional efforts to train election observers, including, for example, a three-day training session in 2011 in Gabon, in conjunction with the AU and the RECs, for observers from Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, DRC, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

Other types of specialized training for CSOs have also been provided as part of UNDP electoral assistance projects, for example, training on conflict prevention, as in Togo. In Nigeria, CSO observers were deployed with UNDP assistance to monitor the behaviour of security forces during the pre-election period. In Kenya, UNDP worked with civil society to foster peaceful elections, focusing on election conflict early warning and response.

UNDP has also supported forums at which CSOs can interact with EMBs, members of parliament and political parties to ensure their voices are heard, including on the legal and institutional framework for elections. Such forums took place in DRC, Lesotho, Niger, Togo and Zanzibar, where UNDP support was provided to facilitate dialogue among EMBs and youth, local political leaders, religious leaders and teachers. Such dialogue can be particularly helpful in preventing or mitigating violence in countries in transition or those experiencing political crises.

In addition to direct assistance to CSOs, UNDP has channeled some elements of project implementation through CSOs. This has frequently been the case, for example, with the implementation of civic and voter education elements of electoral assistance projects. One example was a small grants programme in Liberia to enable CSOs to deliver civic and voter education. Another example was in Ethiopia, where during the 2005 elections, UNDP provided support for a national civic and voter education programme in which 26 CSOs were able to conduct 33,000 civic and voter education events across all regions of the country, reaching 6.7 million voters. Relying on CSOs to implement such projects has the dual advantage of strengthening civil society and ensuring a broader reach to the population. Working through civil society can also be extremely cost effective, as was the case in the Ethiopia programme, which returned a high impact at a low cost.

UNDP has also contributed to building a more independent and professional media as part of electoral assistance projects, recognizing that a strong and free media plays a central role

BOX 6: BURUNDI: SUPPORTING THE MEDIA FOR AN UNBIASED COVERAGE OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN 2010



UNDP support to the media in Burundi was delivered through a project entitled “Common Action Plan for Media Support” (PACAM), which encompassed both the public and private media. The main objective of PACAM was to promote professional and responsible coverage of elections by the radio, TV, electronic and print media.

PACAM had a steering committee to supervise the implementation of the plan. It was composed of representatives from the EMB, the National Communication Council, the media professional bodies, the government and development partners including UNDP. Pre-election activities under PACAM included training and technical support for journalists, as well as equipment for election coverage. The project also contributed to pooling of expertise and production of radio and TV programmes.

The success of the project was demonstrated by the equitable coverage of political parties and candidates.

Source: *The catalytic role of the Peace-Building Fund in creating an enabling environment for the elections in Burundi, UNDP Country Office, March, 2010.*

in creating conditions for democratic elections. UNDP has contributed to training journalists to report on elections in a more professional, accurate, objective and balanced manner. For example, such programmes were carried out in Burundi and Tanzania. In Ethiopia, part of UNDP's project of assistance for the 2005 elections included supporting the development of a code of conduct for the media aimed at developing more impartial and balanced campaign coverage; the code was signed by leading private and state media institutions. In addition, UNDP supported independent media monitoring by the Addis Ababa University School of Journalism, thus simultaneously building local capacity and providing an important election monitoring function.

Providing support to political parties can be sensitive, but can also be crucial to building competitive and credible electoral processes. UNDP electoral assistance projects have helped create stronger and more democratic political parties in a number of African states. In Tanzania, for example UNDP supported the training of 5,000 party officials. In Ethiopia, a political party code of conduct was adopted with UNDP assistance. The same project managed the provision of international in-kind support for political parties, while another project helped design a formula for the distribution of funds to political parties by the NEBE through a transparent procedure. In Benin, a UNDP project strengthened the capacity of political parties through dialogue and consensus-building, and helped them to establish a code of professional ethics.

Training has been organized by UNDP for members of the judiciary in countries such as Tanzania (2010), Nigeria (2011) and Lesotho (2012) to give them the skills necessary to adjudicate electoral disputes in a timely and transparent manner.

Empowerment of women and marginalized groups for effective and inclusive participation in elections

Various UNDP projects across Africa have strong stand-alone components of support to women and other historically disadvantaged groups including youth, people living with disabilities and internally displaced persons (IDPs). UNDP's strategic commitment to enhancing the participation of women in politics and elections is in line with both UNDP's goals of fostering inclusive participation in electoral processes and with the global UN MDG of increasing gender equality and women's empowerment.

In most of these projects significant resources have been devoted to supporting activities which aim at improving the capacity of women to engage effectively with electoral processes as candidates, voters, and election officials. UNDP commitment to the inclusive participation of women is underscored by the implementation of gender-specific regional programmes, in addition to the inclusion of gender elements in country-specific electoral projects. For example, until 2012, GPECS provided for a stand-alone gender component and a regional gender advisor based in Dakar covering the whole of Africa. In addition, GPECS has appointed consultants to assist country offices to mainstream gender into their electoral support activities. Such efforts have included the development of gender policies for EMBs.

UNDP has been vocal on gender mainstreaming in electoral programming. These efforts have seen the systematic inclusion of gender considerations into electoral project formulation. Among the goals of gender-sensitive electoral reform is the appointment of women to EMBs. For example, in Guinea in 2010, UNDP played a major role in ensuring that the EMB was gender balanced.

Most of the gender-focused UNDP programmes have sought to address legal, administrative and other deficiencies in the conduct of elections such as the exclusion or marginalization of women as candidates, voters and electoral staff. In addition to supporting EMBs to mainstream gender in elections, UNDP has provided support to empower women to play a pivotal role in political party structures. This has included efforts to enhance the capacity of women to campaign effectively for election to political party leadership structures as well as to public office.

As noted previously, UNDP has worked to empower other marginalized groups for effective participation in elections, including youth, people living with disabilities, IDPs and others. A major thrust of UNDP projects has been to mainstream the participation of these groups by encouraging and facilitating their ability to register and vote. Civic and voter education campaigns that address the needs and aspirations of socio-politically marginalized groups have formed an element of many projects. In addition, UNDP has encouraged political parties and candidates to address the concerns of such groups during election campaigns and beyond.

A noteworthy project is underway in Kenya, where UNDP is collaborating with the EMB and civil society to support youth engagement in the electoral process, and linking such support to job creation and skills transfer for youth. UNDP is also supporting efforts in Kenya to give IDPs the opportunity to participate in electoral processes. This includes efforts to encourage IDPs to register as voters and to vote, as well as conducting civic and voter education campaigns specific to the needs and aspirations of IDPs and promoting dialogue on national cohesion and reconciliation.

3.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

3.2.1 Sustainability

UNDP electoral assistance programmes are based on the premise that elections are a process rather than an event, encompassing the period before, during and after elections. This is especially true in regard to programming for second-generation elections, including in Africa. For example, initial UNDP electoral assistance in a post-conflict situation may centre on a single election as part of a process to restore peace and build national reconciliation. Over the longer term, however, moving from an event-based approach to an electoral cycle approach reflects a long-term commitment targeting multiple actors and building institutions for sustainable electoral processes.

This shift is undergirded by a set of principles, including efficiency, cost-effectiveness, impact, national ownership and sustainability. Together, they provide UNDP with the prospect of reducing electoral assistance gradually, while developing sustainable national capacities. Over time, this should lead to an end point for UNDP's electoral assistance in an increasing number of countries, as countries that have been successful in consolidating stable electoral systems and institutional expertise require less and less UNDP electoral support. UNDP attaches great significance to project design with a view to developing electoral systems and processes that will remain sustainable without the need for international assistance.

Sustainability requires not only professional capacity-building, but also the development of systems that are broadly acceptable to all election stakeholders, as well as equipment and procedures that are affordable and can be maintained by national institutions without the need for external assistance. Benin, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania are among those countries that have taken important steps to develop sustainable electoral processes, which have resulted in the following types of benefits:

- Enhancement of capacity of the EMBs and other election-related institutions
- Increased participation by citizens
- Voters empowered to make well-informed choices
- Increased transparency and credibility of the electoral systems
- An improved legal framework for elections
- National ownership of the electoral process

3.2.2 Promotion of democratic governance including respect for human rights

Beyond the need to promote credible elections, the UNDP electoral assistance agenda is based on the need to integrate electoral support into the broader development goal of promoting democratic consolidation and sustainable human development. This means that UNDP interventions should seek to address the broad, long-term goal of strengthening democratic institutions. Such institutions include EMBs, political parties, a free media, parliaments and independent judiciaries. Each of these institutions has a role to play in solidifying democratic governance and respect for human rights, as well as improved elections.

At the heart of such efforts is the need to create conditions in which citizens are able to enjoy fully all their human rights. From an electoral perspective, this includes in particular their civil and political rights, as set out in the ICCPR and other international instruments mentioned earlier in this publication, including treaties and standards adopted by the AU and other African bodies. In addition to the rights to vote and to run for office, democratic elections require respect for freedoms of expression, association, assembly and movement, as well as freedom from discrimination. Parties and candidates must be able to campaign freely and on an equitable basis, and citizens must be free to support the candidates of their choice without fear of intimidation or violence. Citizens whose rights have been violated should have the right to an effective remedy. While it is the responsibility of governments to guarantee the human rights of their citizens, UNDP interventions have sought to integrate the promotion of human rights as a key programmatic component of its electoral assistance, recognizing that credible and genuine elections depend on respect for human rights.

UNDP support for human rights goes well beyond electoral assistance and is integrated into a range of programmes on democratic governance and in other fields, including projects to strengthen parliaments, build independent judiciaries, combat corruption, develop professional media and promote gender equality. Many of these projects contribute substantially to improved elections, for example, through improved legislation or better trained institutions which serve as guardians of human rights, including the judiciary, civil society and the media.

BOX 7: IMPACT ON THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

- Credible elections and systems which enable EMBs to produce and publish results efficiently.
- Accurate voter registers to promote transparency and credibility.
- Citizen participation, with citizens empowered to make informed decisions.
- Respect for human rights improved.
- Gender equality enhanced.
- Democratic institutions strengthened.
- Culture of democracy developed.

UNDP also supports national Human Rights Commissions and ombudsman institutions, which are sometimes empowered to monitor elections and address abuses. Their role has been particularly visible in the support to the third generation elections in Ethiopia, Ghana, Togo and Zanzibar.

Support provided to domestic election observer organizations can be crucial in bringing human rights violations to light, particularly when the organizations are engaged in long-term observation of the election campaign period. Long-term observation reports can be a good indicator of the extent to which election processes are in line with human rights obligations. Training the judiciary in election dispute resolution – which has been a part of a number of UNDP projects in Africa – also contributes to observance of human rights. Training provided to police forces, as in the election support project in Tanzania, promotes human rights compliant behaviour by security forces.

Gender mainstreaming activities within UNDP electoral assistance projects also promote human rights. UNDP projects around Africa have supported the mobilization and inclusion of women as candidates, voters, observers and election staff. Elements of election projects have aimed at supporting women in political parties and as community activists, and at reinforcing their role in the peaceful settlement of election disputes. UNDP capacity-building programmes also focus on gender equality. For example, training provided to newly elected officials – both men and women – includes gender mainstreaming. Likewise, training for EMBs often emphasizes gender mainstreaming and provides gender-awareness training for all electoral staff and personnel. These activities frequently include a review of election management procedures to ensure that they promote gender equality, as well as a media strategy for formulating clear and gender-sensitive electoral messages.

BOX 8: TOGO: CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



One of UNDP's successes in Togo was the activities conducted during the 2010 elections to promote human rights, a culture of peace and democratic values, in order to prevent electoral violence. Although the UNDP project focused on technical assistance, particular attention was given to making sure the electoral process took into account issues of human rights, democratic values and peace.

UNDP supported several initiatives to promote a peaceful electoral process. A mechanism was set up to bring together political parties to consult and share common understanding of the process. A platform for dialogue was created for civil society to campaign and promote peace during the elections and beyond. These activities borrowed from successful experiences in neighbouring Ghana. They not only provided a platform for dialogue, but also led to a commitment by all stakeholders to promote a culture of peace and human rights. This represented a break from a past of violence and human rights violations and renewed popular confidence in the electoral process.

Source: UNDP electoral Assistance in Togo, Country Office contribution, 2012.

3.2.3 Conflict mitigation and democratic transformation

The interconnectedness between electoral assistance and the broader democratic and development agenda is often most visible in post-conflict transitional settings. UNDP's electoral support in such circumstances is provided in a context of political and economic crisis characterized by deep divisions in society, the absence of strong state institutions, breakdown of the rule of law, degraded infrastructure and the danger of renewed violence or hostilities. The situation is often further complicated by the presence of large numbers of IDPs. The overall aim of UNDP support in such contexts is to consolidate peace and to build a stable and viable democratic state. This requires a range of complementary interventions to strengthen state institutions and to develop the role of non-state actors to improve governance and build public confidence.

Elections in post-conflict and transitional situations are often written into a peace agreement. They are regarded as a necessary step towards national reconciliation and legitimate, democratic governance based on the will of the people. UNDP electoral assistance in such contexts is often delivered as part of the work of a larger, integrated UN mission, frequently in close cooperation with DPKO and other UN agencies.

BOX 9: SIERRA LEONE: POST-WAR TRANSFORMATIONAL REFORMS



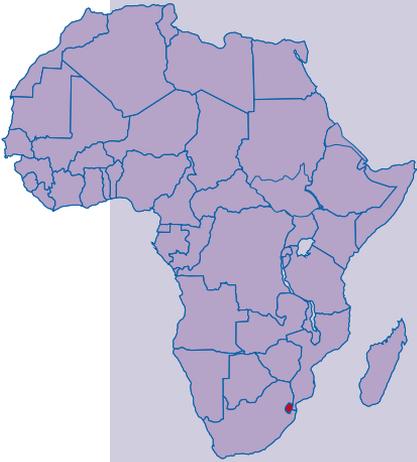
UNDP's electoral cycle programme design in 2005 was based on a seven-step matrix model that reflected the reform agenda of the election commission. The programme design encapsulated a series of interwoven activities ranging from restructuring of the key EMBs to the construction of permanent offices and a warehouse for the EMB. The programme resulted in major electoral reform in the immediate postwar period. The seven step reform agenda, each with well thought-through outputs, included: 1. Restructuring of the EMB, 2. Staff capacity development, 3. Infrastructure development, 4. Information technology system, 5. Laws and regulations, 6. Boundary delimitation, and 7. Voter registration.

Source: UNDP Support to the Electoral Process in Sierra Leone, Country Office contribution 2011.

The design of UNDP electoral assistance programmes in post-conflict and other transitional situations is especially complex and challenging. While elections may be a necessary component of peacebuilding, they can also spark renewed conflict if not planned and implemented with careful attention to conflict prevention measures, and carried out under conditions that provide for a genuinely democratic process. Many of the standard elements of UNDP assistance projects take on extra significance in post-conflict countries and are formulated and implemented in ways specifically intended to mitigate conflict. For example, assistance projects that ensure the balanced and inclusive composition of EMBs, as well as their impartial functioning, can make a huge contribution to public confidence in an election process and can reassure hostile parties that the contest is fair and legitimate.

Projects that put in place a broad-based consultative process to reach wide agreement on electoral laws and procedures can help draw contestants into a peaceful competition and obviate the incentive for the use of violence. UNDP sponsorship of civic education campaigns can help ensure that the population at large understands and supports the electoral process as a path towards peace and democratic governance. UNDP support for substantial numbers of election observers, including long-term observers, can help mitigate conflict by building public confidence that the process is being implemented fairly and that there is a level playing field for all contestants.

BOX 10: CONFLICT PREVENTION IN LESOTHO



UNDP anticipated that election-related conflicts would arise when it designed its deepening of democracy project for Lesotho. Due to forward planning, the project was able to meet the country's needs in a timely manner and assisted greatly in mitigating conflict in Lesotho's fragile democracy. The role of the Independent Election Commission-UNDP Facilitation Team in providing workshops for the Lesotho Military and Security Forces in the run-up to the election was particularly welcomed given the challenge of regularizing civil-military relations in Lesotho, particularly during election periods.

Source: Evaluation of Lesotho deepening democracy project 2006-2009.

UNDP efforts to foster gender equality and the rights of women can help ensure that they have equal opportunities to contribute to peacebuilding and national reconciliation. UNDP efforts to strengthen the judiciary can provide a crucial channel for peaceful resolution of disputes.

UNDP projects focused on constitutional and legal reform have helped build national reconciliation and establish a solid foundation for elections. Attention to the needs of IDPs has helped promote stability by ensuring inclusive electoral processes. Projects that include the development of codes of conduct for candidates and political parties – as in Benin – have helped reduce the threat of violence, intimidation or campaign disruptions that could spark renewed conflict.

Training for security forces has helped ensure their role is centred on ensuring a secure environment for elections rather than interfering in the process. UNDP electoral assistance programmes have supported training for security forces in conflict management techniques, which has resulted in a significant reduction of violence during some elections, better community-police relations and enhanced trust in electoral processes. This has been the case, for example in Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Togo. Training for senior police officers in Zanzibar helped set higher standards for police work and behavior, including new rules of engagement.¹¹

¹¹ UNDP Zanzibar office contribution, December 2011.

Electoral assistance in post-conflict settings serves as a bridge to the long-term, sustainable approach promoted by UNDP in democratic settings as illustrated in the following figure:

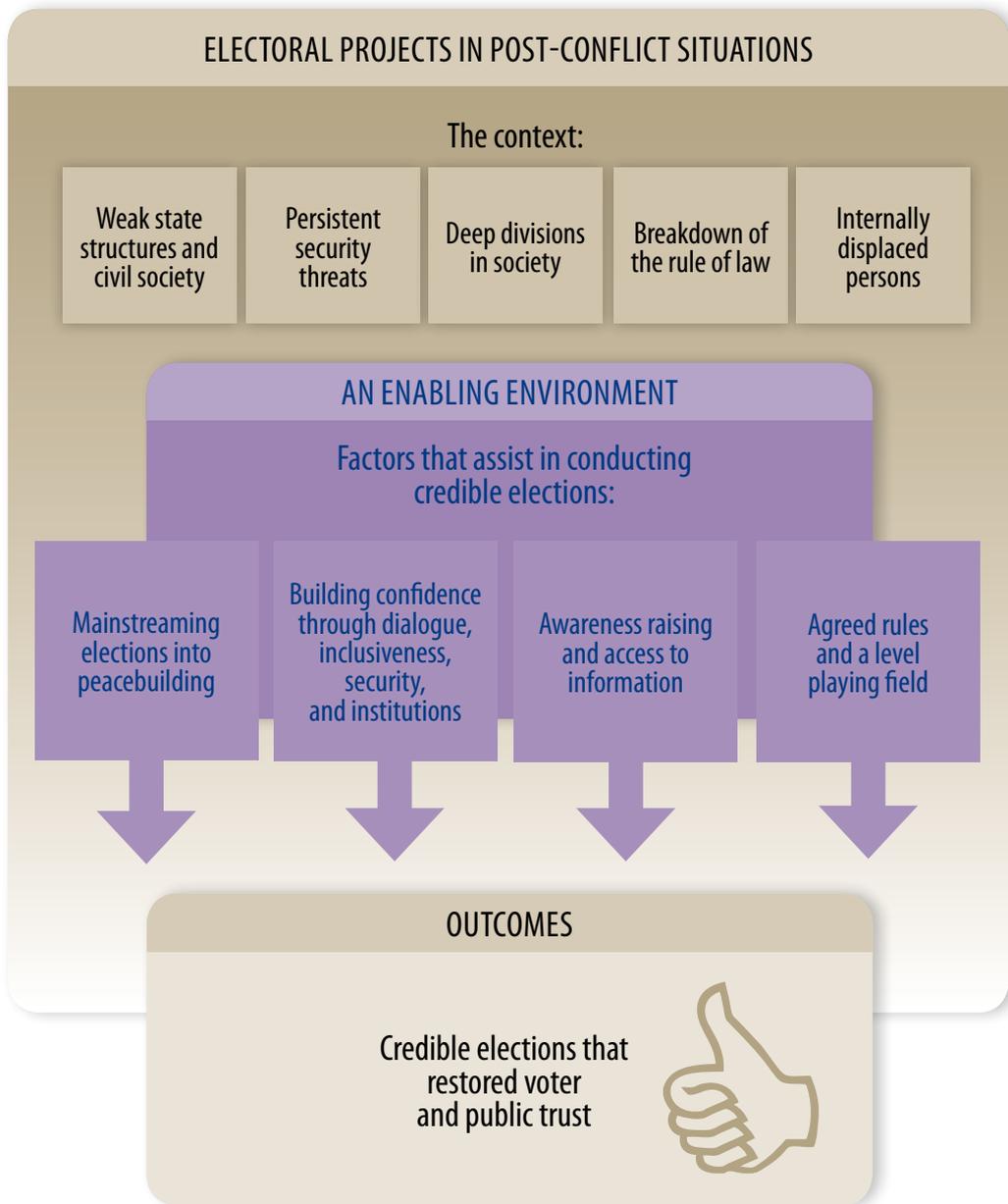


Figure 4: Electoral assistance in post-conflict and transitional settings

3.3 THE CHALLENGES ON THE ROAD TO SUSTAINABLE ELECTORAL PROCESSES IN AFRICA

The challenges in supporting democratic elections in Africa vary from country to country and context to context even in the same country, but overall they are similar in many ways to the electoral challenges faced by UNDP in other parts of the world. Challenges are linked to the political context, state functioning, the level of respect for human rights, the legal framework for elections, the extent of civil society engagement and donor willingness to provide sufficient resources to support electoral assistance activities. As noted in previous sections, the challenges in post-conflict countries are greater still. Post-conflict elections are particularly challenging when election calendars included in peace agreements do not provide enough time for adequate preparation for elections.

Some other significant challenges of electoral assistance in Africa have included:

- Lack of political commitment by authorities to allow credible, democratic elections
- Election-related violence, especially along regional, ethnic or religious lines
- A political climate of tensions generated by electoral campaigns
- EMBs lacking independence or impartiality
- EMBs lacking capacity and resources to fulfil critical electoral functions
- Constitutional and legal frameworks, including electoral laws, that do not create equal conditions for all contenders or inspire stakeholder confidence in the electoral process
- Electoral malfeasance and rigging
- Ineffective voter registration processes or widespread allegations of voter registration malpractices
- The selection and use of inappropriate ICT, especially in countries with limited infrastructure
- Poorly developed political parties that are often centred around a single charismatic personality
- Limited opportunities for full participation by women and/or other marginalized groups
- Media not providing accurate, balanced and professional election coverage
- Insufficient resources allocated for elections
- Inadequate attention to civic and voter education
- CSOs that do not have the capacity to undertake programmes in support of elections
- Inadequate numbers of trained, non-partisan domestic election observers
- Ineffective systems of electoral dispute resolution and management

CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC ELECTORAL PROCESSES LESSONS FOR CHANGE



The top of the page features a purple background with a faint, circular UNDP logo. A large, bold, yellow number '4' is superimposed on the right side of the logo.

4

UNDP can draw many lessons from its broad experience in providing electoral assistance in Africa. The most important of these is that electoral assistance – when properly planned and when implemented with national partners committed to democratic change – can be a powerful tool to build and consolidate democratic practices and institutions. UNDP electoral assistance in Africa has fostered elections widely regarded as reflecting the will of the people and meeting international standards on democratic elections. It has led to more professional election administrations, greater popular participation in governance, improved respect for human rights, an enhanced role for women, more effective national institutions and a more capable and active civil society. Countries that have enjoyed UNDP assistance over a number of election cycles have often shown steadily increasing national capacity and clear progress toward democratic consolidation, as in Benin, Ghana and Tanzania.

In post-conflict situations, UNDP electoral assistance has contributed substantially to peacebuilding and national reconciliation. Electoral assistance has helped transform violent conflict on the battlefield into peaceful competition at the ballot box. A significant number of the elections supported by UNDP in Africa have produced results that have placed countries on a path to recovery and peaceful transition following years of civil conflicts. These include elections in Namibia which led to independence in 1989, in South Africa and Mozambique in 1994 to end decades of civil conflict, in DRC, Liberia and Sierra Leone in the mid-2000s and more recently in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya and Sudan.

Although building sound election processes as a means to consolidating democratic governance has been shown to produce positive results, it can be a slow process and is often fraught with difficulties. The challenges in building democratic elections in Africa are formidable, as illustrated in this publication. Moreover, although elections are an essential part of democracy, elections alone do not make a democracy. Consolidating national institutions and developing a culture of democracy are long-term processes that require long-term commitments. In the final analysis it is up to governments and their citizens to build and protect democracy. UNDP electoral assistance can provide crucial support and guidance, but cannot be a substitute for national leadership and ownership.

The sections below summarize some of the key lessons learned from three decades of UNDP electoral assistance in Africa.

LEFT: A group of women listening to a radio broadcast, Women's Empowerment Meeting in Tanzania, 2011.
Photo: UNDP

THE UNDP APPROACH

- While UNDP electoral assistance in Africa has seen notable successes, there is a need for continuous review of both broad approaches and individual country interventions to ensure they are updated to remain relevant to changing needs, circumstances and priorities.
- As an increasing proportion of UNDP electoral assistance in Africa is channeled to second-generation and subsequent elections, greater emphasis should be attached to supporting electoral actors other than the EMB, including political parties, CSOs, the media, and the judiciary. This approach would take into account that EMB capacities should be improving with each election and that actors other than EMBs also have critical roles to fulfill if elections are to be successful.
- Over time new issues that may deserve greater attention in some African countries will arise, such as developing codes of conduct (for political parties, candidates, EMBs, CSOs and/or media), establishing rules and enforcement mechanisms for the use of government resources during campaign periods, dealing with campaign financing issues, organizing out-of-country voting, setting up media monitoring mechanisms, introducing new technologies, and promoting electoral system reform to engender better representation and participation of all citizens including women, youth and people with disabilities.
- Due attention needs to be devoted to local elections, which can be more complex to administer than national elections, and may require support to provincial, city and local EMBs as well as to national structures.
- During project design and implementation, attention must be devoted to the political environment. Assistance to improve the technical implementation of elections is of little value unless it is accompanied by a political commitment to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms necessary for a genuine election process and to provide for a level playing field for all contestants. This means that some projects should focus less on such traditional assistance areas as capacity-building and voter education, and more on such approaches as political party dialogue, consensus-building, legal reform and strengthening of civil and political rights.
- Support for the delimitation of constituencies can help guarantee election outcomes that are fair, legitimate and give equal weight to each citizen's vote.
- Especially during second and subsequent generation elections, project design should focus on addressing specific problems that have been identified in previous elections, relating to the election administration or broader political or human rights issues. Reports by domestic and international observers can provide the basis for assessing identifying deficiencies that should be addressed.
- Project design, implementation and evaluation should take into account that the concept of national ownership of election processes relates not just to host governments, but to all national election stakeholders, including opposition parties and CSOs. Projects are most likely to foster inclusiveness and build public confidence in election processes if they are designed to address the needs of multiple stakeholders.



ABOVE: Counting votes by lamp light in the Liberian presidential run-off, November 2011.
Photo: UNDP

- UNDP can create more value added for its election work by “mainstreaming” election components into other aspects of its work in democratic governance. For example, parliamentary projects might include a component on drafting improved election legislation; gender equality projects might include a component on women in politics; assistance to the judiciary might include a component of training on electoral dispute resolution; and anti-corruption projects might look in part at election malfeasance or campaign financing issues. Such an approach could create powerful synergies within UNDP country governance portfolios. It could also provide a means of phasing out election-specific assistance over time, while ensuring that particular electoral issues of concern continue to be addressed within the broader governance portfolio.
- When evaluating the impact of electoral assistance projects, UNDP should consider not only the extent to which they contributed to improved capacity, national ownership, sustainability and cost effectiveness, but also whether the resulting election was in line with UN and other international standards for elections. Effective implementation of technical processes does not guarantee that the election process as a whole is free, fair or sustainable.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- UNDP can provide valuable assistance in legislative reform and should consider the impact that a range of laws can have on the election process, including not only election laws, but also legislation on political parties, public demonstrations, campaign finance, access to information, media and citizenship, as well as the civil and criminal codes. It should be borne in mind, however, that even the best laws are of little value unless they are implemented and enforced.
- Election laws are crucial since they set the rules for the electoral contest. Election laws work best when they reflect a consensus among major political parties and when they are drafted as part of a transparent process of public consultation.
- Election regulations and laws are a critical element of a solid electoral framework, which deserve careful attention in UNDP projects. Lack of adequate or detailed regulations can lead to inconsistencies in different regions of a country or even in different polling or counting stations, to the detriment of the overall process.
- In some African countries the legislative framework provides important electoral regulatory powers to institutions other than the EMB. These may include government ministries, security services, bodies which regulate broadcasting or other matters, or institutions that resolve electoral disputes. Since these bodies can have an important impact on the conduct of elections, they should be considered for UNDP electoral assistance.
- Electoral dispute resolution is a key area which frequently attracts less attention than other aspects of elections, often until after voting has taken place. Nevertheless, inadequate performance of courts or other dispute resolution mechanisms can lead to loss of public confidence, rejection of election results by some contestants, or even violence. It therefore deserves consideration as a priority area in UNDP electoral assistance projects.

ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES

- Strengthening the professional capacity of EMBs has been a central element of most UNDP electoral assistance projects in Africa and has been vital to the successful delivery of free and credible elections.
- Project design should address long-term capacity development and professionalization of EMBs in order to decrease reliance of EMBs on external experts.
- As EMBs become more professional, capacity-building in new areas takes on added importance. For example, while initial UNDP capacity-building assistance may focus on basic operations to deliver an election, subsequent assistance may be more appropriately focused on less urgent but still critical areas such as strategic planning, personnel management, campaign financing, public affairs or budgeting. Different methods of capacity-building may also become more relevant over time, with less emphasis needed on international assistance for basic cascade training for poll workers and more attention to professional development through such programmes as BRIDGE, individual mentoring or peer exchange.



ABOVE: Public sensitization in DRC, Oct 2006.
Photo: UNDP

- If EMBs are not independent and impartial in their operations, then capacity-building, training or technical assistance is unlikely to improve their performance or to lead to elections in line with international standards.
- Strengthened partnerships and sound working relationships between EMBs and other elections stakeholders, especially political parties, CSOs and the media, is critical to ensure transparency and accountability, as well as to build public confidence in the EMB and to ensure acceptance of elections results.
- UNDP can help guide EMBs to make sound choices on the use of information technology in elections. This issue will become increasingly important over time in Africa, as more EMBs seek to take advantage of ICT solutions for election processes. For ICT solutions to be helpful, they need to be feasible, cost-effective and sustainable by the EMB without outside assistance.
- UNDP can help EMBs in Africa to forge cooperation and networking, in order to learn from each other and to share resources. Much effort in this area has taken place without direct UNDP assistance. UNDP could explore ways to strengthen inter-EMB cooperation, including within the framework of South-South cooperation.



ABOVE: SWAPO supporters calling for the implementation of the UN Res 435 on UN-supervised elections for independence. Namibia, September 1978.

Photo: UNDP

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

- In Africa, as elsewhere in the world, CSOs can play a central role in electoral processes, including by mobilizing and informing citizens, advocating for positive change, contributing to conflict mitigation, and acting as watchdogs over the process. UNDP support for CSOs has enriched and improved citizen participation and enhanced the overall quality of election processes around the continent.
- CSOs, particularly in Africa, are constrained by a lack of professional capacity and insufficient resources. While UNDP assistance has had a positive impact, CSOs require more help to build their institutional capacity for project development and implementation, fundraising, advocacy and other issues. Direct UNDP assistance for CSOs – rather than assistance funnelled through EMBs – can help build their independence and strengthen their capacity for effective advocacy.
- Non-partisan domestic election observers in Africa, as elsewhere, have made an enormous contribution to election transparency, accountability and public confidence. Many observer organizations, however, need greater assistance to improve their methodologies and reporting skills and to expand their activities to observe the longer-term process of elections, including voter and candidate registration, the political campaign and post-election dispute resolution. Support for observation of specific aspects of elections can also yield benefits, for example, observation focused on women's participation, campaign finance or media monitoring.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER AND ISSUES AFFECTING MARGINALIZED GROUPS SUCH AS YOUTH AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Gender issues and issues affecting other marginalized groups should be mainstreamed by UNDP into all aspects of its assistance projects throughout the electoral cycle. Concerted efforts should be made to support empowerment of women and other marginalized groups as candidates, voters, and election officials. Including a component on women in electoral projects can be useful but is not an adequate substitute for gender mainstreaming.
- Producing gender-disaggregated election statistics, including on voter registration and voter turnout, can help identify any inequalities that should be addressed.

POLITICAL PARTIES

- Providing support to political parties can be an especially sensitive aspect of electoral assistance but, if carefully managed, can make an important contribution to democratic governance and improved elections. Promoting dialogue between political parties and EMBs can be particularly important in fostering confidence in electoral processes.
- Many political parties in Africa are relatively young and inexperienced and could benefit from training in such issues as voter mobilization, issue-based campaigning, transparency and accountability. Parties are often in need also of guidance on developing internal party democracy and development of grassroots structures.
- UNDP can offer assistance on promoting the role of women and other marginalized groups in party leadership structures and as party-backed candidates, as well as in developing party platforms that take into account their special concerns.

THE MEDIA

- An independent and professional media plays a key role in creating conditions for democratic elections by informing the people, analyzing issues, investigating problems, promoting transparency and accountability, and serving as a watchdog over the election process. In many African countries UNDP has found that training is needed to enable the media to perform such functions effectively and professionally.
- A particular aspect of election media coverage that often merits attention in Africa and that can often benefit from UNDP assistance is training to promote equitable media coverage of women, portraying them in a positive light and on an equal basis with men as candidates, leaders and voters.
- The social media is increasingly becoming a valuable source of election-related information and a tool for election monitoring; there may therefore be a need for UNDP to support efforts, especially by civil society, to use social media effectively to convey information and monitor electoral processes.

CONCLUSION



UNDP electoral support has resulted in capacity enhancement for national electoral institutions and processes across the African continent. In some countries, elections now take place with minimal external support. In many other countries, due to a variety of factors, UNDP and other external support continue to be needed.

UNDP assistance for elections is anchored in a broader development agenda and, in particular, forms part of a more comprehensive approach to promoting democratic governance, which takes into account processes beyond elections. UNDP's interconnected electoral assistance interventions in several overarching areas – programmatic leadership, coordination and partnerships, institutional development and support to non-state actors – has been perceived as a landmark in building sustainable and credible electoral systems in Africa.

Through carefully designed interventions and adherence to guiding principles, UNDP has shown its ability to mobilize resources, establish strategic partnerships, build the capacity of EMBs, and empower a range of stakeholders to enhance their involvement in electoral processes. Democracy, however, is always a work in progress and elections can always be improved. Key challenges for the future include ensuring that electoral assistance remains relevant and produces sustainable results; focusing on new issues to meet evolving needs; and ensuring that electoral assistance contributes not only to improved technical practices, but also results in elections that meet international standards and solidify democratic practices.

This publication has provided a brief overview of UNDP's electoral assistance in Africa, highlighting success stories, continuing challenges and lessons learned. It is hoped that bringing together this information in such a concise format may serve to increase understanding of UNDP's role and encourage governments to consider where they might benefit from, or contribute to, the organization's efforts. The lessons learned and experiences gained over three decades of working with elections in Africa should help to enhance the relevance and appropriateness of UNDP electoral assistance, and guide the organization's strategic interventions in the future.

LEFT: Voters queuing for the Southern Sudan referendum, January 2011.
Photo: USAID

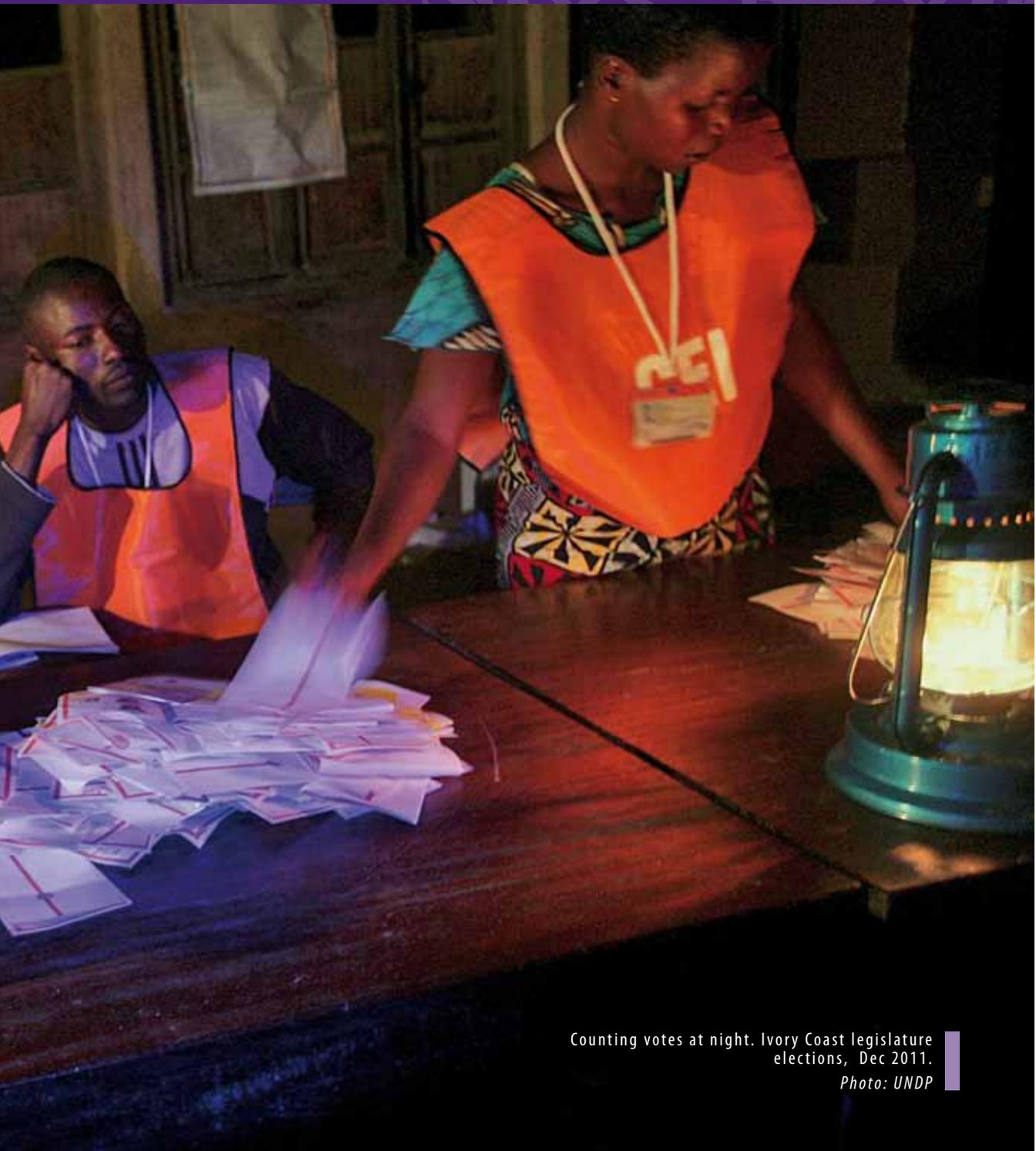
ANNEX

The boxes below highlight best practices in electoral assistance and contributions by UNDP to democratic transitions in Africa. Country examples were selected to illustrate a variety of UNDP interventions and their success in particular circumstances.

The various examples were also selected to illustrate good practices and experiences in providing programmatic support to national stakeholders in line with countries' own national priorities. Examples include assistance to EMBs, civil society, political parties and media. They also showcase instances in which electoral assistance has strengthened broader democratic governance and served to mitigate conflict.



CASE STUDIES: Best practices in UNDP electoral assistance

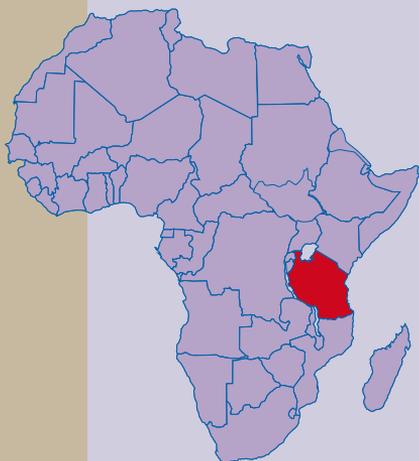


Counting votes at night. Ivory Coast legislature elections, Dec 2011.

Photo: UNDP

Best practices in democracy-building

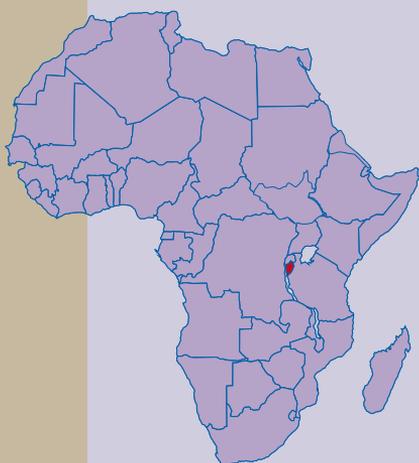
TANZANIA 2010: A CONSISTENT SUPPORT TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY



The peaceful elections in 2010 were part of a long-term national plan to provide effective preparations for free and fair elections, improve citizens' understanding of their rights and duties to engage in the political process, and strengthen impartial media coverage. UNDP's early collaboration and partnerships with a range of international partners, national institutions, CSOs and media helped build the foundation for the progressive attainment of democratic and participatory governance in Tanzania. The long and productive engagement that UNDP had with electoral support in Tanzania, played an important role in helping to deepen democracy in the country.

Source: UNDP Support to the Electoral Process in Tanzania – Country Office contribution 2012.

BURUNDI: SUPPORT FOR THE MOBILIZATION OF WOMEN FOR ELECTIONS



In 2010, Burundian women participated in elections not only as voters but, with UNDP support were involved in the electoral process as:

- Members of voter registration stations in the country and abroad
- Representatives of candidates or lists of candidates
- EMB members at national, provincial and communal levels
- Members of polling stations in the country and abroad
- Election observers
- Candidates
- Members of groups of sponsors
- Proxy bearers
- Members of the administration
- Members of the security and legal services

Source: The catalytic role of the Peace-Building Fund in creating an enabling environment for the elections in Burundi.

MALAWI 50/50 CAMPAIGN: PROMOTING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



After the return to democracy in May 1994, the Government of Malawi committed itself to improving the profile of women in politics and public life. This commitment is reflected in a number of efforts that included the development of a national gender policy in 2000 and ratification of several regional and international protocols, treaties and declarations that promote gender equality. These included, among others, CEDAW, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Beijing Declaration (1995) and the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997). These protocols commit African governments to ensure the equality of women and men.

These commitments were the genesis of the 50/50 campaign. The 50/50 programme was conceived by the government with guidance from the Development Assistance Group on Gender, in which UNDP participated, to promote a gender sensitive electoral process and encourage greater female participation in the May 2009 parliamentary and presidential elections. UNDP provided technical and financial support to the 50/50 campaign.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development coordinated the 50/50 campaign, based on a national programme of increased female representation in parliament and government.

UNDP provided technical and financial assistance for:

- Independent Election Commission publicity material including caps, t-shirts and posters
- Producing candidate profiles for the electronic and print media
- Training for women candidates and their agents
- Legal services, including advice on claims and election petitions
- Communications advice
- Candidates' start-up contributions of MWK90,000 (about US\$325)

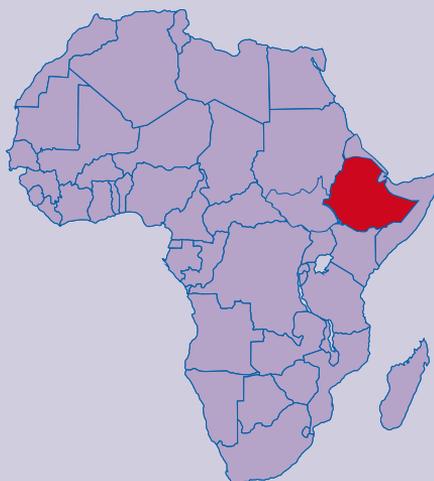
The 50/50 campaign succeeded in raising public awareness about female political participation, achieving modest gains. Being associated with a well-publicized election raised the public profile of female aspirants.

The 50/50 campaign mobilized some 400 women who registered interest in contesting the May 2009 elections, of whom 239 actually contested. The campaign encouraged women who could not secure their candidacy through the primary elections to stand as independents. Of the 239 women candidates, 87 were independents.

The results represented a substantial increase of the number of women contesting the elections when compared to 154 women candidates in 2004. Forty-two women were elected. This represents 22 per cent of parliamentary seats, up from 14 per cent of seats held by women following the 2004 elections. While this fell well short of the 50/50 goal, it represented welcome progress and provided a platform upon which to build.

Source: UNDP Support to the Electoral Process in Tanzania – Country Office contribution 2012.

ETHIOPIA: A HOLISTIC APPROACH



In 2007-2008, a new five year multi-donor programme known as the Democratic Institutions Programme (DIP) was set up in support of the Plan for Accelerated and sustained Development to end Poverty. A central goal was to achieve “a fully operational democratic, accountable and responsive constitutional federalism, ensuring citizens’ empowerment and participation.”

The programme supported democratic institutions that strengthen the framework for democratic governance. This included support to the National Human Rights Commission, Institution of the Ombudsman, Anti-corruption Commission, parliamentary and local councils, and a national audit capacities electoral support programme. UNDP support to the NEBE under the DIP included a capacity development programme based on the electoral cycle approach for more sustainable elections.

The NEBE sub-programme was aimed at ensuring that elections are held in accordance with the Constitution and overseen by an effective NEBE. The major areas of support by the sub-programme were:

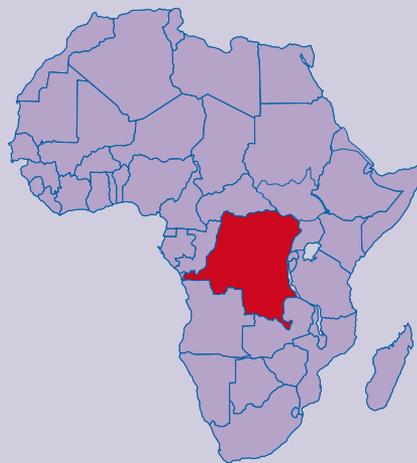
- Administrative and managerial capacity of the NEBE
- Capacity of the NEBE to develop a comprehensive framework for planning and administering free, fair and credible elections
- Openness and transparency of the electoral process
- Public awareness of the electoral process and of citizens’ rights to participate in the management of public affairs
- Electoral dispute resolution and election law enforcement
- Well informed media coverage of electoral matters
- An improved general electoral environment.

Source: DIP Mid-term Evaluation Report, 2010, UNDP.

Best practices in electoral assistance in post-conflict situations or in situations of post-election violence

REFORM AND TRANSFORMATION

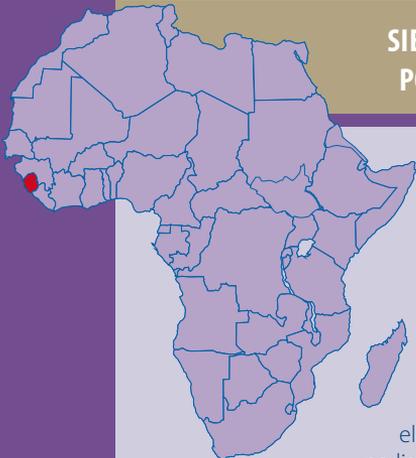
DRC ELECTORAL PROJECTS



Beginning in 2004, UNDP participated closely in the Security Council mandated United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC). Under this umbrella, UNDP embarked on large-scale programmes of support to the electoral process. It developed field activities in cooperation with CSOs, particularly in the Ituri district and several provinces of eastern DRC. UNDP was also instrumental in developing a plan of action for the post-electoral phase. In 2005, the integrated MONUC/UNDP Electoral Unit successfully managed to register 25 million voters and organize a national referendum with the participation of nearly 62 per cent of the electorate. When considering the size of the country, the difficulties of the terrain, the absence of roads in many areas and the conditions of insecurity prevailing in many locations, this was by all accounts an outstanding achievement.

Source: *Case Study, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries*, <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/DRC.pdf>

SIERRA LEONE 2002-2012: SYSTEMATIC SHIFT FROM THE POWER OF THE BULLET TO THE POWER OF THE BALLOT

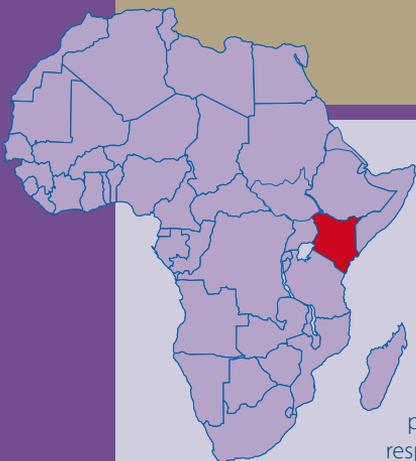


Since the end of the civil war in Sierra Leone in 2002, UNDP has played a major role in supporting the post-war electoral processes. UNDP support aimed at moving military conflict to peaceful political competition, legitimizing the power of elected governments, and solidifying democratization processes in Sierra Leone. The country has now experienced five successive post-war elections, including the 2002 presidential and parliamentary elections, the 2004 local government elections, the 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections, the 2008 local council elections and the 2012 presidential, parliamentary and local council elections.

The 2007 and 2008 elections were assisted through a basket fund mechanism fully managed by UNDP. The 2007 elections climaxed the democratic processes in post-war Sierra Leone and were seen to have been of extraordinary significance, resulting in a peaceful transfer of governance and political leadership from the ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party to the All Peoples Congress party. UNDP again managed a basket fund to support electoral assistance to the 2012 elections which were peaceful and deemed well-run and credible by observers.

Source: UNDP Support to the Electoral Process in Sierra Leone, Country Office contribution, 2011.

KENYA: CONFLICT MITIGATION AFTER POST-ELECTION VIOLENCE



Following the violence-plagued 2007 elections, UNDP supported the Interim Independent Electoral Commission (IIEC) to ensure it had the capacity to conduct a free and fair constitutional referendum in 2010. UNDP support focused on strengthening the institutional capacity of the IIEC, voter education, voter registration, legal reform, results management, domestic observation, and coordination of international assistance. Through its peacebuilding strategy, UNDP worked with civil society and state agencies to foster peaceful elections, focusing on election conflict early warning and response.

The 2010 referendum was seen as a success across the board. Despite tensions, the vote was peaceful and voter turnout was high. The introduction of the electronic results transmission, massive voter awareness campaigns, multi-stakeholder collaboration and sustained political will at the highest level were critical to its success. The most important outcome was the adoption of a new constitution that is rights-based and people-centred. The new constitution introduced far-reaching electoral reforms including a change of the electoral system, establishment of an independent EMB, establishment of minimum criteria for candidates, and regulation of campaign financing.

Source: UNDP Support to the Electoral Process in Sierra Leone, Country Office contribution, 2011.

NIGERIA: TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENT OF OBSERVERS TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE ELECTION-RELATED VIOLENCE IN 2011



Mitigating electoral violence was one of the main priorities of the Democratic Governance for Development Project (DGD) with a series of complementary activities implemented in parallel and supported by the UNDP project. Security forces were trained all over the country by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in coordination with the British Council. Monitors were deployed by NHRC to witness the conduct of security officials during the elections. Their presence contributed to an overall reduction of cases of intimidation and abuse of the electorate by security personnel involved in the electoral process.

In the words of a NHRC official in the city of Jos, security personnel were on their best behaviour because awareness had been created during the training workshops and they felt they were being monitored. Similarly, the deployment of election observers in elections hot spots by the DGD partner, the Transition Monitoring Group, not only enhanced the integrity of the electoral process and increased the confidence of voters but also served to deter inappropriate security force behaviour in areas traditionally prone to violence.

Action aimed at political parties implemented together with INEC also produced important results despite the serious cases of violence that erupted after the presidential elections in some parts of the country. Youth wings of political parties, who traditionally engaged in violent action in past elections, benefitted in all the Nigerian states from training on conflict management and non-violence. Participants all committed in a declaration they signed not to engage in violent acts during the election period.

Also, the Political Parties Code of Conduct signed in Abuja in early March that contained provisions on the non-recourse to violence and intimidation was disseminated to political party chairs at state level to sensitize them. Media owners and editors were sensitized at a series of ad hoc forums on the need to cover the elections in a manner that would not fuel violence among the population. Some 230 correspondents over the six geo-political zones were trained on conflict-sensitive reporting. Monitors of the media coverage of the elections confirmed the tone in the various media was globally positive.

Source: UNDP Electoral Assistance to Nigeria - Country Office contribution, 2012.

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