

APPENDICES 2 0 2 1

SUPPORTING ELECTIONS EFFECTIVELY: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE APPENDICES

Therese Pearce Laanela, Sead Alihodžic, Antonio Spinelli, Peter Wolf

Supporting Elections Effectively: Principles and Practice of Electoral Assistance

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Table of Contents

Appe	ndix 1 – Search strategy	4
1.	Research questions	4
2.	Key search phrases and words	4
3.	Search products	5
4.	Search timeframe	6
5.	Search spaces	6
6.	Documenting	7
Appe	ndix 2 – Literature review evidence	8
Appe	ndix 3 – Compendium of electoral assistance	!
princi	iples	159
Appe	ndix 4 – Survey results and analysis	165
Appe	ndix 5 – Interview protocol	201
Appe	ndix 6 – Interview report	207
Th	ne method and implementation	207
In	terview findings	208
Appe	ndix 7 – Background paper for expert discuss	sions
22	21	
El	ectoral Assistance Study – Expert Working Groups	221
	ne Long-term Effectiveness of Electoral Assistance – udy Scope and Problem	223
Se	ession 2: Political Dimension of Electoral Work	233
	ession 3: Polling 2030 – Investments needed now to pport elections of the future	242
	ession 4: Design, Reform and Renewal: How to support cally-owned electoral change processes	251

Appendix 8 – Expert Group Discussions – Findings 260

Expert Working Group Session 1 (15th February 2021)	2 60
Expert Working Group #1 Consensus Document –	
Supporting Elections for the Long-Haul	268
Expert Working Group Session 2 (19th February 2021)	277
Expert Working Group Session 3 (22nd February 2021)	302
Expert Working Group #3 Consensus Document – The Investments needed now to support elections of the	
future	310
Expert Working Group Session 4 (24th February 2021)	315
Expert Working Group #4 Consensus Document – How to support locally-owned electoral change processes	323

Appendix 1 – Search strategy

1. Research questions

- What makes electoral assistance interventions successful?
- What makes electoral assistance interventions sustainable?
- What are the challenges to effective and sustainable electoral assistance?

2. Key search phrases and words

Main:

- "Electoral assistance" AND "effective" AND "successful" AND "sustainable" AND "challenges"
- "Electoral assistance AND effective AND successful AND sustainable AND challenges"
- "Electoral assistance evaluation"
- "Electoral assistance" AND "evaluation"
- "Electoral assistance principals"
- "Electoral assistance" AND "principals"

Other:

- "Electoral assistance" AND effective
- "Electoral assistance" AND successful
- "Electoral assistance" AND sustainable
- "Electoral assistance" AND challenges

To capture different word endings and synonyms, following search options/variations will be tried:

Synonyms:

• Assistance: support, aid

• Effective: efficient

• Successful: helpful, good

Sustainable: durable

• Challenge: barrier

Principals: goals

Word endings:

• Elect*

Sustain*

3. Search products

- Policy documents for references to electoral assistance (EA) principles and goals
- EA evaluations covering:
 - Multiple countries over a longer period
 - One country over several electoral cycles
 - One country over one electoral cycle
- Academic literature on EA principles/effectiveness/successes/ sustainability/challenges

Additionally, authors will reach out to their networks for relevant documents.

4. Search timeframe

Policy documents: 1990–present

Evaluations: 2000–present

Academic literature: 1990-present

5. Search spaces

General:

- Open web
- Google Scholar
- Microsoft Academic Search
- Other scholarly search engines

Targeted websites:

- Swedish MFA and Sida
- UN system: UN/UNDP/UNEAD
- UK: DFID and FCO
- USAiD
- AusAid
- European Union Commission
- African Union Commission
- CoE
- OSCE
- OAS
- IFES
- EISA

- ANFREL
- AWEB
- IDEA
- Aceproject

6. Documenting

The researcher will keep a record of:

- search phrases and words used
- search engines used
- web spaces visited
- relevant findings, including:
- a short summary of the key content
- link or copy of a document

Following initial research, the researcher will consider/suggest further categorization of findings.

Appendix 2 – Literature review evidence

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
Principle 1: Context awareness						
"Sida's decisions on electoral assistance need to be based on indepth studies of the prerequisites for free and fair elections and the expected impact of elections on further democratisation."	EA Success (Q. 1)	The Political Institutions	Policy and practice guidelines	https://www.s ida.se/content assets/0bd279 80dda445dca bb5a0dcc195c acf/14201.pdf	Sida, 2002	21
"Understanding the context within which elections are held is key."	EA Success (Q. 1)	Electoral Assistance and Politics: Lessons for International Support	Policy and practice guidelines	https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67464/elec t-asst-pol-less- int-supp.pdf	DFID, 2010	11

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Request that international electoral assistance is delivered in a manner appropriate to the context, based on careful and comprehensive needs assessment and respecting national dynamics and ownership."	EA Success (Q. 1)	Praia Declaration on Elections and Stability in West Africa	Policy and practice guidelines	https://unowa .unmissions.or g/sites/default /files/PRAIA% 20DECL ANG 0.pdf	UNOWA, 2011	3
"take into account the political context within which electoral processes unfold and electoral assistance provided"	EA Success (Q. 1)	The Electoral Cycle Approach: Effectiveness and Sustainability of Electoral Assistance	Policy and practice guidelines	https://epd.eu /wp- content/uploa ds/ISPI-and- ECES - WP Sustainab ility and Effe ctiveness of Electoral Assi stance The El ectoral Cycle Approach Fi nal.pdf	Bargiacchi, 2011	8
"Take the local context seriously through careful, comprehensive	EA Success (Q. 1)	Accountability and Democratic	Policy and practice guidelines	https://www. oecd- ilibrary.org/do	OECD, 2014	80

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
assessments especially in fragile situations." "Although the need for problem definition is perhaps obvious, not	EA Challenges (Q. 3)	Governance: Orientations and Principles for Development: CHAPTER 7 (Principles for international electoral assistance) Managing assistance in	Policy and practice	cserver/97892 64183636-10- en.pdf?expire s=160327556 6&id=id&accn ame=guest&c hecksum=B38 355FC048410 1211CE62A50 C0B49F8 https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d	USAID, 2000	7
infrequently little attention is actually paid to diagnosing or identifying the nature of the problem and how financial or technical support can aid in its solution."		support of political and electoral processes	guidelines	ocs/PNACF63 1.pdf		
"The appropriateness of specific electoral systems to particular political settings cannot be underestimated. Choices for different constitutional and	EA Challenges (Q. 3)	International Electoral Assistance: A Review of Donor	Policy and practice guidelines	https://www.c lingendael.org /sites/default/ files/pdfs/200 30600 cru w	Reilly, 2003	7

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
electoral systems have a large and long-term impact on the process of democratization."		Activities and Lessons Learned		orking paper 17.pdf		
"Converging electoral and parliamentary support has challenges, though, such as the timing of programmes, implementation strategies, the context of each country, the risk of politicizing programmes, and respecting specific country requests."	EA Challenges (Q. 3)	The Longer- term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned	Policy and practice guidelines	https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral- assistance lessons.html	UNDP, 2015	60
"Reliance on a set-menu approach to electoral assistance also likely incurred efficiency losses. Even though more recent program	EA Challenges (Q. 3)	Making it count: Lessons from Australian	Assessments and evaluations of	https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance-	Arghiros, 2017	5

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
design documents included detailed analyses of context, translating the implications into appropriate program designs appeared to be a challenge."		Electoral Assistance	electoral assistance	assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
"Deep understanding of the political and institutional context in which assistance is provided is a foundational principle in DFAT's Effective Governance Strategy. Australia has much relevant expertise on electoral assistance, gender equality and social inclusion, as well as deep knowledge about the political and institutional situation in neighbouring countries.	EA Challenges (Q. 3)	Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance	Assessments and evaluations of electoral assistance	https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons-	Arghiros, 2017	6

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
This expertise and knowledge are housed in individuals, different parts of academia and public sector bodies (including the Australian Electoral Commission and DFAT). They are not well coordinated or systematically accessed in electoral support programming."				from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
"The question is not whether to assist with elections, but rather, what kind of election support is needed. It is essential, at the same time, to manage expectations about what such assistance can deliver."	EA Challenges (Q. 3)	USAID Election Assistance: Lessons from the Field	Policy and practice guidelines	afsa.org/sites/ default/files/fs j-2018-05- may.pdf	Ivantcheva, 2018	37
"Clearly, the benefits of thorough problem definition lie in better solutions as well as more efficient and effective technical assistance; however, it is just as clear that conditions do not always permit thoroughness."	EA Success (Q. 1)	Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes	Policy and practice guidelines	https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PNACF63 1.pdf	USAID, 2000	7

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The starting point is a good understanding of the political and institutional context, including the strengths and weaknesses of the current electoral system."	EA Success (Q. 1)	How to note: On Electoral Assistance	Policy and practice guidelines	https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	DFID, 2010	9
"Democracy assistance could be more effective and achieve more realistic objectives if it is approached from a country's historical and political context, rather than by simply applying a system of normative standards."	EA Success (Q. 1)	Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide	Policy and practice guidelines	https://www.i dea.int/sites/d efault/files/ab out us/10- years-of- supporting- democracy- worldwide.pdf	Inter- national IDEA, 2005	30
"The planning of future electoral assistance needs to emphasize the development of political frameworks and democratic culture. The priority placed on	EA Success (Q. 1)	Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide	Policy and practice guidelines	https://www.i dea.int/sites/d efault/files/ab out us/10- years-of-	Inter- national IDEA, 2005	102-103

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
technical electoral assistance should become part of a comprehensive strategy of capacity building to strengthen democratic processes and institutions. The relationship between the political, foreign policy and development agendas is often sensitive and contradictory and may not necessarily be consistent with the democratization process."				supporting- democracy- worldwide.pdf		
"Sustainability can be pursued in a number of ways, through a number of different activities, but it must always be placed in the right context and must proceed along with the other institutional developments."	EA Sustainability (Q. 2)	EC Methodologi- cal Guide on Electoral Assistance	Policy and practice guidelines	http://eeas.eu ropa.eu/archi ves/eueom/p df/ec- methodologic al-guide-on- electoral- assistance en. pdf	European Commission, 2006	43
"Ultimately, UNDP assistance aims to ensure thatthat there is awareness of elections being part	EA Success (Q. 1)	UNDP Electoral Assistance		http://content = ext.undp.org/	UNDP, 2007	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
of a broader democratic governance framework"		Implemen- tation Guide		aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance- Implementati on-Guide.pdf		
"We must ensure that projects are developed to meet the specific requirements of the country we are seeking to support, rather than adopt a "one size fits all" approach, which happens too frequently. As the UN General Assembly has stated on numerous occasions, there is no single recipe for democracy."		International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris — Craig Jenness' personal reflections		http://aceproj ect.org/today/ newsletter/int ernational- support-for- elections- effective/at d ownload/file	Jenness, C., 2010	3
"All electoral support should begin from a clear statement of goals and objectives that are specific to the country in question. While all		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go	DFID, 2010	8

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
electoral support may share a common high-level purpose strengthening democracy, the particular opportunities and risks are unique to each country context, and should be clearly identified in the design of the assistance."				vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf		
"Election assistance must include analysis of underlying roots of potential violent conflict and support efforts to build domestic conflict mitigation mechanisms, which can be extensions of domestic election monitoring, political party dialogue, EMB liaison efforts and other more traditional electoral assistance, as well as activities in early warning, community dialogues and other means of building sustainable local conflict management efforts."		First Roundtable on International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems		https://www. ndi.org/sites/ default/files/N DI Pat Merlo e DAC Electi on Support P rinciples 1- March- 2010.pdf	NDI, 2010	З

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Assistance should examine the range of techniques that could be applied and deliver the most effective ones for the national context."		First Roundtable on International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems		https://www. ndi.org/sites/ default/files/N DI Pat Merlo e DAC Electi on Support P rinciples 1- March- 2010.pdf	NDI, 2010	3
"Cost effectiveness and long-term impacts should be assessed in every context of electoral assistance, even when time constraints call for immediate action."		5 th Global Electoral Organization Conference: Credible Elections for Democracy		https://www.i dea.int/sites/d efault/files/pu blications/cre dible- elections-for- democracy.pd f	Inter- national IDEA, 2011	13
"Electoral assistance is provided with the understanding that there is no "one size fits all" model or solution. A comprehensive analysis		Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance		https://dppa.u n.org/en/elect ions	DPPA, 2012	13

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of the national social, economic and political context combined with a thorough analysis of needs should guide the type of advice that is provided. To the extent possible, options and the consequences of each should be presented for consideration."						
"Efforts to integrate conflict- prevention strategies in electoral- assistance regimes, as espoused in the Praia Declaration, represent a significant development for the electoral-assistance paradigm."		Elections and Stability in West Africa: The Way Forward		https://www.f iles.ethz.ch/is n/143915/ipi e pub electio ns in west af rica.pdf	IPI, 2010	9
"Better electoral assistance designs should feature support across the electoral cycle that is tailored to reflect the varying workload."		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www.d fat.gov.au/dev elopment/perf ormance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic-	Arghiros, D., Boneo, H., Henderson, S., Palmieri, S. and Pearce Laanela, T., 2017	5

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				evaluations/m aking-it-count- lessons-from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
"Practitioners should explore ways to increase the sustainability of investments. In particular, when making decisions about electoral aid, they should pay close attention to the informal power dynamics and relations that can undermine the sustainability of donor-led electoral reforms. This can be done by structuring traditional political economy analysis (and other risk assessment tools) more consistently around the notion of informal norms, institutions, and the overall distribution of power."		Promoting electoral integrity through aid: Analysis and advice for donors		https://reliefw eb.int/sites/re liefweb.int/file s/resources/p romoting- electoral- integrity- through-aid- analysis-and- advice-for- donors.pdf	Uberti, L. J., and Jackson, D., 2018	preface

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
Principle 2: Electoral cycle approach						
"In post-conflict environments, the initial external assistance is vital to restore democracy and stability, but unless considerable donor assistance continues to be available in the medium term, to continue to develop EMB capabilities, both the electoral process and democracy itself may experience reverses"		International IDEA Handbook on Electoral Management Design			Inter- national IDEA, 2006	260
"A high level of international assistance for second and third elections in emerging democracies may not result in greater efficiency or effectiveness"		International IDEA Handbook on Electoral Management Design			Inter- national IDEA, 2006	258
"the core mistake of past electoral assistance projects did not rest in the provision of ad hoc short term support, but in the belief that such support would suffice to ensure the sustainability of the following electoral processes, the		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective-	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	15

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independence and transparency of the EMB concerned and the consequent democratic development of the partner country"		Implemen- tation		electoral- assistance		
"Support for sustainable institutional strengthening is – by its very nature – a long-term endeavour that requires adequate levels of continuity and that needs to be implemented, nurtured and sustained over an extended period of time. Therefore, given its long-term nature, institutional strengthening is less visible and, for this reason, perhaps less politically attractive and appealing to donors and providers of technical assistance, particularly if the next elections are scheduled several years ahead"		UNDP, Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support			UNDP, 2009	9
"International community does not practice what it preaches"		The Electoral Cycle		https://epd.eu /wp-	Bargiacchi, F., Bakken,	17

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		Approach: Effectiveness and Sustainability of Electoral Assistance		content/uploa ds/ISPI-and- ECES - WP Sustainab ility and Effe ctiveness of Electoral Assi stance The El ectoral Cycle Approach Fi nal.pdf	M., Guerin, P., Godinho and Gomes, R., 2011	
"Time stress leaves no time for int expert to mentor"		The Electoral Cycle Approach: Effectiveness and Sustainability of Electoral Assistance		https://epd.eu /wp- content/uploa ds/ISPI-and- ECES - WP Sustainab ility and Effe ctiveness of Electoral Assi stance The El ectoral Cycle	Bargiacchi, F., Bakken, M., Guerin, P., Godinho and Gomes, R., 2011	14

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				Approach Fi nal.pdf		
"Policy development gaps - EC not systematized"		Electoral Assistance and Politics: Lessons for International Support		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67464/elec t-asst-pol-less- int-supp.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment, 2010	34
"The evaluation found that assistance that came too late in the electoral cycle most likely entailed significant efficiency losses"		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m	Analysis and advice for donors, 2017	5

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
"It is now widely understood by all those involved that electoral assistance has to take stock of all the steps of the electoral cycle: this approach, however, presents challenges of its own that are still to be fully appreciated. Chief among these are the problems caused by post-electoral fatigue among electoral officials, institutions and development agencies' decision makers alike; and political indifference in the post-electoral period towards any type of electoral, political and administrative reform that impacts		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	20

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
election administration. A recurrent						
problem is the underestimation at						
the political level of the financial						
and administrative consequences						
that accompany decisions labelled						
as purely technical (for example,						
the decision to go ahead with a						
crucial electoral administrative						
reform like the transition from an						
ad hoc voter register to an						
integrated permanent civil						
registration). Analysis of the various						
challenges facing attempts to						
improve the effectiveness of						
electoral assistance shows that						
professional development of						
electoral officials must be factored						
in as a permanent activity by						
assistance providers and partner						
institutions. This offers the best						
chance of ensuring institutional						
sustainability for the electoral						
institutions of the partner countries						
and a successful gradual						

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
disengagement strategy for the development agencies of the development agencies countries."						
"Let me insert a frank word about the electoral cycle approach. This is a welcome tool for planning and to encourage donor support and there is much to like about it. But the approach is increasingly being misunderstood, and frequently misused. The electoral cycle approach was developed out of a concern that electoral assistance — particularly in the peacekeeping realm — was not focused on building sustainable capacity. There was some truth to this. But the current reality is that it is now in the development context that we find the un-sustainable technology, the high numbers of foreign advisers, and the resistance of project managers to "end states". Capacity		Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris - Craig Jenness' personal reflections		http://aceproj ect.org/today/ newsletter/int ernational- support-for- elections- effective/at d ownload/file	Jenness, C., 2010	3

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
is seemingly never built. And the electoral cycle is commonly used as justification — "we are looking at the long term — not just at election events. Thus, the electoral cycle approach increasingly means expensive assistance for a very long time. I know personally most of you who developed and championed this approach — and I know this was not what you intended"						
"The effectiveness of assistance to strengthen election management systems has been mixed. A major shortcoming has been the mismatch between recognising (for example, in program designs) the benefits of an electoral cycle approach, 5 while in practice continuing with a succession of separate projects. Projects were often later than ideal, and focused		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons-	Analysis and advice for donors, 2017	3

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
narrowly on the electoral management body."				from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
"A good understanding of the various components, and stages of the electoral cycle is a prerequisite for better planning and it better places individuals to reflect on sudden calls for urgent electoral support and facilitating the clarification from the outset what is achievable in the short- term and what should be the object of different, longer-terms projects or programmes."		EC Methodologi- cal Guide on Electoral Assistance		http://eeas.eu ropa.eu/archi ves/eueom/p df/ec- methodologic al-guide-on- electoral- assistance en. pdf	European Commission, 2006	47-48
"The alternative approach sees the electoral process as an ongoing or cyclical activity rather than being event driven at discrete points in time. Apart from the good governance and sustainability		EC Methodologi- cal Guide on Electoral Assistance		http://eeas.eu ropa.eu/archi ves/eueom/p df/ec- methodologic	European Commission, 2006	45

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
issues by which is better to support the EMBs rather than single electoral events, there are other important considerations that support this approach, such as: increasing participation to the democratic process and sharing of democratic values; sound management practices; efficient use of national resources; desirable development of synergies with other state institutions. These are all elements that could bring the electoral costs significantly down."				al-guide-on- electoral- assistance en. pdf		
"Taking into consideration the different activities and phases of the Electoral Cycle allows for better identification of needs and advance planning, Moreover, it helps identify responses to urgent short-term requests for electoral assistance. To be effective, such responses should be developed as		UNDP Electoral Assistance Implemen- tation guide		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance-	UNDP, 2007	З

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
part of a longer-term approach addressing what can more appropriately be achieved in the short and long run through a single project or programme."				Implementati on-Guide.pdf		
"Electoral assistance that uses the Electoral Cycle's approach centres on longer-term support and provides a better opportunity to address in a much more sustainable manner issues of capacity development; institutional strengthening; participation of women, minorities, indigenous people and other disadvantaged groups; and the use of appropriate/cost-effective technology in electoral processes, among others"		UNDP Electoral Assistance Implemen- tation guide		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance- Implementati on-Guide.pdf	UNDP, 2007	2
"Electoral assistance can only be defined as "sustainable" and "effective" when its impact is		UNDP Electoral Assistance		http://content - ext.undp.org/ aplaws public	UNDP, 2007	37

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
nurtured and endures beyond a single electoral event."		Implemen- tation guide		ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance- Implementati on-Guide.pdf		
"The electoral cycle approach has gained almost unconditional support as identification and planning instrument both among electoral assistance providers and EMB officials from all over the world. Nevertheless, it presents a number of challenges and requires delicate advocacy and sensitisation work with the development agencies community. This work is directed at firmly shifting the emphasis from generic endorsement for longterm assistance policies to concrete commitments, especially for capacity development and		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D.,Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F.,Maguire, L., 2008	26

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
institutional strengthening programmes that make the outcomes more sustainable and are aligned with the overall development objectives of the partner country."						
"electoral assistance that uses a cyclical approach – rather than focusing on election day – provides a better opportunity to tackle over time a range of electoral and development challenges that will ultimately impact on the quality and perception of electoral processes, and to link these to the broader development and democratic governance agendas in a given country."		Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support			UNDP, 2009	6
"The UK has therefore adopted the Electoral Cycle Approach (ECA), now recognised as representing best practice internationally in electoral support. The ECA is both a		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
diagnostic and a planning tool which helps us map out the different phases and dimensions of the electoral process. It can be used to plan a strategic, multi-annual engagement with the electoral system, linked to other forms of democracy support. Where our engagement is more limited, it can help us identify strategic issues on which to focus."				uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	the Foreign and Common- wealth Office, 2010	
"UNDP was most effective at promoting sustainable and credible electoral processes, systems and institutions when its electoral assistance was integrated into a more holistic package of support — one that targeted the enabling environment alongside the technical aspects of the process and integrated a long-term vision for the end result of all assistance."		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2012	xv

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"a number of tools and approaches have been developed in the past years within the area of electoral assistance to enhance the effectiveness of the support given. The electoral cycle is a planning tool that provides useful input to the formulation phase. It assists the responsible parties to consider not only what is required for successful voting operations on election day, but also encourages assistance providers to consider a range of different activities that may need to be supported over a longer period, in order to build the capacity of the national authorities to ultimately manage their entire electoral process without the need for international electoral assistance."		Working together in electoral assistance: Formulating and implementing electoral assistance projects in the context of the EC-UNDP partnership		https://www. ec-undp- electoralassist ance.org/wp- content/uploa ds/2018/08/u ndp-contents- publications- EU-and- UNDP- working-in- electoral- assistance- English.pdf	European Commission and UNDP, 2013	41
"The electoral cycle approach is a useful tool for long-term objectives		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/	UNDP, 2015	70

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
and broadening the scope of engaging multiple stakeholders"		Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral- assistance lessons.html		
"The aim of the electoral cycle approach according to UN policy is to secure needed resources and expertise to support effective planning and institution-building between electoral events, and therefore to hasten sustainability and to decrease the time frames for long-term UN support."		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess	UNDP, 2015	9

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral- assistance lessons.html		
"When it comes to peace, the electoral cycle approach is the only viable conflict mitigation approach because it covers the period before, during and after an election."		USAID Election Assistance: Lessons from the Field		afsa.org/sites/ default/files/fs j-2018-05- may.pdf	Ivantcheva, A., 2018	37
"Since the early 2000s. long-term electoral cycle approach has been embraced by the international community and become the norm among election practitioners, who know that improvement of the process is best achieved between elections."		USAID Election Assistance: Lessons from the Field		afsa.org/sites/ default/files/fs j-2018-05- may.pdf	Ivantcheva, A., 2018	37

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Electoral assistance is more effective if delivered during the complete electoral cycle, as it enables election management bodies (EMBs) to identify and apply lessons learned from previous electoral processes in the country itself."		Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPS): Program Evaluation Report		https://data.u said.gov/api/vi ews/ccua- ggy5/files/8ec d4b39-c396- 4abb-ac66- 183dc0f4f87c	Robinson, L., Mitchell, L., Braizat, F., Abadneh, R., Kapoor, R., Lada, M. and Al Qutub, D., 2018	25
"It is necessary to observe all stages of the electoral process in order to have a well-founded and comprehensive assessment. For instance, voter registration, the unfolding of the election campaign or the resolution of disputes after the voting (i.e. FYROM 1999 and Mozambique 1999) may be crucial to assess the election process properly. Sometimes the count may take several weeks due to logistic difficulties. Long-term observers should be on the ground a couple		Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation		https://eur- lex.europa.eu/ legal- content/EN/T XT/HTML/?uri =CELEX:52000 DC0191&from =EN	European Commission, 2000	6

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
of months before the election, and remain long enough to comment on the final implementation of the election results. Technical assistance is needed as early as possible, and should continue between elections, promoting good governance and democratization. The longer-term programmes preceding and following an electoral process must be integrated into the EU's normal development agenda."						
" electoral assistance has to take stock of all the steps of the electoral cycle and that interelection periods are as crucial as the build-up to the elections themselves, thus requiring regular inter-institutional contact and support activities before, during and after election periods, for the sake of lessons learned and inter-		Operational Guidelines: Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects		http://www.e eas.europa.eu /archives/docs /eueom/docu ments/ec und p operational guidelines el ect assist en. pdf	European Commission and UNDP , 2006	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
institutional memory aiming at improved electoral processes in beneficiary countries"						
"To move towards sustainability - an important and often underestimated step - is to engage stakeholders in defining what needs to be done after and between electoral events. There should be full consultation and as much consensus as possible among all stakeholders (including governments, political parties, the media, civil society organisations dealing with democratic governance, academics and thinktanks) with regard to political frameworks, legal frameworks and electoral systems and related activities. This will encourage commitment and compliance by political and electoral stakeholders		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	14

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
at all levels both during an electoral event and after it."						
"the Ottawa Conference organised by International IDEA and CIDA in May 2006 represented a defining moment in the establishment of a new approach to make electoral assistance effective and meaningful for the overall democratic development of partner countries. It was formally acknowledged that even though concepts such as 'effectiveness', 'sustainability' and 'capacity building' had been recognised as the way forward, turning the concepts into reality in implementation had proven difficult. Support for institution building is by its very nature a longer-term exercise, and therefore less visible or perhaps less politically attractive in the event		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	14

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
that elections may be some years in the future. Furthermore, progress in institution building is difficult to measure, easily influenced by external factors and unforeseen events, and not always fully informed by or linked to wider governance programmes. The potential consequence of neglecting the strengthening of institutions between electoral events is that "open and democratic" elections can take place in semi authoritarian states in which the opposition is given space only during that brief period while the world is watching. Similarly, institution-building activities must be supported by corresponding improvements in pluralism and the rule of law, if they are to generate real changes."						

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The EU support should take into account the full electoral cycle and not focus on ad hoc electoral support only."		Council conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations - 2974 th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting Brussels, 17 November 2009		https://www.c onsilium.euro pa.eu/uedocs/ cms data/doc s/pressdata/e n/gena/11125 0.pdf	Council of the European Union , 2009	4
"The EU support should take into account the full electoral cycle and not focus on ad hoc electoral support only."		Council conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations - 2974 th EXTERNAL		https://www.c onsilium.euro pa.eu/uedocs/ cms data/doc s/pressdata/e n/gena/11125 O.pdf	Council of the European Union , 2009	4

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		RELATIONS Council meeting Brussels, 17 November 2009				
"Elections are more than events or technical procedures, even though it is critical that administration of electoral procedures be both politically impartial and effective. The 'election cycle' is more than a two-dimensional construct, because elections are interwoven with a country's political process and are part of an inseparable fabric relating to many institutions connected to governance, human rights and the rule of law"		First Roundtable on International Support for elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems Paris, 1 March 2010: Toward Draft Principles and an Action Plan		https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI Pat MerloeDAC Election Support Principles 1-March-2010.pdf	Merloe, P., 2010	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Focused support around election time is necessary but not sufficient to deepen accountability systems or strengthen democratic processes." "Effective election support means taking a long-term perspective, because many of the most important determinants of an election's outcome take place in the years before it occurs" "Development partners need to extend their period of commitment to at least ten years after the first elections in a post-conflict society"		Electoral Assistance and Politics: Lessons for International Support		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67464/elec t-asst-pol-less- int-supp.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment, 2010	22
"There is an increasing realization that building capacity to organize credible elections may require assistance over a sustained period and over several electoral cycles. The electoral cycle refers to the entire electoral process, from the		Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/254562 1/Note%20of %20Guidance %20Final%20S	Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and the UNDP, 2015	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
pre-election preparation period to polling to the post-election period."		Nations Development Programme: Revised Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance		eptember%20 2010.pdf		
"The elections should not be seen as a singular event, but as long-term processes, as the electoral cycle approach suggests. This means extending support to all relevant stakeholders as well, not just to the EMBs."		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral-	UNDP, 2015	125

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				assistance lessons.html		
"Effective electoral assistance should consider all stages of the electoral process, from planning and registration in the pre-electoral period, through campaigning and voting in the electoral period, to reviewing, reforming and improving in the post-election period."		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16	Analysis and advice for donors , 2017	38

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference				
Principle 3: Participation of women a	Principle 3: Participation of women and marginalized groups									
"Despite this progress towards democratic elections, by and large women are unequally participating both as voters and as candidates in electoral processes. And despite international efforts to strengthen the conduct of free and fair elections throughout the world, insufficient attention and resources have been devoted to addressing the gap between male and female participation. Indeed, not enough is known about the gap in participation and how to adequately address it."		Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support			UNDP, 2009	33				
"There was little gender diversity in the composition of the political party agents who received training. Selection of trainees was the prerogative of local party executives. Electoral Commission could only nudge, not compel, the		Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac	Coffey , 2013	22				

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
parties to select or send women for training as polling agents. The Electoral Commission attributes the general under-representation of women among polling agents to the chronic absence of women in local political party leadership and misconceptions about the role of a polling agent leading to malebiased selection criteria (e.g. preference for "toughness"). This issue was described as systemic and institutional beyond just election work."		DCP Ghana 524		hment data/fi le/298760/Eva luation- Ghana- Electoral- Support- Programme.p df		
"New issues will continue to arise, and electoral assistance has to mature accordingly with increased awareness of gender sensitivity, as all these issues have a great impact on women's participation as candidates and voters. This could mean promoting electoral system reform to engender better		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess	UNDP, 2015	27

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
representation and participation of all citizens, including women, youth and people with disabilities"				es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral- assistance lessons.html		
"Australian electoral assistance has sought to increase women's participation—and specifically to redress the paucity of women elected across the region—primarily through candidate training. This assistance has emphasised women's individual capacity to run, more so than the institutional or electoral environment in which they run. The focus has commonly been on numbers—increasing the number of women candidates, polling officials, voters and elected officials. Recent reviews of the utility and		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral-	Analysis and advice for donors , 2017	4

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
effectiveness of women's electoral participation programs have concluded that a more holistic approach is required. A more holistic approach would need to address wider attitudes and norms and legal and institutional barriers, and provide practical strategies to empower women for genuine participation throughout the electoral cycle."				<u>assistance-</u> <u>2006-16</u>		
"The last ten years have seen wider acceptance of the principle that representation of women involves representation by women. Pressure has grown for both electoral and political legislation that encourages the election of women through gender-friendly electoral systems and quotas, and for action within political parties to encourage the nomination of more women candidates."		Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide		https://www.i dea.int/sites/d efault/files/ab out us/10- years-of- supporting- democracy- worldwide.pdf	IDEA , 2005	108

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Electoral assistance that uses the Electoral Cycle's approach centres on longer-term support and provides a better opportunity to address in a much more sustainable manner issues of capacity development; institutional strengthening; participation of women, minorities, indigenous people and other disadvantaged groups; and the use of appropriate/cost-effective technology in electoral processes, among others."		UNDP Electoral Assistance Implemen- tation guide		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance- Implementati on-Guide.pdf	UNDP, 2007	2
"However, these gains can only be achieved when resources are directed to women and when women's groups have a voice in these processes that will shape their political landscape and the future of their democratic transition for years to come."		Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support			UNDP, 2009	33

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The major change attained through the project in this fourth Project Component is the fact that parties have adopted gender action programmes for women in politics and are actually in the process of implementing them. This latter change seems to be a sustainable result for the target groups that the project has contributed to, and whose benefits will also probably continue after the Swedish funding ends."		Review of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) project "Building Public Confidence in the Electoral Process in Georgia", 2009-2013		https://www.s ida.se/English/ publications/1 53958/review -of-the- national- democratic- institute-ndi- project- building- public- confidence-in- the-electoral- process-in- georgia-2009- 2013/	Eduards, K., Gugeshash- vili, M., Devine, V., Christoplos, I. and Rothman, J., 2013	11
"UNDP was effective in helping to create the conditions for the participation of women in the electoral process."		Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 7957	Cossée, O., Mountain, R., Fox, A., Kaplan C. ad	53

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		contribution Afghanistan			Merchant, K., 2014	
"An ESR is one of a number of initiatives and mechanisms that may be part of a broader effort to contribute to objectives that are also pursued by the UN, such as the promotion of women's political participation, and the prevention of electoral violence -including violence against women."		United Nations Support to Election Situation Rooms		https://dppa.u n.org/sites/de fault/files/ead pda un sup port to electi on situation rooms 20181 120 e.pdf	UNEAD, 2018	2
"IRI achievements were particularly notable in providing information, resources and transfer of skills to women, young people and PWD; all of this makes it more possible for these groups to engage in political processes. IRI (and NDI) were able to develop effective international election monitoring in Jordan, thus contributing to the transparency of elections."		Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPS): Program Evaluation Report		https://data.u said.gov/api/vi ews/ccua- ggy5/files/8ec d4b39-c396- 4abb-ac66- 183dc0f4f87c	Robinson, L., Mitchell, L., Braizat, F., Abadneh, R., Kapoor, R., Lada, M. and Al Qutub, D., 2018	16

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"A gender perspective must be integrated in planning, implementation and the follow up of projects, and projects that promote women's participation, whether as voters or candidates, should be prioritized"		The Political Institutions		https://www.s ida.se/content assets/0bd279 80dda445dca bb5a0dcc195c acf/14201.pdf	Sida , 2002	22
"Programmes encouraging the participation of women in electoral offices are crucial to ensure greater gender equality in both local and national elections."" Consistent and on-going support to the women in politics agenda is critical to sustain momentum and advances made." "Development partners need to address both formal and informal institutions need to be addressed in order to tackle the problem of gender inequality and discrimination within this arena"		Electoral Assistance and Politics: Lessons for International Support		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment_data/fi le/67464/elec t-asst-pol-less- int-supp.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment, 2010	30

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Another important factor is including more women in political processes."		Democracy and Human Rights		https://www.s ida.se/English/ how-we- work/our- fields-of- work/democr acy-human- rights-and- freedom-of- expression/de mocracy-and- human-rights/	Sida, 2014	
"Gender issues should be mainstreamed by UNDP into all aspects of its assistance projects throughout the electoral cycle. As part of election support projects, concerted efforts should be made to support the empowerment of women and marginalized groups"		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/11the-	UNDP, 2015	44

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral- assistance lessons.html		
"Given the need to advance opportunities for women to be elected in the 2022 national election; strategies to effectively support women in the PNGEC and as AEMs; and the implementation of measures to ensure safety for women during elections; gender and inclusivity should be prioritised in the new Electoral Support Design Document."		Evaluation of Australia's Electoral Assistance to Papua New Guinea 2015 - 2017		https://www. dfat.gov.au/sit es/default/file s/evaluation- of-australias- electoral- assistance-to- png-2015- 17.pdf	Markiewicz, A., Patrick, I. and Wood, T., 2018	18
"Specifically, there needs to be a stronger understanding of the impact on women of electoral technical assistance in various areas, for example, voter registration in conflict-affected		Lessons Learned: Integrated Electoral Assistance in		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/regions/afr ica/DZ/lessons -learned-	UNDP, the UNDPA and the UNDPO, 2013	29

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
communities, polling booth location, and targeted voter education"		UN Mission Settings		integrated- electoral- assistance- in/view		
"UN electoral assistance will take into account the barriers and constraints that women face to participation in elections, including financial constraints, security constraints, discrimination based on gender stereotypes and constraints caused by the burden of childcare and employment in informal sectors, and should fully mainstream a gender perspective into all aspects of electoral assistance, including by: considering the specific needs of women and girls		Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance		https://dppa.u n.org/en/elect ions	Department for Political and Peace- building Affairs , 2012	10

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
in the development and design of policy in all areas; • reviewing the differential impacts of electoral systems on the political participation of women and their representation in elected bodies; • giving rigorous assessment to the potential benefit of temporary special measures given the particular country context; • incorporating the perspectives, contributions and experience of women's organizations in policy						

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and programme development. The gender consideration is particularly important in post-conflict situations."						
"Mixed methods of civic and voter education were effective for reaching different target groups, but the programs did not adequately reach the grassroots."		Performance Evaluation of USAID Electoral Assistance to Kenya from January 2008– August 2013		https://www. usaid.gov/doc uments/1860/ performance- evaluation- usaid- electoral- assistance- kenya- january- 2008%E2%80 %93august- 2013	Vittum, K., Getto, M. and Maosa T. N. , 2014	30
"Despite strong (and internationally renowned) DFAT policy guidance on disability inclusion, disability mainstreaming in electoral		Making it count: Lessons from Australian		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance-	Analysis and advice for donors, 2017	45

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
assistance has been a significant challenge. Inclusion of people with disabilities has been promoted through high-level policy dialogues, and targeted support to civil society for specific purposes, but has fallen well short of mainstreaming. Disability-inclusion efforts have prioritised physical access to polling places by people with disabilities, rather than their political empowerment. The focus has been on ensuring they are able to register, and vote and observe elections, rather than on breaking down cultural barriers to their participation and indeed on their election. The degree of attention to disability inclusion in electoral assistance has been driven more by individuals' motivation and relationships within DFAT, rather		Electoral Assistance		assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
than by policy or technical imperatives."						
"Electoral assistance that uses the Electoral Cycle's approach centres on longer-term support and provides a better opportunity to address in a much more sustainable manner issues of capacity development; institutional strengthening; participation of women, minorities, indigenous people and other disadvantaged groups; and the use of appropriate/cost-effective technology in electoral processes, among others."		UNDP Electoral Assistance Implemen- tation guide		http://content - ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance- Implementati on-Guide.pdf	UNDP, 2007	2
"The pilot project for voters with disabilities was also acclaimed as a success by the majority of the people interviewed. Such an activity had never been attempted before. It reinforced the positive image of the Electoral Commission and		Honduras Post Electoral Assessment: Final Report		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PDACQ72 3.pdf	Creative Associates Inter- national and the Centre for Inter- national	23

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
motivated the organizations working on behalf of persons with disabilities which could result in long-term sustainability and probable expansion of the activity."					Develop- ment at Rockefeller College University at Albany, 2010	
"IRI achievements were particularly notable in providing information, resources and transfer of skills to women, young people and PWD; all of this makes it more possible for these groups to engage in political processes. IRI (and NDI) were able to develop effective international election monitoring in Jordan, thus contributing to the transparency of elections."		Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPS): Program Evaluation Report		https://data.u said.gov/api/vi ews/ccua- ggy5/files/8ec d4b39-c396- 4abb-ac66- 183dc0f4f87c	Robinson, L., Mitchell, L., Braizat, F., Abadneh, R., Kapoor, R., Lada, M. and Al Qutub, D., 2018	16
"Following on the IEC's interest in enhancing the accessibility of polling stations, in mid-2015 IFES supported the IEC in conducting a technical assessment of polling and		Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening		https://data.u said.gov/api/vi ews/ccua- ggy5/files/8ec d4b39-c396-	Robinson, L., Mitchell, L., Braizat, F., Abadneh, R., Kapoor,	46

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
counting center accessibility and general barriers to participation for persons with disabilities."		(CEPS): Program Evaluation Report		4abb-ac66- 183dc0f4f87c	R., Lada, M. and Al Qutub, D., 2018	
"An effective voter education programme, one that is focused on the technical aspects of the election and aimed at encouraging people to make free choices, can prevent violence and intimidationTargeted civic and voter education programmes, aimed specifically at raising the participation of these groups can thus be a particularly effective strategy for advancing the long-term interests of the most disadvantaged sectors of society"		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2004	13
"Electoral assistance should promote the full participation of all citizens in the electoral process and seek to overcome barriers to participation of women, youth and other groups that have been		First Roundtable on International Support for elections:		https://www. ndi.org/sites/ default/files/N DI Pat Merlo e DAC Electi	Merloe, P., 2010	2

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
traditionally marginalized from participation in public affairs."		Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems Paris, 1 March 2010: Toward Draft Principles and an Action Plan		on Support P rinciples 1- March- 2010.pdf		
"There are a wide range of possible entry points for promoting inclusiveness. • Electoral laws can explicitly guarantee equal rights for women and other marginalised groups • A focus on the rights of women and other marginalised groups should be mainstreamed into assistance for EMBs. EMBs should be encouraged to ensure fair		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and the Foreign and Common- wealth Office, 2010	32-33

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
representation of women and disadvantaged groups in their own management and staffing. Civic and voter education messages can be tailored to encourage women and minorities to register and vote. Voter registration procedures can facilitate access by disadvantaged groups, including the elderly and disabled. Polling stations should also be organised to facilitate access for the sick, elderly and disabled. Political parties should be encouraged to allow women and disadvantaged groups fair access to their						

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
nomination procedures, and to include them in their organisational structures.						
Civil society organisations, trade unions, religious organisations and the media may offer stepping stones for women and minorities to enter politics."						
"UNDP plays a lead role in the provision of policy advice and programmes in democratic governance. The emphasis of its role and interventions in the electoral area is on long-term capacity-building of electoral institutions and processes, as well as promoting inclusive participation of traditionally marginalized groups, such as women, youth or people living with disabilities, and providing assistance to stakeholders such as		Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme: Revised Note of Guidance		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/254562 1/Note%20of %20Guidance %20Final%20S eptember%20 2010.pdf	Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and the UNDP, 2015	2

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
political parties, civil society and media."		on Electoral Assistance				
"While providing electoral assistance and recognizing that there are many stakeholders in any electoral process, both national and international, and the UN must try to be responsive to the needs, requests and demands of each, the ultimate goal of UN electoral assistance should be to facilitate the expression of the will of the people. A primary focus of UN electoral assistance is therefore to facilitate and promote universal and equal suffrage. This involves advice on how this can be achieved in a general sense and also through targeted interventions to address specific needs and groups. In furtherance of its aim to facilitate and promote universal and equal suffrage UN electoral assistance		Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance		https://dppa.u n.org/en/elect ions	Department for Political and Peace- building Affairs, 2012	15

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seeks to promote the involvement of under-represented or marginalized groups in electoral processes. These can include women, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities and other populations vulnerable due to poverty or illiteracy. UN electoral assistance should provide support to the development of policies and the implementation of appropriate measures to promote the participation of under-represented or marginalized groups in electoral processes. This will include measures specific to electoral events, temporary special measures, and longer term programmes."						

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
Principle 4: Local ownership and local	empowerment					
"The international community has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness, even a decided tendency, to spend huge amounts of money on post-conflict elections and to develop relatively sophisticated technical systems for elections in poor, physically devastated societies. None of these societies is likely to come up with the resources to sustain such systems in future elections"		Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve		https://carneg ieendowment. org/1999/12/ 31/aiding- democracy- abroad- learning- curve-pub-99	Carothers, T., 1999	136
"With so much politically invested in election events, the question for UN leadership and CEAs in each country was how to minimize the risk of dependency"		Lessons Learned: Integrated Electoral Assistance in UN Mission Settings		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/regions/afr ica/DZ/lessons -learned- integrated- electoral- assistance- in/view	UNDP, the UNDPA and the UNDPO, 2013	33

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Little capacity-building of the electoral institution has followed the 1994 election in terms of the organization of a permanent electoral body, the updating of voter lists, or civic education"		Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance		http://www.u ndp.org/conte nt/dam/aplaw s/publication/ en/publication s/democratic- governance/d g- publications- for- website/elect oral- management- bodies-as- institutions- of- governance/El ections-Pub- EMBbook.pdf	López- Pintor, R., 2000	95
"Two immediate challenges have been the transfer of authority from international EMBs to fully local		Electoral Management Design: The		http://constit utionnet.org/s ites/default/fil	Wall, A., Ellis, A., Ayoub, A.,	258

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
(national) EMBs and determining how best to ensure institutional sustainability of newly-founded EMBs"		International IDEA Handbook		es/EMD inlay final.pdf	Dundas C. W., Rukambe, J., Staino, S., 2006	
"The Hard Lessons of the 1990sa fundamental dichotomy persisted in the approach of many development agencies (and in the consequent formulation of assistance programmes) between the desirability of investing in capacity development and the political imperatives to achieve the best results within the shortest possible timeframe."		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	12
"Long-term institution building programs in the electoral area were at first simply not considered, as the focus was usually on the election as an event. International support was typically not available for sustained activities in this sector		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective-	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	5

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
and longer term assistance was deemed difficult to measure and more easily influenced by external factors or unforeseen events."		to Actual Implemen- tation		electoral- assistance		
"Both USAID and Sida were involved in training efforts - through IFES and UNDP in the case of polling station and TREP workers – with adequate impact. But the training provided will not be sustainable, as it was limited in duration and in depth"		Honduras Post Electoral Assessment: Final Report		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PDACQ72 3.pdf	Creative Associates Inter- national and the Centre for Inter- national Develop- ment at Rockefeller College University at Albany, 2010	26
"It troubles me greatly that some of the poorest countries in the world have adopted some of the most expensive electoral systems.		International Support for Elections: Effective		http://aceproj ect.org/today/ newsletter/int ernational-	Jenness, C., 2010	2

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One country, for example, in the bottom 15 places of the UNDP human development index, recently adopted a 31-million-dollar biometric voter registration system which scans all five fingers. While it is the sovereign right of any country to choose the systems for voter registration and other aspects of the election process that it wishes to adopt, we must consider our responsibilities carefully in advising, and procuring equipment for such tasks."		Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris - Craig Jenness' personal reflections		support-for- elections- effective/at d ownload/file		
"Let me make clear that I am not against technology. But let us acknowledge something that we all know to be true – the election assistance world is, for many, a business. I also have no problem with business. But we all know of situations – usually in developing countries - where vendor-driven		International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris - Craig		http://aceproj ect.org/today/ newsletter/int ernational- support-for- elections- effective/at d ownload/file	Jenness, C., 2010	2

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
processes result in electoral materials and financial costs that are neither suitable nor sustainable. These problems will likely get worse with the global economic downturn - donor money will be less available, and countries will be stuck with systems that they, and donors, can no longer afford."		Jenness' personal reflections				
"Our case studies from Burundi, Malawi and Afghanistan showed that UNDP prioritised the delivery of a particular election over capacity building, thus undermining the potential for sustainable impact."		Evaluation of DFID's Electoral Support through UNDP		https://agulha s.co.uk/our- work/evaluati on-dfids- electoral- support-undp- icai/	In- dependent Commission for Aid Impact, 2012	12
"GESP's work with the Electoral Commission poses particular challenges for sustaining the benefits so far achieved. The turnover of staff for elections is significant – as most are called upon short-term and only when		Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac	Coffey , 2013	40

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
elections come, it is difficult to sustain capacities and justifies GESP's strategy of focusing on institutional systems building and working with the Electoral Commission staff to a degree"		DCP Ghana 524		hment data/fi le/298760/Eva luation- Ghana- Electoral- Support- Programme.p df		
"There were problems with sustainability of technology-intensive registration solutions (such as biometric voter registration), related to long-term financing, technical capacity and ownership. DFAT has not routinely evaluated the effects of its investments in voter registration."		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral-	Analysis and advice for donors , 2017	3

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				<u>assistance-</u> <u>2006-16</u>		
"The least evidence of success was found in addressing institutional (legislative, financial and political) constraints on electoral management bodies' capacity to operate effectively."		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16	Analysis and advice for donors , 2017	3
"ZESN will remain reliant on international funding for the foreseeable future. This is a considerable concern given the		Evaluation of the Zimbabwe Election		https://www.s ida.se/content assets/0c646e	NIRAS Sweden AB , 2019	27

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
declining and uneven levels of donor support to Zimbabwe. Domestic funding for electoral activities is virtually non-existent, which stems from both the financial crisis facing Zimbabwe and the high profile of the international community during election periods"		Support Network Project 2016–2018		44a52c4d57a 277ceb8c3ec2 6f9/de2019 2 8 62258en.pd f		
"The means by which these goals are to be achieved have changed, the emphasis moving away from the imposition of standards and systems, which were predominantly conditioned by the experiences of the assistance providers rather than the actual situation facing the beneficiaries, towards the development of institutional capacity and national ownership through a constructive long term partnership targeting the consolidation of democracy."		EC Methodologic al Guide on Electoral Assistance		http://eeas.eu ropa.eu/archi ves/eueom/p df/ec- methodologic al-guide-on- electoral- assistance en. pdf	European Commission, 2006	21

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The other significant instrument already in use for quickly and costeffectively building EMB internal capacity is the BRIDGE Project. BRIDGE stands for "Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections", and it is the most comprehensive professional development course available in the field of election administration, already utilised in 25 countries for more than 3,000 election officials. It offers an excellent platform for the timely delivery of a capacity building program"		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	23
"Effective electoral assistance primarily means long term institutional strengthening and capacity development."		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	28

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		Implemen- tation				
"Knowledge and capacity development services such as ACE and BRIDGE are cost-effective and readily available tools for professional development and the dissemination of regional based knowledge. Each new electoral assistance project and electoral mission should make more use of these services, from the moment of programme design and deployment."		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	28
"The outcome evaluation of the 2001-2005 Governance Programme found a high degree of ownership in some of the major projects like the Election Support 2004 and the PGRI, while there were some difficulties with a number of smaller projects that lacked an exit strategy and had not managed to		Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP contribution Indonesia		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 3995	Edgren, G., Bhatt M. and Juliani, L., 2010	42

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
institutionalize their achievements. In the 2006-2010 Governance Programme, the same pattern seems to have been replicated. The Elections Multi-Donor Project was an example of a successful and gradual exit, through which the technical support for the National Elections Commission, the Election Supervisory Committee and the training of poll workers were fully taken over by GoI and managed with minimal technical assistance from UNDP in 2009."						
"The recruitment of more nationals than internationals has strengthened the sense of local ownership, even though the midterm review saw some disadvantages from the point of effectiveness."		Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP contribution Indonesia		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 3995	Edgren, G., Bhatt M. and Juliani, L., 2010	39

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"UNDP assistance that incorporates development and capacity-building considerations increases national ownership and contributes to more sustainable results."		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2012	58
"UNDP is generally effective at providing technical assistance that strengthens the work of electoral management bodies and results in the holding of credible electoral events."		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2012	xiii
"In the context of electoral assistance, the largest UNDP focus area is strengthening electoral administration, accounting for		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen	Dudnik Stern, J.	xi

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
approximately 25 percent of the total effort in the estimate of 39 country offices. Civic and voter education follows with 19 percent, and building sustainable electoral processes ranks third at 12 percent."		to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		ts/download/ 5969	(editor), 2012	
"UNDP assistance that incorporates development and capacity-building considerations increases national ownership and contributes to more sustainable results."		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2012	xiv
"And in addition, the electoral cycle can contribute to a participatory and inclusive process whereby all relevant stakeholders take part in formulating the strategic plan for longer-term objectives, continued		Working Together in Electoral Assistance: Formulating and		https://www. ec-undp- electoralassist ance.org/wp- content/uploa ds/2018/08/u	European Commission and UNDP, 2013	41

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
capacity building and thorough post-election reviews."		Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC-UNDP Partnership		ndp-contents- publications- EU-and- UNDP- working-in- electoral- assistance- English.pdf		
"The GESP activities were delivered with a focus on sustainably - building the capacity of individuals and institutions without creating an over reliance on donor funding. While this approach was appreciated by many of the programme beneficiaries, the nature of the election process means that it is beyond the capability of the programme to ensure that these benefits are carried forward to the next election process."		Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme DCP Ghana 524		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/298760/Eva luation- Ghana- Electoral- Support-	Coffey, 2013	viii

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				<u>Programme.p</u> <u>df</u>		
 "To what extent are the benefits of the programme sustainable beyond the life of the programme? While the impact of successful election on embedding democracy in Ghana should not be minimised, we find that there will be other more direct outcomes from the GESP that are sustainable – in part because of the episodic nature of elections. These sustainable benefits include: The training delivered to Electoral Commission permanent field staff in public outreach programmes has increased the capability of these officials in a 		Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme DCP Ghana 524		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/298760/Eva luation- Ghana- Electoral- Support- Programme.p df	Coffey, 2013	31-32

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manner that will improve their on-the-job performance in a sustainable manner in what is a recurring role in subsequent elections. • The training of polling agents will likely have sustainable benefits. The survey of polling agents indicated that over 30% of polling agents had previously performed the role. If this "retention" rate is achieved during the next electoral cycle, the benefits of the training that these agents have received will outlive the programme. • The development of both the "Manual on Election Adjudication in Ghana" and						

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"A Guide to Candidates and their Agents" documents will continue to provide benefits postelection, as each contains information that can inform the election process going forward. The training of judicial staff in election adjudication will contribute to a more professional and expeditious judicial service in a manner that should persist, especially considering the likely lower turnover that one would expect in a more specialist organisation.						
The use of the Electronic Case Distribution System to the election adjudication provide an opportunity to train and acquaint additional staff at the Judicial Service on the						

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use of this system, which should facilitate the uptake and enhanced capacity of court staff to use this system going forward."						
"Facing up to the election challenge in developing countries, supporting EMBs has emerged as the most successful aspect of UN election assistance"		Resisting democracy assistance: Who seeks and receives technical election assistance?		https://discov ery.ucl.ac.uk/i d/eprint/1008 3372/1/Borzys kowski 2016 Resisting%20D emocracy%20 Assistance.pdf	von Borzys- kowski, I., 2016	10
"Capacity building in electoral management bodies has sometimes been effective, but overall its success has been mixed within and across countries. Gains have been greatest at the level of individuals, through people focused investments including professional exchange programs, graduate recruitment, study tours, regional		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it-	Analysis and advice for donors , 2017	3

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
networking, peer-to-peer dialogue, and structured, contextualised training. There was some evidence of improvements in the organisational capacity of electoral management bodies, such as improved planning and operational procedures, better financial management, enhanced IT systems and increased HR capacity."				count-lessons- from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
"The evaluation found that working with a smaller number of beneficiaries, previously identified through trusted channels, was an effective approach. The PWD empowerment program was an effective way to expose PWD to politics, in many cases for the first time."		Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPS): Program Evaluation Report		https://data.u said.gov/api/vi ews/ccua- ggv5/files/8ec d4b39-c396- 4abb-ac66- 183dc0f4f87c	Robinson, L., Mitchell, L., Braizat, F., Abadneh, R., Kapoor, R., Lada, M. and Al Qutub, D., 2018	13
"USAID and its partners have also provided long-term support to local election groups, many of whom		USAID Election Assistance:		afsa.org/sites/ default/files/fs	Ivantcheva, A.,, 2018	36

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
have become powerful players in		Lessons from		<u>j-2018-05-</u>		
their own countries and regions"		the Field		may.pdf		
"Until recently, the international community paid little attention to issues of sustainability of electoral infrastructure. That situation has been somewhat rectified by, among other things, international concern about cost effectiveness. Issues of sustainability have three main components—technical, financial, and political—that tend not to develop at a similar pace. A country achieves technical sustainability when it no longer needs external advice for the conduct of elections. This is the easiest and cheapest of the three to achieve. Financial sustainability occurs when funds for elections are raised mostly from internal sources. This goal is a little		Postconflict elections and democratizati on: An experience review		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf d ocs/PNADB89 7.pdf	López- Pintor, R. , 2005	IX
harder to achieve. Finally, a country achieves <i>political sustainability</i>						

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when both domestic and international actors accept the results of the election as legitimate and binding. Because it depends heavily on the evolution of trust among contenders, political sustainability has proved to be the most difficult to realize."						
"Electoral assistance should envisage the transfer of know-how, through long-term capacity building that enables electoral administrators to become more professional and to better understand, plan for and implement their core tasks."		Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from Event-based Support to Process Support Conference report and conclusions		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/topics/elec toral- assistance/ee a-final.pdf	Ellis., A, Guerin, P., and Ayoub., A., 2006	26
"In order to increase national ownership and strengthen national institutions it is necessary to engage		EC Methodologic al Guide on		http://eeas.eu ropa.eu/archi ves/eueom/p	European Commission, 2006	25

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
partner countries more in political dialogue which encompasses governance policies and public administration reforms. The path to the achievement of democracy will then be longer, but the path towards the achievement of the overall objectives of democratic development will also be steadier."		Electoral Assistance		df/ec- methodologic al-guide-on- electoral- assistance en. pdf		
"EMB activities directed at building internal capacity and strengthening the institution (as well as electoral assistance projects which use advisers and consultants with experience in other countries), need to be structured to ensure skills transfer and capacity building in order that the project's achievements do not depart with the advisers. In this context, each EMB's capacity development plan must take advantage of the instruments and mechanisms that		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L. 2008	22

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are already available for sharing and disseminating knowledge and capacity building services at very affordable costs, and development agencies should pay attention to the constant development of such instruments. Effective electoral assistance passes through regular inter-institutional contact and knowledge networks comprising electoral experts, electoral officials and electoral assistance providers."						
"Ultimately, UNDP assistance aims to ensure that elections are fully owned nationally"		UNDP Electoral Assistance Implemen- tation Guide		http://content cext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance- Implementati on-Guide.pdf	UNDP, 2007	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The EU remains committed to the principles of ownership of development strategies and programmes by partner countries. Locally driven processes can be supported by an appropriate mix of financial and political instruments tailored to the specific situation of each country."		Council conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations - 2974 th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting Brussels, 17 November 2009		https://www.c onsilium.euro pa.eu/uedocs/ cms data/doc s/pressdata/e n/gena/11125 0.pdf	Council of the European Union, 2009	1
"Building true partnerships based on dialogue and consultation enhances ownership of democracy building processes and elements of democratic governance should, wherever possible, be treated as an item in its own right in EU dialogues with partner countries."		Council conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations - 2974 th EXTERNAL		https://www.c onsilium.euro pa.eu/uedocs/ cms data/doc s/pressdata/e n/gena/11125 O.pdf	Council of the European Union, 2009	5

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		RELATIONS Council meeting Brussels, 17 November 2009				
"We must place sustainability and local capacity building at the forefro7.nt of our work when preparing assistance projects."		International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris - Craig Jenness' personal reflections		http://aceproj ect.org/today/ newsletter/int ernational- support-for- elections- effective/at d ownload/file	Jenness, C., 2010	3
"international electoral assistance should:encourage sustainability to		International Support for Elections:		http://aceproj ect.org/today/ newsletter/int	Jenness, C., 2010	4

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ensure that local capacity is built as quickly as reasonably as possible"		Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris - Craig Jenness' personal reflections		ernational- support-for- elections- effective/at d ownload/file		
"The aid community must therefore define and insist on a broader principle of local ownership [beyond government ownership] in the elections domain, one that stresses a wider concept of a country ownership extending to an array of actors and sectors involved in electoral processes rather than just the political power holders"		First Roundtable on International Support for elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems Paris, 1 March 2010: Toward Draft		https://www. ndi.org/sites/ default/files/N DI Pat Merlo e DAC Electi on Support P rinciples 1- March- 2010.pdf	Merloe, P., 2010	3

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		Principles and an Action Plan				
"Engage local consultants and trainers in workshops or other activities in order to strengthen sustainability efforts. It is necessary to build capacity and sustainability in the country by ways of promoting greater ownership of acquired information and skills."		Honduras Post Electoral Assessment: Final Report		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PDACQ72 3.pdf	Creative Associates Inter- national and the Centre for Inter- national Develop- ment at Rockefeller College University at Albany, 2010	41
"USAID and other donors need to take stock of lessons learned and initiate at least modest support for electoral reform through available funding instruments. Doing this as soon as possible will enable these		Performance Evaluation of USAID Electoral Assistance to		https://www. usaid.gov/doc uments/1860/ performance- evaluation-	Vittum, K., Getto, M. and Maosa T. N., 2014	46

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
stakeholders to work toward an electoral process that is sustainable over the long term, with the goal of local ownership of the process."		Kenya from January 2008– August 2013		usaid- electoral- assistance- kenya- january- 2008%E2%80 %93august- 2013		
"UNDP aims to ensure that elections are credible and fully owned at the national level"		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral-	UNDP, 2015	13

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				assistance lessons.html		
Principle 5: Risks management	<u>'</u>		1			
"Elections risks manifest in a variety of ways. Although in worst-case scenarios, violent conflict and coups may occur, more common risks are vote stealing, rigging and/or voter intimidation. Getting well-functioning institutions in place to combat this is critical to a successful overall outcome." "Although risk analysis is crucial for informing effective donor support, experience shows us that developing effective risk mitigation strategies is always challenging. Competing foreign policy concerns; entrenched patron-client relationships; unresponsive governments; corruption and many other factors all constitute fundamental		Electoral Assistance and Politics: Lessons for International Support		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67464/elec t-asst-pol-less- int-supp.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment, 2010	16-18

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
impediments to realizing risk mitigation."						
"The basket fund and the wider consortium of bilateral donors served its purpose of coordination, avoiding duplication of effort, dispersion in objectives, and significantly decreasing the burden of TSE in having to relate to a variety of donors. The mechanism and the monthly meetings also permitted crucial risk management and political follow-up of the electoral processes as well as contributing to resolving political and planning obstacles."		Asistencia Técnica al Régimen Electoral Guatemalteco		https://www.s ida.se/English/ publications/1 53368/asisten cia-tecnica-al- regimen- electoral- guatemalteco /	Jessup, F., Hayek, E. and Hällhag, R., 2008	5
"All forms of electoral assistance have the potential to mitigate against the risk of violence, if planned with this objective in mind. A well-managed election is inherently less risky than a poorly managed one. Electoral assistance		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment_data/fi	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and the Foreign and	13-14

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
should be flexible enough to respond to risks as they emerge. Some of the most effective risk-management approaches include:				le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	Common- wealth Office, 2010	
"Coordinated diplomatic intervention by the international community can be an effective way of responding to emerging problemsWhere the government is adequately open, it may be preferable for the international community to engage privately with the government on the international standards required for the election to be considered genuine. Regional and sub-regional						
to engage privately with the government on the international standards required for the election to be considered genuine.						

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Election observation is a tried and tested strategy for reducing the risk of electoral fraud or violence. While states are under no obligation to invite international observer missions, they often do so in order to secure greater legitimacy for the election"						
"Comprehensive risk assessments and the implementation of corresponding interventions that account for the whole electoral cycle will enable electoral assistance practitioners to put in place specifically designed response measures to prevent, mitigate and/or resolve election-related conflict and violence."		The Electoral Cycle Approach: Effectiveness and Sustainability of Electoral Assistance		https://epd.eu /wp- content/uploa ds/ISPI-and- ECES - WP Sustainab ility and Effe ctiveness of Electoral Assi stance The El ectoral Cycle	Bargiacchi, F., Bakken, M., Guerin, P., Godinho and Gomes, R., 2011	13

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				Approach Fi nal.pdf		
"Specifically, in a country plagued by election-related violence, the Tool (Electoral Risk Management Tool) was relevant. As a capacity building tool for the INEC (Independent National Electoral Commission) staff, it was effective. The limited amount of time and training for implementers rendered the project less efficient than desired, but it was, nonetheless, sufficient as a starting point. The impact of the ERMTool, while poorly documented, was on advancing the INEC's understanding of risk management and mitigation. Finally, the vast amount of information and knowledge acquired during 2015 elections provides a sustainable platform upon which to build."		The 2015 Evaluation of International IDEA EA Project "Preventing Conflict and Electoral Violence in Nigeria		Not available	Binda Consulting Inter- national Ltd, 2015	Not available

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"All electoral support should begin from a clear statement of goals and objectives that are specific to the country in question. While all electoral support may share a common high-level purpose strengthening democracy, the particular opportunities and risks are unique to each country context, and should be clearly identified in the design of the assistance"		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and the Foreign and Common- wealth Office, 2010	8
"Elections assistance providers must respond to the recent rise in electoral and post-electoral violence in conflict-prone and developing countries by giving greater attention to electoral risk and structural causes of political violence that could ignite in election processes. These concerns should be reflected in the design and implementation of electoral assistance interventions."		Accountability and Democratic Governance: Orientations and Principles for Development: CHAPTER 7 (Principles for international		https://www. oecd- ilibrary.org/do cserver/97892 64183636-10- en.pdf?expire s=160327556 6&id=id&accn ame=guest&c hecksum=B38 355FC048410	OECD, 2014	80

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		electoral assistance)		1211CE62A50 COB49F8		
"United Nations electoral assistance is provided under a framework established by the General AssemblyThis policy has been developed to provide structure and guidance to how the UN should engage with election situations rooms to ensure mitigation of potential risks that may be associated with the entity's engagement."		United Nations Support to Election Situation Rooms		https://dppa.u n.org/sites/de fault/files/ead pda un sup port to electi on situation rooms 20181 120 e.pdf	UNEAD, 2018	2
Principle 6: Diplomacy						
"Electoral assistance projects, though technical in nature, have an undeniable political dimension which must be recognised during the dialogue on development cooperation which takes place with stakeholders in partner countries. Such recognition can provide the		EC Methodologic al Guide on Electoral Assistance		http://eeas.eu ropa.eu/archi ves/eueom/p df/ec- methodologic al-guide-on- electoral-	European Commission, 2006	26

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
EU actors with an additional awareness of the functioning of national key institutions."				assistance en. pdf		
"Caution should be exercised if the UN deploys an expert panel in a country where technical electoral assistance is being provided by the UN system in order to prevent a conflict of interest."		Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance		https://dppa.u n.org/en/elect ions	Department for Political and Peace- building Affairs, 2012	9
"There were also challenges and obstacles that affected the U.S. Government's ability to conduct sustained and active programming. In the summer of 2012, for example, USAID/Kenya experienced a massive turnover in personnel, including the mission director, the DRG Office director, and the DRG conflict prevention project management specialist, as well as two development leadership initiative officers (new foreign service officers). The embassy also		USAID Support for the Kenya's 2013 Elections: Rapid Assessment Review		https://www. usaid.gov/doc uments/1866/ usaid-support- kenya%E2%80 %99s-2013- elections- rapid- assessment- review	Garber, L., Dallas, E.and Wilkie, J., 2014	9

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
experienced significant turnover during this time frame, including the ambassador and the deputy chief of mission, as well as almost the entire political office. Given the imminent elections, S/CSO detailed several staff to bridge the gap until new personnel were assigned."						
"Coordinated diplomatic intervention by the international community can be an effective way of responding to emerging problemsWhere the government is adequately open, it may be preferable for the international community to engage privately with the government on the international standards required for the election to be considered genuine. Regional and sub-regional bodies may be able to serve as mediators"		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and the Foreign and Common- wealth Office, 2010	14

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The study found that IEA structures and methods can contribute to more effective integrated use of the UN's good offices and preventive diplomacy capacity in electoral processesDiplomatic coordination groups were cited as providing an effective meeting place for informal discussions on strategy"		Lessons Learned: Integrated Electoral Assistance in UN Mission Settings		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/regions/afr ica/DZ/lessons -learned- integrated- electoral- assistance- in/view	UNDP, the UNDPA and the UNDPO	28
"As per decision No 2010/23 of the Secretary-General (12 October 2010 meeting of the Policy Committee), all electoral assistance in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, or special political mission settings should be delivered in a fully integrated manner from the outset, whether or not the mission is structurally integrated. Furthermore, as a norm, and subject to existing guidance on integration, electoral components		Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance		https://dppa.u n.org/en/elect ions	Department for Political and Peace- building Affairs, 2012	14

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
in structurally integrated missions should report to the SRSG or mission head through the Deputy SRSG who is also Resident Coordinator. In non-mission settings effective mechanisms should be established to ensure coordination, coherence, consistency and collaboration and avoidance of duplication in UN electoral assistance"						
"The evaluation strongly endorses the importance of an 'investment in staff' to ensure they have adequate understanding of the institutional environment; but such understanding also requires multidisciplinary, longitudinal analysis within countries, spanning electoral cycles The explicit goals would be to: bring existing knowledge and new learning together more coherently and		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons-	Analysis and advice for donors, 2017	6

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
systematically; build DFAT's institutional knowledge base; and make this expertise and knowledge more accessible to DFAT staff."				from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
DFID principles underlined that electoral assistance should integrate diplomatic efforts and should not be undermined by "competing foreign policy priorities". This was further reiterated by emphasizing that EA should be grounded in complementary diplomatic policies, international norms and obligations. "The international community has a particularly important role in fragile contexts as players who are willing to (a) guarantee the relative integrity of electoral processes and (b) continue to ensure that the bargains struck in the run-up to		Electoral Assistance and Politics: Lessons for International Support		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67464/elec t-asst-pol-less- int-supp.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment, 2010	16, 21, 34

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
elections are honoured later" "There is an important inter- relationship between diplomatic/political, financial and technical support before, during and after elections The international community needs to pay careful attention to the messages that it sends when it designs its support, and response to, elections support must, where possible, be consistent and long- term, and adopt uniform diplomatic and development standards to avoid accusations of bias."						
"EA should only be used to promote free and fair elections, not to advance other donor policy goals, such as burnishing the legitimacy of favoured partner governments or building friendly relationships with governments." "Electoral assistance should be actively integrated into		Accountability and Democratic Governance: Orientations and Principles for Development:		https://www. oecd- ilibrary.org/do cserver/97892 64183636-10- en.pdf?expire s=160327556 6&id=id&accn	OECD, 2014	82

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
the wider domain of democracy support, especially assistance for political party development, legislative strengthening, media assistance, and civic education programmes."		CHAPTER 7 (Principles for international electoral assistance)		ame=guest&c hecksum=B38 355FC048410 1211CE62A50 C0B49F8		
Principle 7: Harmonization and alignm	nent			·		
" the involvement of multiple donors is often a factor. There is a wide range of organizations that provide electoral assistance."		Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PNACF63 1.pdf	USAID, 2000	54
"If there is a large number of donors, coordination will be required to avoid redundancy, provide coherence to the assistance effort, and manage the number of people and requests inundating the election commission."		Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PNACF63 1.pdf	USAID, 2000	54
"At the same time, coordination can be a tricky business, with each		Managing assistance in		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d	USAID, 2000	55

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
agency seeking to leave its unique mark on the electoral process and be able to claim credit for successful elections."		support of political and electoral processes		ocs/PNACF63 1.pdf		
"Donor commitment and adherence to coordination principles as evidenced by the constitution of a Basket Fund and a broader donor coordination mechanism, was also reflected in the promotion of a project to be jointly executed by the OAS and IIDH/CAPEL. However, in practice, the content and execution modality of the project corresponded more to the execution of two parallel sub-projects. Even when the project document specifically referred to the necessity to carry out the project jointly and in a coordinated fashion, the evaluation team was unable to identify any coordnation instruments or mechanisms."		Asistencia Técnica al Régimen Electoral Guatemalteco		https://www.s ida.se/English/ publications/1 53368/asisten cia-tecnica-al- regimen- electoral- guatemalteco /	Jessup, F., Hayek, E. and Hällhag, R., 2008	5

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The effectiveness of aid is reduced when there are too many duplicating initiatives, especially at country and sector levels. We will reduce the fragmentation of aid by improving the complementarity of donors' efforts and the division of labour among donors, including through improved allocation of resources within sectors, within countries, and across countries."		The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action		https://www. oecd.org/dac/ effectiveness/ 34428351.pdf	OECD, 2005/2008	17
"The almost complete absence of proper coordination between different bilateral and/or multilateral donors while providing electoral support to a given recipient is another alarming factor that systematically contributes to the lack of effectiveness and sustainability"		Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from Event-based Support to Process Support Conference report and conclusions		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/topics/elec toral- assistance/ee a-final.pdf	Ellis., A, Guerin, P., and Ayoub., A., 2006	8

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The Hard Lessons of the 1990sthe almost complete absence of proper coordination between different bilateral and/or multilateral development agencies systematically impacted on the lack of effectiveness and sustainability of the electoral assistance efforts."		Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/misc/ace- focus-on- effective- electoral- assistance	Tuccinardi, D., Guerin, P., Bargiacchi, F., Maguire, L., 2008	11
"Thus far, UNDP's global support to electoral assistance has relied on discrete resources from the Global Cooperation Framework and other funding sources to support activities in an ad hoc manner year to year. However, given the number of countries worldwide that are demanding assistance in the area, the need for an integrated approach within the UN and with external partners, and the high level of locally mobilized resources devoted to electoral assistance, this		Concept Paper on the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support		Not publicly available	UNDP, 2008	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
approach is no longer feasible or sustainable"						
"The variety of organizations which engage in election support activities call for a good cooperation and division of tasks in order to avoid duplications and contradictions, among international actors as well as between international and domestic organizations"		Two Decades of International Electoral Support: Challenges and Added Value		https://www. mpil.de/files/p df2/mpunyb 06 binder.pdf	Binder., C, 2009	243
"a number of challenges such as the potential for elections to be overshadowed by political discord or violence, especially after results are announced; concerns regarding the cost of elections and sustainability; and, following the increase of actors involved in electoral assistance both inside and outside the UN, the need to ensure coordination and cohesion and safeguard the Organization"s impartiality."		Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme: Revised Note		http://content = ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/254562 1/Note%20of %20Guidance %20Final%20S eptember%20 2010.pdf	Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and the UNDP, 2015	1

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		of Guidance on Electoral Assistance				
"The second observation is that the organisations' work could have been more effective and efficient if it were guided by a clear overarching and cohesive strategy that ensured their various roles were complementary."		Evaluation of Australia's Electoral Assistance to Papua New Guinea 2015 – 2017		https://www. dfat.gov.au/sit es/default/file s/evaluation- of-australias- electoral- assistance-to- png-2015- 17.pdf	Markiewicz, A., Patrick, I. and Wood, T., 2017	27
"The EU performance and input to elections has invariably been enhanced where timely and qualified exploratory missions have been undertaken and where a sincere dialogue has been possible with the country in question. To facilitate later coordination, these missions should inter alia gather information about the intentions of		Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation		https://eur- lex.europa.eu/ legal- content/EN/T XT/HTML/?uri =CELEX:52000 DC0191&from =EN	European Commission, 2000	12

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
other donors. If possible, they should be jointly organized with relevant international organizations. The exploratory mission should also advise what conditions must be fulfilled by the host government before the EU is prepared to commit funds. Exploratory missions should give the first indication to EU decision makers of what kind and what size of electoral intervention would be most effective."						
"a number of innovative global initiatives have been undertaken by UNDP in partnership with other electoral assistance providers to avoid duplications of efforts and rationalize donor activities targeting harmonization of procedures, cost effectiveness and sustainability."		UNDP Electoral Assistance Implemen- tation guide		http://content cext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance-	UNDP, 2007	55

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				Implementati on-Guide.pdf		
"The basket fund and the wider consortium of bilateral donors served its purpose of coordination, avoiding duplication of effort, dispersion in objectives, and significantly decreasing the burden of TSE in having to relate to a variety of donors. The mechanism and the monthly meetings also permitted crucial risk management and political follow-up of the electoral processes as well as contributing to resolving political and planning obstacles."		Asistencia Técnica al Régimen Electoral Guatemalteco		https://www.s ida.se/English/ publications/1 53368/asisten cia-tecnica-al- regimen- electoral- guatemalteco	Jessup, F., Hayek, E. and Hällhag, R., 2008	5
"Donors meetings and joint political monitoring may have partially substituted for, or obscured the need for more robust procedures for project monitoring and followup, such as technically rigorous and timely progress reports."		Asistencia Técnica al Régimen Electoral Guatemalteco		https://www.si da.se/English/ publications/1 53368/asisten cia-tecnica-al- regimen-	Jessup, F., Hayek, E. and Hällhag, R., 2008	5

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				electoral- guatemalteco/		
"Coordinated diplomatic intervention by the international community can be an effective way of responding to emerging problemsWhere the government is adequately open, it may be preferable for the international community to engage privately with the government on the international standards required for the election to be considered genuine. Regional and sub-regional bodies may be able to serve as mediators"		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and the Foreign and Common- wealth Office, 2010	14
"If the EC funded activities are aligned with the EC systems and approach then coordination of BVR and support to the election process is more likely to be effective" (UK DIFID, Evaluation of the Ghana		Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme DCP Ghana 524		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment_data/fi	Coffey, 2013	55

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
Electoral Support Programme DCP Ghana 524, 2013, p. 69)				le/298760/Eva luation-		
"Individual projects focusing on the same issue, same stakeholders, and same geographical areas is not an effective way of operating an election project with a specific one-year timeframe."				Ghana- Electoral- Support- Programme.p		
"Coordination and collaboration among key actors contribute to the effectiveness of electoral investments. Long-term engagement with implementing partners and stakeholders strengthened relationships, eventually leading to greater flexibility and reach in programming. Similarly, cooperation among USAID offices, U.S. agencies and other donors proved critical in Kenya."		USAID Support for the Kenya's 2013 Elections: Rapid Assessment Review		https://www. usaid.gov/doc uments/1866/ usaid-support- kenya%E2%80 %99s-2013- elections- rapid- assessment- review	Garber, L., Dallas, E. and Wilkie, J., 2014	17

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"In response to a general desire among UN actors of electoral assistance for enhanced coordination, an Inter- agency Coordinating Mechanism for UN Electoral Assistance (ICMEA) was established in 2009. The ICMEA provides a forum at headquarters level for coordination of UN electoral assistance activities among the various UN actors involved in this field. It aims to foster greater system-wide coherence and consistency, based on more systematic exchange of information, clearer division of labour and improved harmonization of activities, more intensive policy dialogue, the adoption of common positions on policy and issues of common concern, and the promotion of stronger partnerships within the UN system."		Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme: Revised Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/254562 1/Note%20of %20Guidance %20Final%20S eptember%20 2010.pdf	Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and the UNDP, 2015	6

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The assessment of elections is a delicate exerciseThe EU should seek to co-operate with other international groups to ensure, where possible, common positions and the most effective deployment of resources. But it should avoid formal co-ordination structures where the EU's integrity and freedom of word and action could be impaired by having to accept the lowest common denominator among a disparate group of international donors (e.g. Cambodia 1998). EU assessments could be more effective if they included recommendations for future actions."		Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation		https://eur- lex.europa.eu/ legal- content/EN/T XT/HTML/?uri =CELEX:52000 DC0191&from =EN	European Commission, 2000	
"At times, it may be advantageous to include national electoral management body members in regular donor meetings. These meetings present an opportunity		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2004	17

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
for greater dialogue between national election officials and donors, on technical and resource mobilization issues as well as on electoral concerns."		Electoral Systems and Processes Participation				
"The planning of future electoral assistance needs to emphasize the development of political frameworks and democratic culture. The priority placed on technical electoral assistance should become part of a comprehensive strategy of capacity building to strengthen democratic processes and institutions. The relationship between the political, foreign policy and development agendas is often sensitive and contradictory and may not necessarily be consistent with the democratization process."		Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide		https://www.i dea.int/sites/d efault/files/ab out us/10- years-of- supporting- democracy- worldwide.pdf	Inter- national IDEA, 2005	102-103

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Donors have responsibilities to ensure that the electoral assistance that they provide to EMBs is effective and promotes sustainability. Key issues for donors to consider in these regards include: 1. coordination of assistance with the EMB and other donors; 2. planning the implementation of assistance to synchronize with the EMB's needs; e. the inclusion of EMB staff in the management of donor-funded programmes;"		Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook		http://constit utionnet.org/s ites/default/fil es/EMD inlay _final.pdf	Wall, A., Ellis, A., Ayoub, A., Dundas C. W, Rukambe, J., Staino, S., 2006	260
"Programme design needs to consider the practicality of multi-focused programmes in the light of the local management capacities available, and consider whether or not better outcomes could be achieved by having multiple programmes of narrower focus within a coordinated, holistic		Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from Event-based Support to Process Support Conference		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/topics/elec toral- assistance/ee a-final.pdf	Ellis., A, Guerin, P., and Ayoub., A., 2006	16

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
framework for democratization assistance."		report and conclusions				
"Untying aid generally increases aid effectiveness by reducing transaction costs for partner countries and improving country ownership and alignment."		The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action		https://www. oecd.org/dac/ effectiveness/ 34428351.pdf	OECD, 2005/2008	5
"iii. Enhancing donors' and partner countries' respective accountability to their citizens and parliaments for their development policies, strategies and performance. iv. Eliminating duplication of efforts and rationalising donor activities to make them as cost-effective as possible."		The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action		https://www. oecd.org/dac/ effectiveness/ 34428351.pdf	OECD, 2005/2008	1
"The Global Programme takes as its point of departure the premise that in order to be effective, global policy, regional challenges and country realities must form a		Concept Paper on the Global Programme		Not publicly available	UNDP, 2008	2

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
virtuous circle. The Programme pillars – global, regional and country – are therefore interdependent and mutually reinforcing"		for Electoral Cycle Support				
"If the UK is providing continuing electoral support, it should include agreeing with the partner country how to take forward these recommendations. The immediate post-electoral period provides a window of opportunity when proposed reforms may not be seen purely in terms of short-term electoral cost and benefit these standards require considerable institutional capacity to implement, and that fully compliant elections are a long-term goal in many countries. When confronted with shortcomings, our usual response will be to work with the partner		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and the Foreign and Common- wealth Office, 2010	24

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
country to improve the situation for subsequent elections."						
"Strategic partnerships and well-coordinated resources are critical to sustain electoral reform. Multiparty elections are complex undertakings that require capacity and resources beyond the reach of some developing countries. External technical and financial assistance is often indispensable, particularly for first time elections in transitional countries. It is important to strategically leverage domestic and international partnerships to transfer and build knowledge and capital."		Essentials: Electoral Assistance		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/essentials- electoral- assistance.ht ml	UNDP, 2012	5
"UN electoral leaders need to advocate for better government commitment to fund sustainable electoral authorities (including permanent bodies), and advocate that donors fund longer-term		Lessons Learned: Integrated Electoral Assistance in		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/regions/afr ica/DZ/lessons -learned- integrated-	UNDP, the UNDPA and the UNDPO, 2013	Annex 6

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
assistance beyond one electoral event."		UN Mission Settings		electoral- assistance- in/view		
"Effective communication is crucial given the volatile circumstances within which electoral assistance is often provided. This is particularly vital in the countries where the EU and UNDP work together. It is therefore important for the EU Delegation and UNDP Country Office to discuss their expectations at the outset of the collaboration."		Working together in electoral assistance: Formulating and implementing electoral assistance projects in the context of the EC-UNDP partnership		https://www. ec-undp- electoralassist ance.org/wp- content/uploa ds/2018/08/u ndp-contents- publications- EU-and- UNDP- working-in- electoral- assistance- English.pdf	European Commission and UNDP, 2013	91
"increased emphasis should be given to support a range of electoral stakeholders, not just the EMB. This includes political parties, CSOs, media, the judiciary and the		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance:		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp	UNDP, 2015	27

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electorate in many subgroups. a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder approach would not only enhance EMB capacity incrementally, but also support and strengthen other actors who play critical roles in the electoral process. Regardless of whether it is UNDP or other assistance providers that support other stakeholders, a mapping of who is receiving support through coordination meetings could help identify gaps."		Lessons Learned		age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral- assistance lessons.html		
"Coordination of electoral assistance among donors: Effective coordination of technical assistance is crucial in situations in which bilateral and multilateral donors, specialized institutions, nongovernmental organizations and the UN are providing electoral assistance."		Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/254562 1/Note%20of %20Guidance %20Final%20S	Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and the UNDP, 2015	6

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
		Programme: Revised Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance		eptember%20 2010.pdf		
Principle 8: Addressing democratic we	eaknesses					
"Aid providers are confronting the real limits of their interventions. To start, if a government or an electoral commission does not take the task of election administration seriously, well designed training courses, savvy external advisers, and generous donations of sophisticated equipment will not solve the problem."		Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve		https://carnegieendowment.org/1999/12/31/aiding-democracy-abroad-learning-curve-pub-99	Carothers, T., 1999	130
"Local or Host-country Receptivity: Host-country receptivity to the proposed activity is important to its success and effectiveness."		Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PNACF63 1.pdf	USAID, 2000	58

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"This serious problem of sustainability makes some critics call for a paradigmatic shift in international electoral assistance, from top-down and supply-driven to bottom-up and demand-led approaches. Many political problems in emerging democracies, for example the often deep-seated problem of political mistrust, should not be met by transparent ballot boxes, they argue, but by promoting dialogue between political parties, civil society and government etc. (Ottaway & Chung)."		The Political Institutions		https://www.s ida.se/content assets/0bd279 80dda445dca bb5a0dcc195c acf/14201.pdf	SIDA, 2002	17
"No consensus exists about the notion of democracy building through international intervention, as there are major unresolved questions which affect the role of elections and the perception of elections. The international		Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide		https://www.i dea.int/sites/d efault/files/ab out us/10- years-of- supporting-	Inter- national IDEA, 2005	102

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community is often not in the position to maintain support for 'international norms of democracy and governance' against firm, if sometimes covert, opposition by significant local actors."				democracy- worldwide.pdf		
"The challenge of sustainability is more pronounced among EMBs in emerging democracies, which often rely heavily on donor aid. Economic and political hardships may prevent these countries from being able to fund their own elections wholly themselves"		Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook		http://constit utionnet.org/s ites/default/fil es/EMD inlay final.pdf	Wall, A., Ellis, A., Ayoub, A., Dundas C. W., Rukambe, J., Staino, S., 2006	258
"The challenge of sustainability is more pronounced among EMBs in emerging democracies, which often rely heavily on donor aid. Economic and political hardships may prevent these countries from being able to fund their own elections wholly themselves"		Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook		http://constit utionnet.org/s ites/default/fil es/EMD inlay _final.pdf	Wall, A., Ellis, A., Ayoub, A., Dundas C. W., Rukambe, J., Staino, S., 2006	258

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The main risk in providing assistance to an EMB is that the institution might not be perceived as impartial or independent or might be actually controlled by the ruling party/coalition. Assistance aimed at enhancing the EMB technical ability to run the process might be considered detrimental in contexts where no equivalent improvements can be recorded. on the political side."		EC Methodologi- cal Guide on Electoral Assistance		http://eeas.eu ropa.eu/archi ves/eueom/p df/ec- methodologic al-guide-on- electoral- assistance en. pdf	European Commission, 2006	38
"The scope and effectiveness of the assistance also depends on the extent to which the political actors in the country are supportive of democratic processes per se — so that, for example, they are willing to see a good process as ultimately more important than achieving an outcome that favours them"		UNDP Electoral Assistance Implemen- tation guide		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/221966 7/UNDP- Electoral- Assistance- Implementati on-Guide.pdf	UNDP, 2007	24

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The colonial powers left many African states with systems of authoritarian values and norms that weakened public administration and the education system – both essential for effective democracy building."		The European Union and challenges to democracy building in Africa		https://www.i dea.int/sites/d efault/files/pu blications/cha pters/democr acy-in- development/ the-european- union-and- challenges-to- democracy- building-in- africa.pdf	Bradley, A., 2009	2
"First, electoral support may – as a matter of principle – be rejected as "undue interference" with the national sovereignty of a country. Second, specific recommendations made or advice provided may be criticised as inappropriate interference or implementation/manifestation of a		Two Decades of International Electoral Support: Challenges and Added Value		https://www. mpil.de/files/p df2/mpunyb 06 binder.pdf	Binder., C, 2009	237-239

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"hidden agenda" of international organizations in a given situationA government's firm rejection of specific electoral support as undue interference or for alleged partiality is a more widespread problem. The lack of political will of the incumbent party/government to improve the electoral process is much more difficult to overcome than technical insufficiencies or the lack of experience of national authorities."						
"support for sustainable institutional strengthening is – by its very nature – a long-term endeavour that requires adequate levels of continuity and that needs to be implemented, nurtured and sustained over an extended period of time. Therefore, given its long-term nature, institutional strengthening is less visible and, for		Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support		Not publicly available	UNDP, 2009	9

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this reason, perhaps less politically attractive and appealing to donors and providers of technical assistance, particularly if the next elections are scheduled several years ahead."						
"Where democratic norms are weakly institutionalised, achieving elections that meet international standards within a single cycle may be too ambitious a goal."		How to note: On Electoral Assistance		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67651/how -to-on-elect- asst.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment and the Foreign and Common- wealth Office, 2010	9
"As well as being technically complex, electoral assistance is often highly political in nature. One of the challenges facing DFID is to support the independence and integrity of EMBs against any threat		Evaluation of DFID's Electoral Support through UNDP		https://agulha s.co.uk/our- work/evaluati on-dfids- electoral-	In- dependent Commission for Aid Impact, 2012	6

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
of interference from the incumbent government."				support-undp- icai/		
"the benefits to effective and efficient technical assistance and the sustainability of that assistance may be outweighed by political issues and perceived risks to UN's credibility"		Lessons Learned: Integrated Electoral Assistance in UN Mission Settings		http://aceproi ect.org/ero- en/regions/afr ica/DZ/lessons -learned- integrated- electoral- assistance- in/view	UNDP, the UNDPA and the UNDPO, 2013	26
"I argue that requests for technical election assistance have not become widespread because technical assistance can generate higher domestic costs for incumbents seeking to manipulate elections than observation does. Technical assistance is aimed at institutional reforms and tends to be deployed long before election day. These technical reforms can		Resisting democracy assistance: Who seeks and receives technical election assistance?		https://discov ery.ucl.ac.uk/i d/eprint/1008 3372/1/Borzys kowski 2016 Resisting%20D emocracy%20 Assistance.pdf	von Borzys- kowski, I., 2016	28

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
strengthen the election commission, update the voter registry, and boost voter education. They can have significant political consequences because they aim to level the playing field months (and sometimes years) before electionday, making it harder to steal elections."						
"The evaluation's overall findings confirm that improving technical support alone, although important, is unlikely to improve electoral processes when operating in challenging institutional, political and cultural environments. This is not an argument that little can be achieved in such environments. Nor is it an argument that technical support for high-quality elections is inappropriate. But stand-alone, technical electoral assistance projects are unlikely to deliver		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian-	Arghiros, D., Boneo, H., Henderson, S., Palmieri, S., and Pearce Laanela, T., 2017	74

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
sustainable gains in all but the most favourable environments, while entailing other risks."				electoral- assistance- 2006-16		
"In difficult political economy contexts, the value of voter registration gains has been diluted by other threats to electoral integrity, such as vote buying or opportunities for corruption of officials. In those countries where stakeholders' commitment to the broader democratic process has been weak, gains achieved in the quality of voter registration began to depreciate almost immediately."		Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance		https://www. dfat.gov.au/d evelopment/p erformance- assessment/ai d- evaluation/str ategic- evaluations/m aking-it- count-lessons- from- australian- electoral- assistance- 2006-16	Arghiros, D., Boneo, H., Henderson, S., Palmieri, S., and Pearce Laanela, T., 2017	3
"There have been a number of hiccups and lessons learned along the way. In some cases technocratic		USAID Election Assistance:		afsa.org/sites/ default/files/fs	Ivantcheva, A., 2018	37

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solutions inadequately address deeply political issues; assistance is offered to political parties whose dedication to internal reform has been mostly rhetorical; or peace messages do not reflect sufficient research into needs and audiences. Moreover, although elections and electoral assistance by themselves cannot be expected to guarantee democratic development, elections remain the only means to a legitimate democratic government."		Lessons from the Field		j-2018-05- may.pdf		
"Using a country's own institutions and systems, where these provide assurance that aid will be used for agreed purposes, increases aid effectiveness by strengthening the partner country's sustainable capacity to develop, implement and account for its policies to its citizens and parliament. Country systems		The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action		https://www. oecd.org/dac/ effectiveness/ 34428351.pdf	OECD, 2005/2008	4

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and procedures typically include, but are not restricted to, national arrangements and procedures for public financial management, accounting, auditing, procurement, results frameworks and monitoring."						
"It has increasingly been realized that a holistic approach that links electoral assistance to the inclusive development of political frameworks and democratic culture is required, and that the building of a strong and stable electoral administration capacity is a better long-term investment than ad hoc contributions to electoral events."		Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from Event-based Support to Process Support Conference report and conclusions		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/topics/elec toral- assistance/ee a-final.pdf	Ellis., A, Guerin, P., and Ayoub., A., 2006	6
"Linking elections to democratic governance: Development partners and implementing institutions should ensure that the objectives of		Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/topics/elec toral-	Ellis., A, Guerin, P., and Ayoub., A., 2006	24

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
election-related programmes should support the longer-term objectives of democratization strategy."		Event-based Support to Process Support Conference report and conclusions		assistance/ee a-final.pdf		
"Best practices nonetheless maintain that it might be most appropriate for developing democracies to choose a system which stimulates the development of political parties and thus prefer a proportional representation system to a strict majority system. Likewise, excessively high thresholds for parties to enter parliament were not considered appropriate in proportional representation systems set up in young democracies. This detailed set of standards permits to draw a clear picture of a country's electoral		Two Decades of International Electoral Support: Challenges and Added Value		https://www. mpil.de/files/p df2/mpunyb 06 binder.pdf	Binder., C, 2009	231-232

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
performance and facilitates exact recommendations for further improvement as well as targeted support by means of electoral assistance. Precise standards and best practice models also make it easier for national governments to improve their electoral performance."						
"In order to improve the sustainability of election support activities, future election support programmes need to take a strategic approach to facilitative partnership between government institutions and other election bodies in the design stage."		Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme DCP Ghana 524		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/298760/Eva luation- Ghana- Electoral- Support-	Coffey, 2013	50

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				<u>Programme.p</u> <u>df</u>		
"democracy is ever a work in progress, and that strengthening democratic institutions and promoting truly democratic politics is the best way to overcome democratic deficits and to foster the link between democracy and human development"		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2004	2
"The long-term vision for international engagement in fragile states is to build legitimate, effective and resilient state and other country institutions. While the guiding principles of effective aid apply equally to fragile states, they need to be adapted to environments of weak ownership and capacity and to immediate needs for basic service delivery"		The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action		https://www. oecd.org/dac/ effectiveness/ 34428351.pdf	OECD, 2005/2008	6

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"assistance must reach beyond those holding power to promote mediating structures, including democratically committed political parties, citizen associations, legislative oversight bodies, traditional news and community media, and use of new information technologies (ITs) that can bridge digital and technology divides to provide accurate information, encourage participation, and promote accountability"		First Roundtable on International Support for elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems Paris, 1 March 2010: Toward Draft Principles and an Action Plan		https://www. ndi.org/sites/ default/files/N DI Pat Merlo e DAC Electi on Support P rinciples 1- March- 2010.pdf	Merloe, P., 2010	2
"While elections can be a means of consolidating democracy and improving governance, elections alone do not constitute democracy. Thus, increased attention should be paid to other areas, such as building government institutions and		Elections and Stability in West Africa: The Way Forward		https://www.f iles.ethz.ch/is n/143915/ipi e pub electio ns in west af rica.pdf	Inter- national Peace Institute, 2012	9

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
strengthening EMBs, civil society, and the media."						
"We encourage DFID to consider how sustainability in electoral assistance can be supported. Sustainable capacity to hold free and fair elections means not just investing in the skills and internal systems of EMBs. It also means creating robust governance arrangements to safeguard their integrity and empowering the media and civil society to respond if their independence comes under threat."		Evaluation of DFID's Electoral Support through UNDP		https://agulha s.co.uk/our- work/evaluati on-dfids- electoral- support-undp- icai/	In- dependent Commission for Aid Impact, 2012	18
"We encourage DFID to consider how sustainability in electoral assistance can be supported. Sustainable capacity to hold free and fair elections means not just investing in the skills and internal systems of EMBs. It also means creating robust governance		Evaluation of DFID's Electoral Support through UNDP		https://agulha s.co.uk/our- work/evaluati on-dfids- electoral- support-undp- icai/	In- dependent Commission for Aid Impact, 2012	18

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arrangements to safeguard their integrity and empowering the media and civil society to respond if their independence comes under threat."						
"Objectives of UN Electoral Assistance are three-fold:"(a) To assist Member States in their efforts to hold democratic elections in accordance with obligations, principles and commitments outlined in universal and regional human rights instruments; (b) To contribute to building, in the recipient country, a sustainable institutional capacity to organize democratic elections that are genuine and periodic and have the full confidence of contesting parties and candidates and the electorate; and c) To reduce the potential for election-related violence."		Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme: Revised Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance		http://content ext.undp.org/ aplaws public ations/254562 1/Note%20of %20Guidance %20Final%20S eptember%20 2010.pdf	Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and the UNDP, 2015	1

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"Domestic political will is an important condition for success, since the implementation and effectiveness of technical assistance depends crucially on cooperation with host country authorities."		Resisting democracy assistance: Who seeks and receives technical election assistance?		https://discov ery.ucl.ac.uk/i d/eprint/1008 3372/1/Borzys kowski 2016 Resisting%20D emocracy%20 Assistance.pdf	von Borzys- kowski, I., 2016	3
Principle 9: Role of regional organizat	ions					
"The objectives of the early regional electoral associations which were formed in the 1980s were, however, so general as to be little more than a framework pointing to desirable goals with little specific commitment."		Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook		http://constit utionnet.org/s ites/default/fil es/EMD inlay final.pdf	Wall, A., Ellis, A., Ayoub, A., Dundas C. W., Rukambe, J., Staino, S., 2006	280
"Beyond their networking function, these associations (Regional International Associations of Electoral Authorities) have played an important role in the diffusion		Electoral Management Bodies as		http://www.u ndp.org/conte nt/dam/aplaw s/publication/	López- Pintor, R., 2000	100

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and consolidation of standards of electoral practice worldwide, and therefore in the enhancement of EMBs as institutions of governance."		Institutions of Governance		en/publication s/democratic- governance/d g- publications- for- website/elect oral- management- bodies-as- institutions- of- governance/El ections-Pub- EMBbook.pdf		
"Locally produced election materials increase sustainability and reduce expectations, for example, that ballot boxes have to be transparent or translucent in order to provide free and fair elections. However, local procurement may		Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from Event-based Support to Process		http://aceproj ect.org/ero- en/topics/elec toral- assistance/ee a-final.pdf	Ellis., A, Guerin, P., and Ayoub., A., 2006	27

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often be difficult because of time constraints and supply difficulties. Regional cooperation between electoral administrators has proved to be a useful tool to enhance the credibility and sustainability of electoral processes."		Support Conference report and conclusions				
"The potential benefits of regional cooperation through associations of electoral organizations are considerable. New EMBs can draw on support and experience from more established electoral authorities, can accelerate their capacity building by exchange of personnel, and may even be able to borrow electoral materials at relatively short notice. The development of common standards with respect to free and fair elections and the quality of electoral services may have a		Electoral Management Design: The International IDEA Handbook		http://constit utionnet.org/s ites/default/fil es/EMD inlay final.pdf	Wall, A., Ellis, A., Ayoub, A., Dundas C. W., Rukambe, J., Staino, S., 2006	281

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
positive effect on losers accepting election results."						
"Regional organizations play an important role in developing the normative and legal framework for free, fair, and regular elections, and for promoting good governance."		Elections and Stability in West Africa: The Way Forward		https://www.f iles.ethz.ch/is n/143915/ipi e pub electio ns in west af rica.pdf	Inter- national Peace Institute, 2012	3
"The key issues that have come up in this study are the need for continued support services at HQ and regional levels to coordinate with other agencies to ensure that contextual assessments, project formulation and implementation, and regular and effective monitoring contribute to achieving sharper and more cost-effective programming"		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste msandprocess es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral-	UNDP, 2015	67

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
				assistance lessons.html		
"Dialogue with regional and international organizations and support to sub-regional organizations are vital to democracy building processes."		Council conclusions on Democracy Support in the EU's External Relations - 2974 th EXTERNAL RELATIONS Council meeting Brussels, 17 November 2009		https://www.c onsilium.euro pa.eu/uedocs/ cms data/doc s/pressdata/e n/gena/11125 0.pdf	Council of the European Union, 2009	6
Principle 10: Multi Level Action						
"A fourth lesson is that the donors tend to forget or to neglect local and regional elections. This is particularly problematic when seen from a popular participation		The Political Institutions		https://www.s ida.se/content assets/0bd279 80dda445dca	SIDA, 2002	18

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
perspective. EU points to the particular importance of local elections in countries where traditional power structures conflict with modern concepts of democracy."				<u>bb5a0dcc195c</u> <u>acf/14201.pdf</u>		
"On the international side, there was a commensurate reduced level of logistical and political support for elections to be held at the local level. The question for consideration is whether they should have received greater attention. Evidence from the case studies suggests that, for the democratic process to take root in any country, the international community needs to give far more consistent attention to each and every election, assessing both the technical capacity of the country to hold it, and the political meaning behind it."		Electoral Assistance and Politics: Lessons for International Support		https://assets. publishing.ser vice.gov.uk/go vernment/upl oads/system/ uploads/attac hment data/fi le/67464/elec t-asst-pol-less- int-supp.pdf	Department for Inter- national Develop- ment, 2010	11

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"Sometimes, local elections can be the entry point for electoral assistance at the national level"		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2004	7
"Given the electoral cycle approach, the GPECS will focus not only on national elections but also on local elections. As more countries decentralize power, services and resources to the local level there is a growing attention on local electoral processes, which are often administered on a different timeline and/or according to a different framework"		Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support		Not publicly available	UNDP, 2009	11

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"The EU should not focus only on national elections. To consolidate democracy, free elections are necessary at all levels. At a local level, popular involvement is often stronger. Support to elections at local level is particularly important in certain developing countries where traditional power structures conflict with modern concepts of democracy."		Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation		https://eur- lex.europa.eu/ legal- content/EN/T XT/HTML/?uri =CELEX:52000 DC0191&from =EN	European Commission , 2000	12
"Providing assistance to local elections is obviously an important part of local government and decentralization programmes. Hence, providing electoral assistance can have a direct impact on subsequent UNDP efforts"		Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes Participation		https://erc.un dp.org/evalua tion/documen ts/download/ 5969	Dudnik Stern, J. (editor), 2004	19

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
"In order to have successful, sustainable programs, it is recommended that resources be invested at all levels. The most efficient and successful programs are managed from the bottom up, meaning from the local to the regional to the national level."		Honduras Post Electoral Assessment: Final report		https://pdf.us aid.gov/pdf_d ocs/PDACQ72 3.pdf	Creative Associates Inter- national and the Centre for Inter- national Develop- ment at Rockefeller College University at Albany, 2010	28-29
"The notion of national ownership is often tied to the government that is requesting support based on their perceived needsElectoral assistance providers should embrace an interpretation of local ownership that takes account of this political imperativeBuilding		The Longer- Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned		https://www. undp.org/cont ent/undp/en/ home/libraryp age/democrat ic- governance/el ectoral syste	UNDP, 2015	26

Literary evidence of factors shaping EA effectiveness	Research question(s) to which the literary evidence relates	Document title	Document type	Hyperlink	First author and year of publication	Page reference
national ownership of electoral processes in general can also be facilitated through the provision of support to local elections."				msandprocess es/11the- longer-term- impact-of- undp- electoral- assistance lessons.html		
"Electoral assistance providers should complement their traditional focus on national elections with greater attention to strengthening local elections."		Accountability and Democratic Governance: Orientations and Principles for Development: CHAPTER 7 (Principles for international electoral assistance)		https://www. oecd- ilibrary.org/do cserver/97892 64183636-10- en.pdf?expire s=160327556 6&id=id&accn ame=guest&c hecksum=B38 355FC048410 1211CE62A50 C0B49F8	OECD, 2014	82

Appendix 3 – Compendium of electoral assistance principles

EU 2000¹: Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation (INTERNAL):

- Regional and local elections may also need assistance and observation.
- Exploratory missions are important.
- Elections are not one-day events.
- The assessment of elections is a delicate exercise.
- Care needs to be taken with the timing and content of EU statements.
- EU actors in the field must co-ordinate and speak with one voice to maximize impact.
- Resources must match political objectives.

Sida/DESA 2002²: In order for Sida/DESA to raise the quality of election assistance, the following should also be considered:

- Electoral assistance projects must be treated as "normal" development co-operation projects.
- Our activities should be focused on a smaller number of countries.

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/111250.pdf

¹ 2000 EU document – Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation /* COM/2000/0191 final *.

 $^{^2~\}underline{\text{https://www.sida.se/contentassets/0bd27980dda445dcabb5a0dcc195cacf/the-political-institutions}~745.pdf$

- Regional co-operation initiatives among our partner countries, such as the SADC Electoral Commissions Forum, should be encouraged and supported.
- A gender perspective must be integrated in planning, implementation and the follow up of projects, and projects that promote women's participation, whether as voters or candidates, should be prioritized.
- We should engage in more long-term institution and capacity building projects, targeted at independent electoral commissions, election management and registration bodies, domestic training and monitoring groups and political parties.
- Technical assistance is needed as early as possible, and should continue between elections.
- We should put more focus on support to local and regional elections which are often more flawed and of much lower quality than national parliamentary and presidential elections.
- We should take an active part in the EU's exploratory missions to countries of high priority for Swedish development cooperation.
- We should give priority to long-term observers in our election observation and monitoring missions in order to promote improved quality of elections and to have well-founded and comprehensive assessments of these elections. Short-term observers should be given priority only in first elections and post-war elections to promote peace, detect and deter fraud and bring about international credibility to the result.
- Better training and field guidance of election observers are needed in order for election observation to function more as an input into further and more long-term electoral assistance.

DFID principles of effective electoral assistance 2010 3: Nine principles for election support:

- Understand the wider context within which elections occur.
- Be clear when to advocate for and support elections and when to hold back.
- Analyze electoral risk at all stages.
- Integrate diplomatic with financial and technical support.
- Systematically adopt the electoral cycle approach.
- Recognize limitations of development partners' role in elections support.
- Support election observation.
- Support women's political participation.
- Follow principles of harmonization, alignment and ownership.

Paria Declaration (West Africa) - Recommendations on Electoral Assistance (2011): 4

- Request that international electoral assistance is delivered in a manner appropriate to context, based on careful and comprehensive needs assessment and respecting national dynamics and ownership.
- Ensure that international electoral assistance encourages sustainability by placing a priority on capacity building of national stakeholders and institutions in conformity to the electoral cycle approach.

/attachment data/file/67464/elect-asst-pol-less-int-supp.pdf

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads

⁴ https://unowa.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/PRAIA%20DECL_ANG_0 .pdf

- Encourage electoral assistance providers to ensure that assistance is sustainable and cost effective, being understood that all West African states are expected to self-fund elections.
- Urge the UN and all international electoral assistance providers to adopt a conflict prevention approach in the provision of electoral assistance; placing at the heart of their work the prevention of election-related conflicts and advice that can facilitate political stability.

Bargiacchi et al 2011⁵: To further promote the effectiveness and sustainability of electoral assistance in the future, projects using the Electoral Cycle Approach will need to gain from the following recommendations:

- Be much more rooted in the context of and integrated with the policies and activities undertaken in the areas of democratic and human development in general.
- Take into account the political context within which electoral processes unfold and electoral assistance is provided.
- Further promote synergies between election observation and electoral assistance.
- Combat fraud, prevent election related conflicts and violence also via focusing on the development of leadership and conflict management skills for all electoral stakeholders.

https://www.ispionline.it/ad/electoral/ISPI%20WP%20-

⁵ Bargiacchi, F., Bakken, M., Guerin, P., and Gomes, R. G., 2011, "The Electoral Cycle Approach: Effectiveness and Sustainability of Electoral Assistance", ISPI working paper, Istituto di Studi di Politica Internazionale.

 $[\]underline{\%20Sustainability\%20 and\%20Effectiveness\%20of\%20Electoral\%20Assistance\%}\\ \underline{20-\%20The\%20Electoral\%20Cycle\%20Approach.pdf}$

UN 20126: Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance

Regardless of the context and the circumstances, the UN must adhere to the relevant international rights and standards and is guided by a number of principles when providing electoral assistance:

- 1. National sovereignty and ownership
- 2. Objective, impartial, neutral and independent
- 3. Broad national support for UN involvement
- 4. Needs based
- 5. Norm-based but not prescriptive to respect the local context
- 6. Political perspective and the management of election-related conflict
- 7. Integration
- 8. Broader and longer-term focus
- 9. Gender perspective
- 10. Promote inclusiveness, including the involvement of underrepresented or marginalized groups
- 11. Cost-effectiveness
- 12. Sustainability

⁶ https://dppa.un.org/sites/default/files/ead pd principles and types of un ea 20120511 e.pdf

OECD DAC 20147: Principles for international electoral assistance

- Take the local context seriously.
- Be alert to electoral risk.
- Don't misuse electoral aid but do promote transparency.
- Ground electoral assistance in complementary diplomatic policies.
- Recognize the role of regional organizations.
- Embrace a full concept of ownership.
- Build on donor co-ordination.
- Be as comprehensive as possible.
- Think and act across the electoral cycle.
- Push for integration.
- Emphasize citizens' understanding and engagement.
- Add the local to the national.
- Make the connection with accountability.
- Don't neglect gender.
- Respond more consistently to flawed elections.
- Keep learning about impact, and act on it.

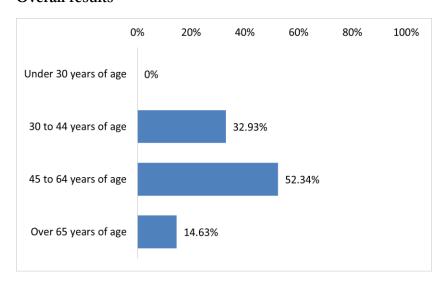
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⁷ https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264183636-10-en.pdf?expires=1602753300&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=BC040DCC98 F64B74B02074FF9FC4A137

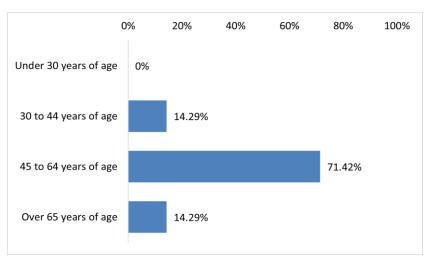
Appendix 4 – Survey results and analysis

Survey question 3: Please indicate your age bracket.

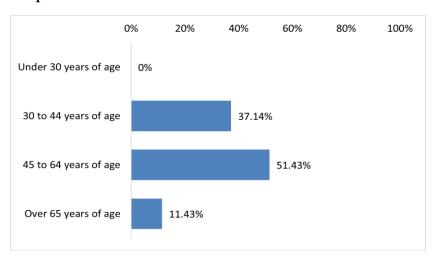
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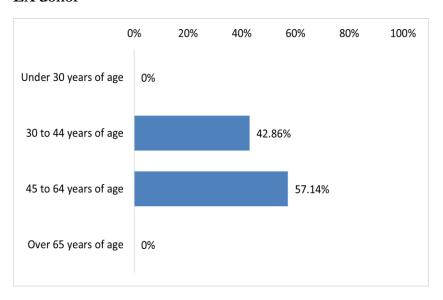
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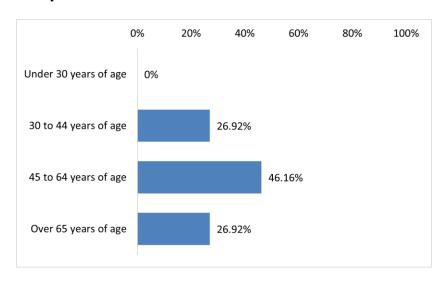
EA provider



EA donor

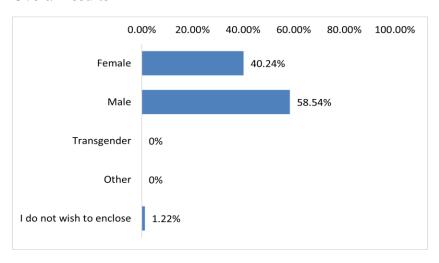


Policy maker

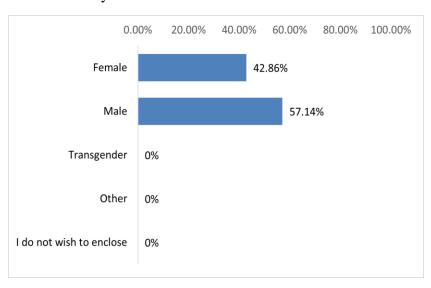


Survey question 4: Please indicate your gender.

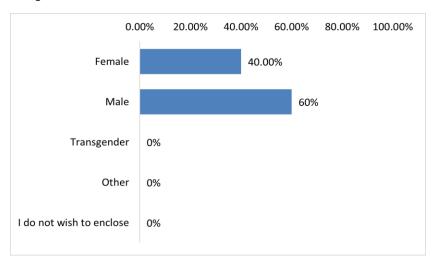
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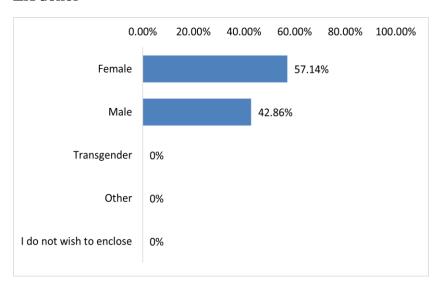
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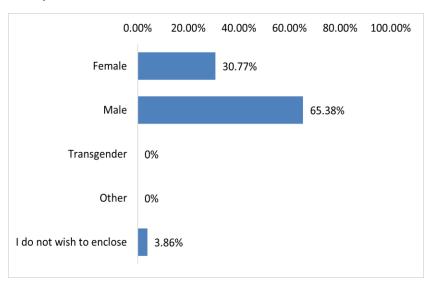
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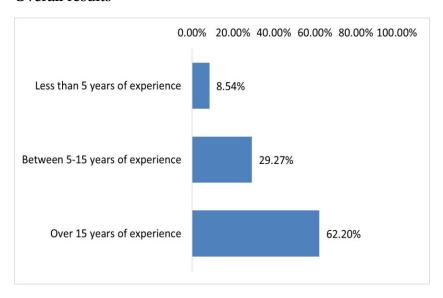


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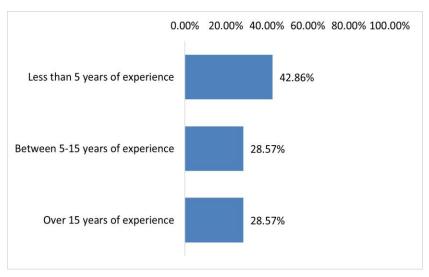


Survey question 6: How many total years of EA experience do you have?

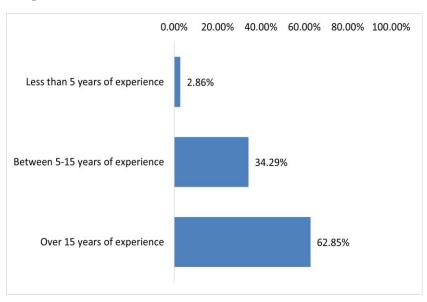
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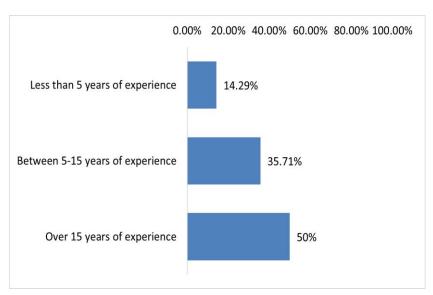
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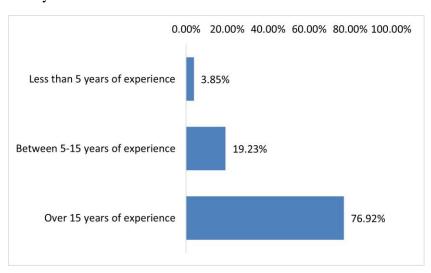
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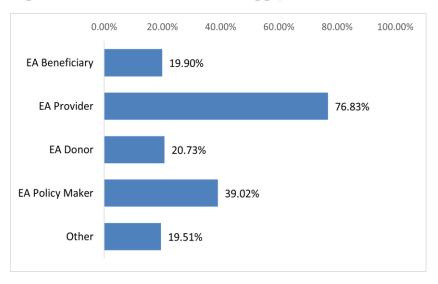
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Policy maker

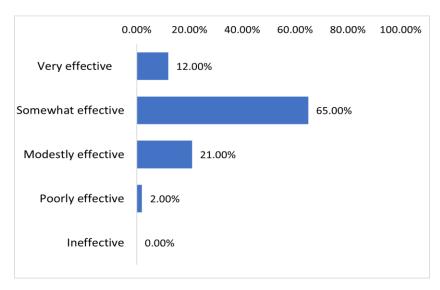


Survey question 7: What is the nature of your EA experience? Please check all that apply.

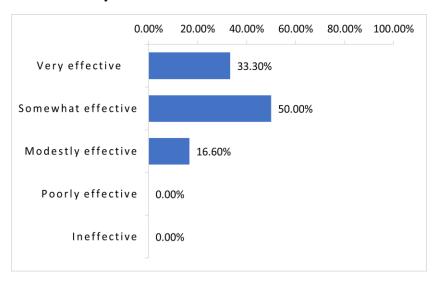


Survey question 18: How do you assess the effectiveness of EA efforts in general?

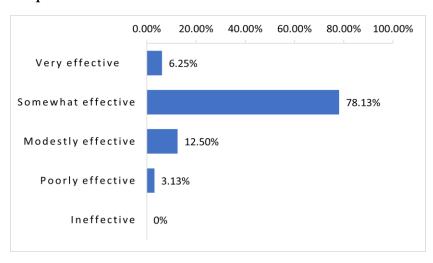
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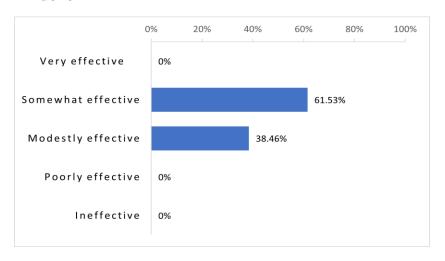
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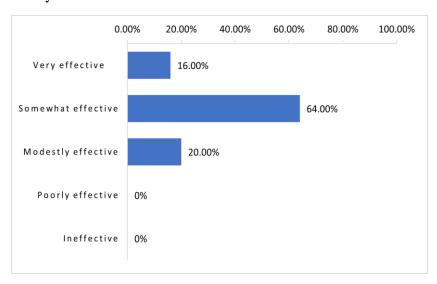
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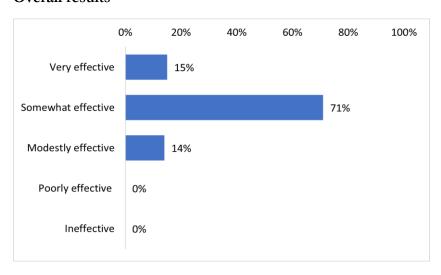


Policy maker

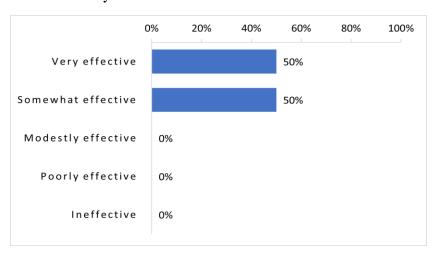


Survey question 19: How do you assess the effectiveness of EA projects in which you have been involved?

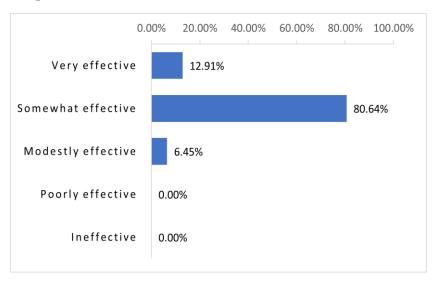
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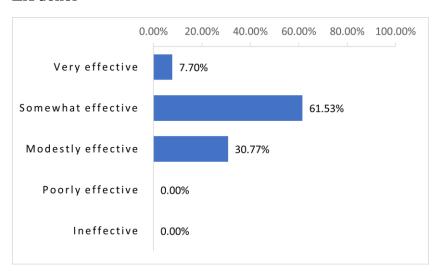
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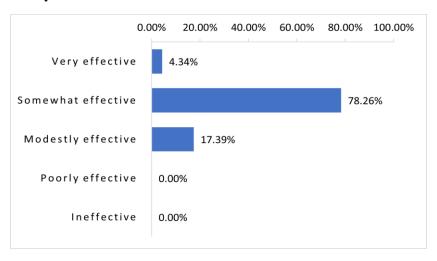
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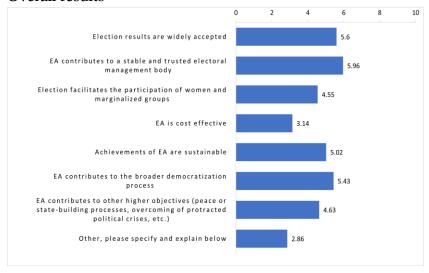


Policy maker

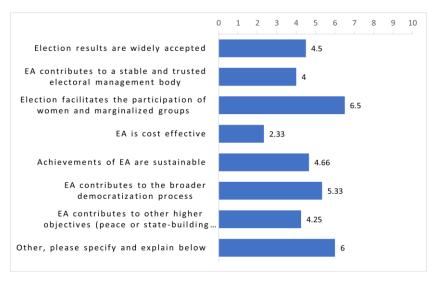


Survey question 20: Please rank in order of significance the following benchmarks of EA success.

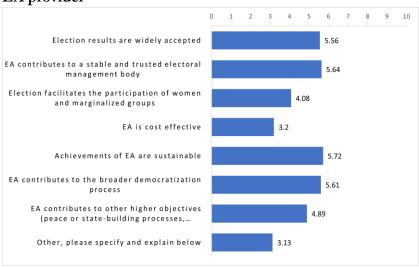
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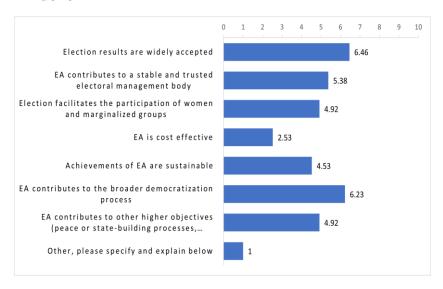
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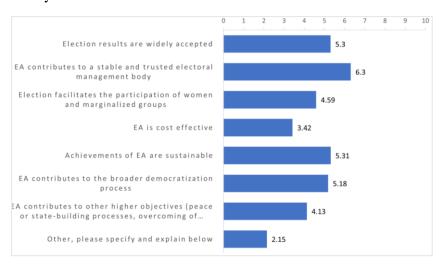
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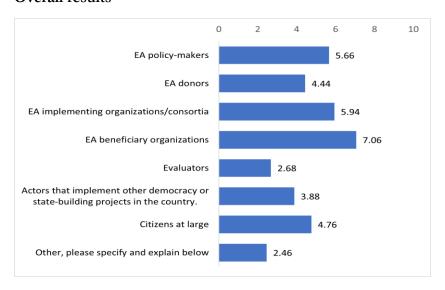


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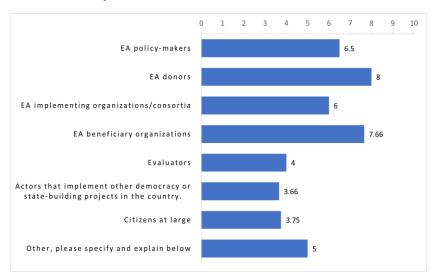


Survey question 22: Please rank the following EA stakeholders in terms of their importance to EA effectiveness.

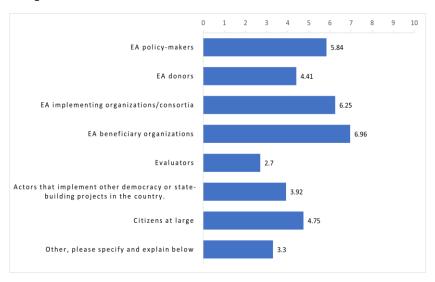
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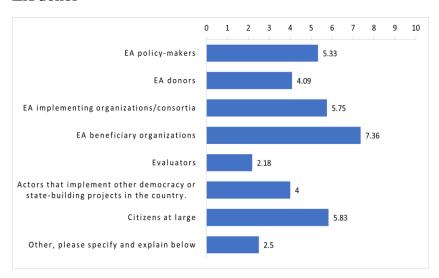
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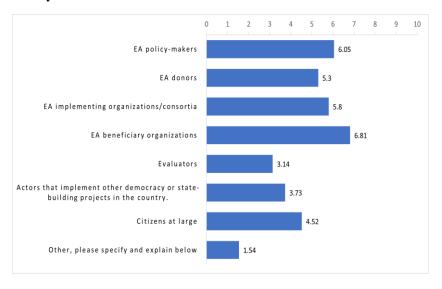
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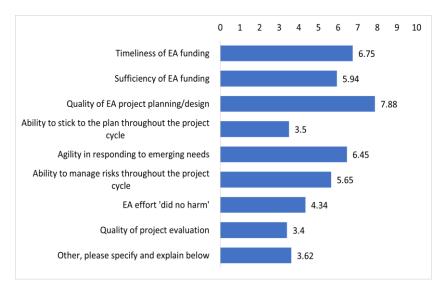


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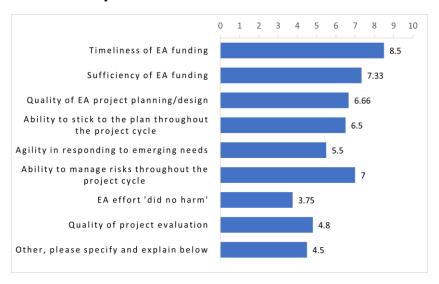


Survey question 24: Please rank the following project-related conditions in terms of their importance to the effectiveness of EA projects.

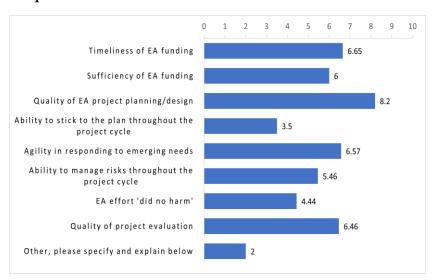
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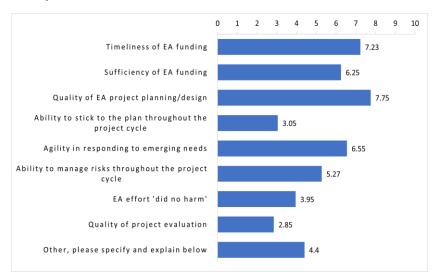
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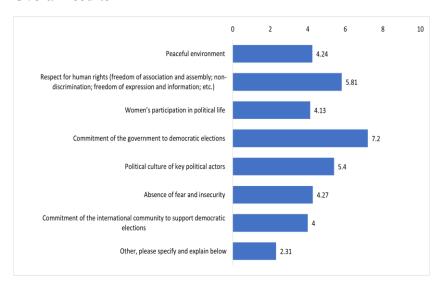


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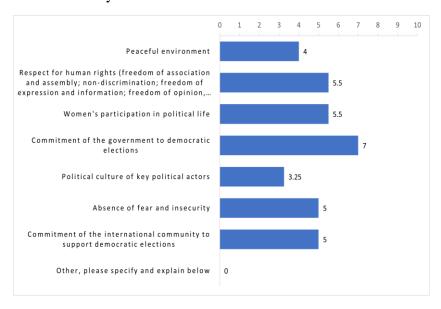


Survey question 26: Please rank the following contextrelated conditions in terms of their importance to the effectiveness of EA projects.

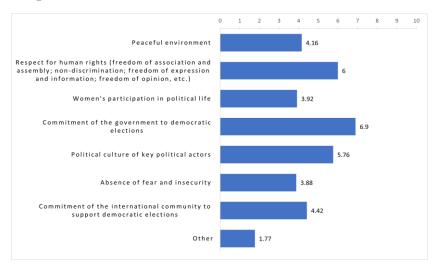
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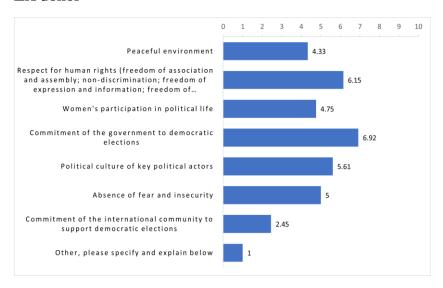
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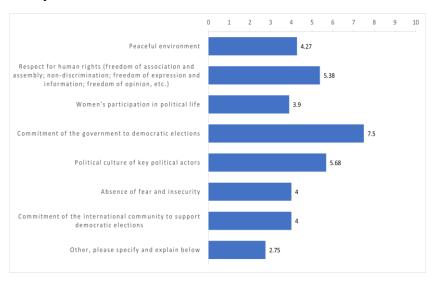
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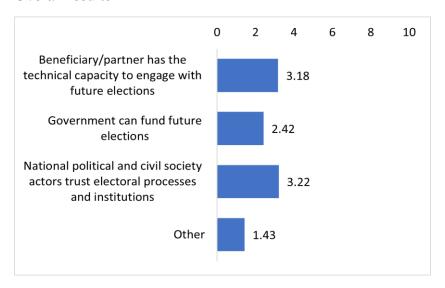


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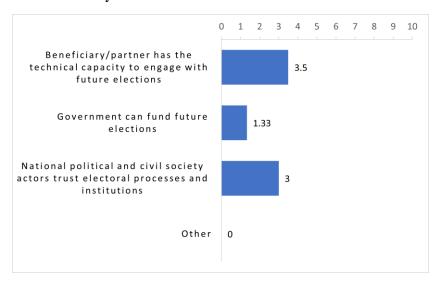


Survey question 28: Please rank in order of significance the following criteria for sustainable EA.

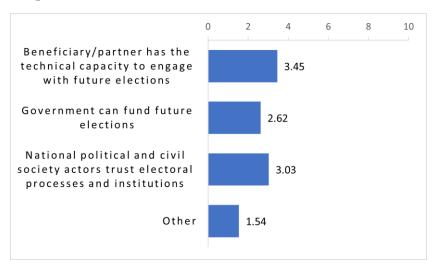
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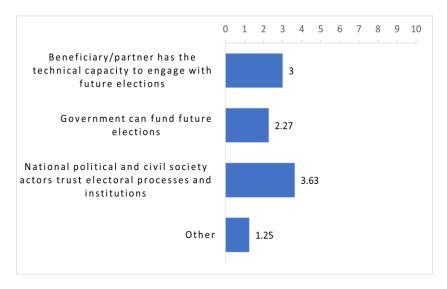
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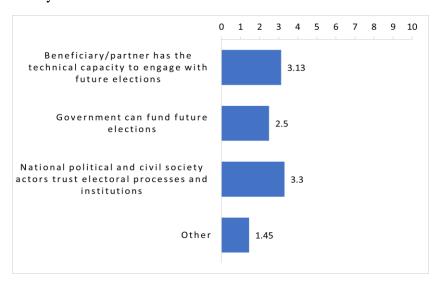
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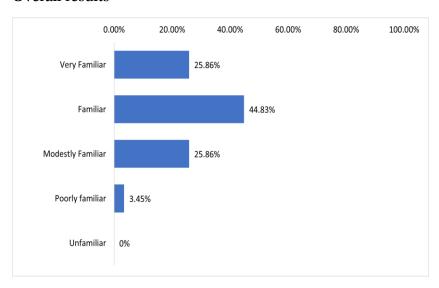


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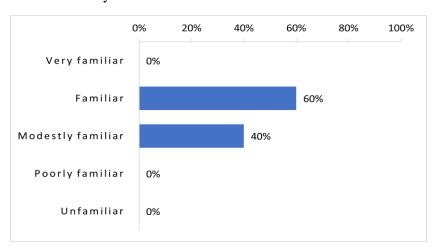


Survey question 30: How familiar are you with any existing set of principles of International EA?

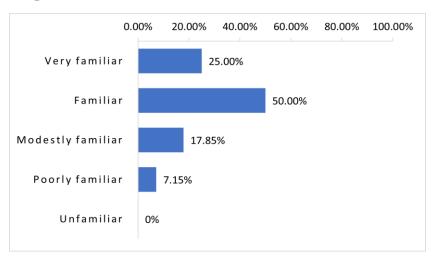
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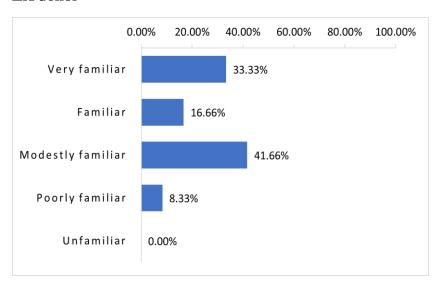
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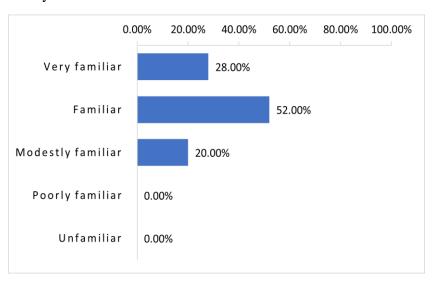
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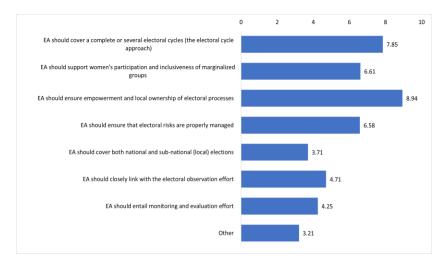


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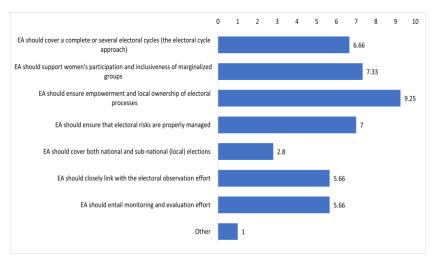


Survey question 32: For the purpose of this survey, we cluster the existing principles of international EA (based on lessons learned, broadly endorsed and frequently referred to by donors and EA providers) into two groups: process and context-related. Please rank process-related principles in order of importance.

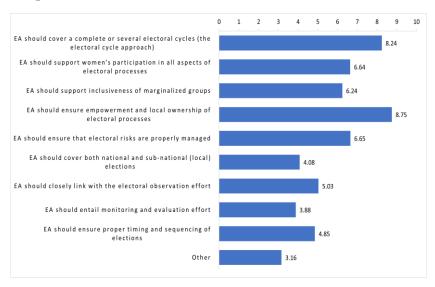
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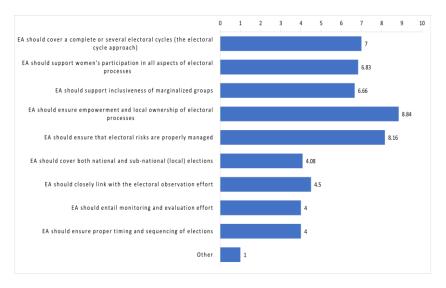
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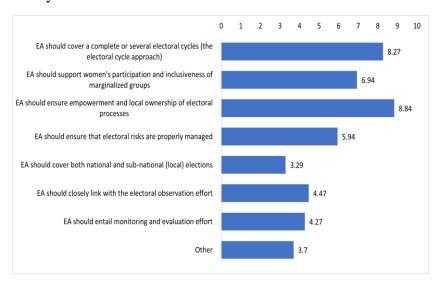
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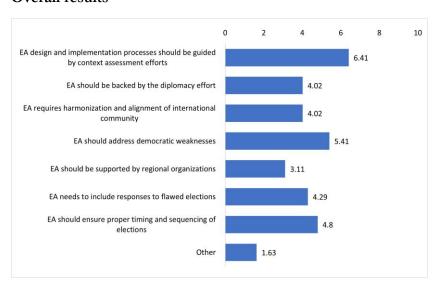


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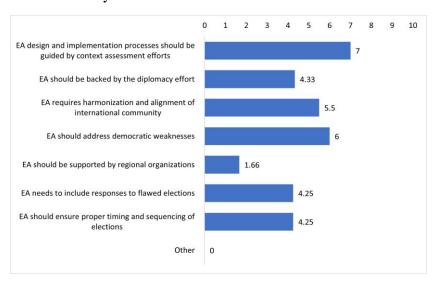


Survey question 34: Please rank context-related principles in order of importance.

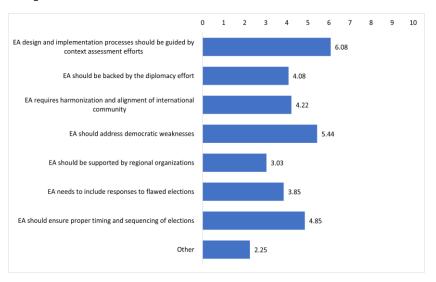
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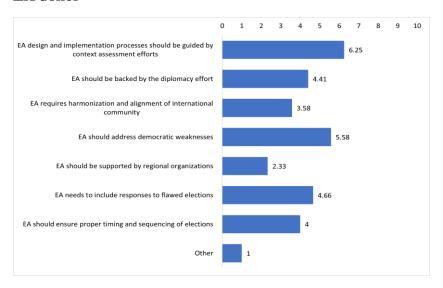
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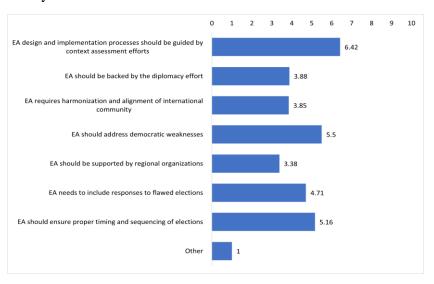
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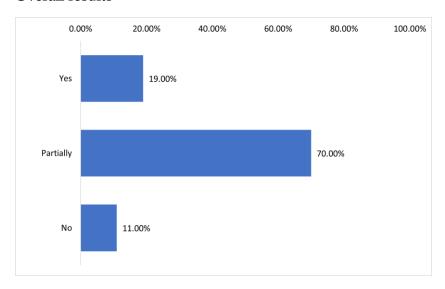


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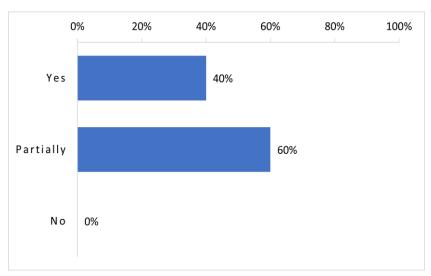


Survey question 37: From your personal experiences, do EA evaluation reports overall capture the impact of EA and lessons learned well?

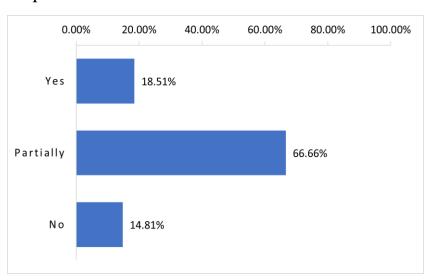
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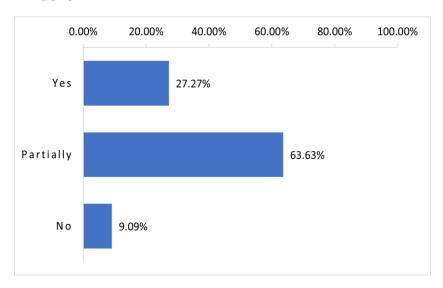
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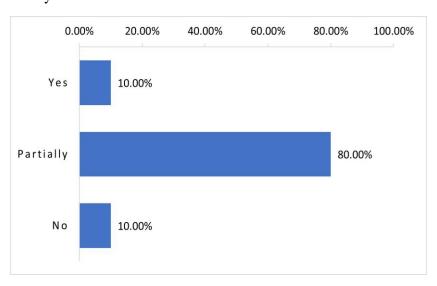
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Policy maker



Appendix 5 – Interview protocol

STEP 1: Contact selected interviewee via email

- Verify that the person has agreed to be interviewed. Survey results are HERE (internal link). Locate individual survey in the list and check the response to Q2 (interest and availability for the interview).
- Also, consider the respondent's commitment and seriousness in answering survey questions.
- Send an email to the respondent:

Dear < Name>

Thank you for participating in the Survey on Effectiveness of Electoral Assistance and agreeing to be contacted regarding a follow-up interview. We are impressed with your answers and comments.

Therefore, I would like to invite you to participate in an online interview. Ideally, the interview would take place in the SELECT (morning/afternoon) of DAY/MONTH. Otherwise, please suggest an alternative day and time during the week 07–11 December.

The interview will take approximately 30–40 minutes and cover the following themes:

- Perception of leading trends in electoral assistance (EA) policy and practice over the last two decades;
- Personal success stories related to EA, including enablers of success;
- Main obstacles for effective EA;
- Pathway to the sustainability of EA effort; and
- How to improve the long-term effectiveness of electoral assistance.

Naturally, we will be keen to hear from any other topic that you find relevant for our consideration. The study will serve as a platform for conveying experts' views to the Swedish development agencies, as well as to development agencies, policymakers, implementers and beneficiaries more broadly.

I am looking forward to hearing from you soon and answering any question that you might have.

Kind regards,

NAME

Answer any follow-up question

CONSIDER – Following the acceptance, even if not asked to provide details, a consequent email should explain:

For report writing purposes, we plan to record and transcribe interviews. However, these will not be shared beyond the IDEA team. In the final report, we will present generic treads and outliers but anonymize all quotes and avoid mentioning specific countries and organizations. Please let us know if you have preferences regarding the use of this transcript.

STEP 2: Conduct interview

(Use the standardized interview form; see below)

- Questionnaire
- Name of interviewee:
- Date of interview:
- Name of interviewer:

Basic info about respondent (prefilled by the interviewer):

- Gender:
- Nationality:
- Professional experience (type/position/s years):
- Current organization (if applicable):
- Geographical focus (to which responses relate):

Remarks:

[Go through the survey, get familiar with responses, in particular those to openended questions. Include important remarks here as self-reminder; e.g. if an outlier, ask for specific experiences that motivated specific selections. Ask more details or clarifications about specific comments comment.]

Make introductory remarks pointing to:

- the project commissioned by the Swedish government which is a generous EA donor.
- the purpose they wish to learn about long-term effectiveness.
 Findings will likely have an impact on Swedish MFA and SIDA
 course of actions. Further, they will likely resonate with other
 development agencies, policy makers, EA providers and
 beneficiaries; many of which are involved in providing
 experiences and thoughts.
- Interview are important milestones of the project where we wish
 to hear about what is it that we need to know and highlight in
 the report.

Be clear about anonymity.	
Consider starting with:	
"You have (number) of years working as	XX
(see survey) inXX (region, country globally."	

Question 1 (time – 4 min):

Looking back – are you able to observe any trends in terms of how EA policy or practice has changed over the years?

Subset questions:

- If YES, please explain; if NO, is it good or bad?
- What are the key drivers of EA change?

Question 2 (time – 4 min):

Indicate one or more successes of EA efforts (that you contributed to?) and drivers behind success. (Alternative words/phrases: EA work that made a difference)

Subset questions:

- Tell me more... what enabled that good work /what were the conditions for that good work
- Is 'your' good lesson adequately recorded for learning purposes?
- Can the story of this success be found in a publication?

Question 3 (time -4 min):

Indicate the main obstacles to the effectiveness of EA effort that you were involved with?

(Interviewer should be able to maintain clarity between process and context-related obstacles)

Subset questions:

- Are these hurdles adequately recorded for learning purposes?
- Can the story of this challenge be found in a publication/report?
 If NO why not?

Question 4 (time – 4 min):

Indicate personal experiences relating to sustainability, and/or lack of it, in EA efforts.

Subset questions:

- Was sustainability achieved in the long-term, or it eroded over a longer period of time?
- What was crucial for achieving sustainability?
- Why successes could not be sustained?
- Can the story of this challenge be found in a publication/report?
 If NO why not?

Question 5 (time 4 min):

The EBA study is concerned with the long-term effects of electoral assistance. What do you see as critical for ensuring such effects?

Question 6 (time – 3 min):

The next step in the process of the development of this study is an expert discussion. Do you have any suggestion for the IDEA team in terms of methods and topics for discussion?

Question 7:

Are you familiar with OECD-DAC (or any other sets of) principles of electoral assistance and how much (not familiar, somewhat familiar, very familiar)?

Background: in the literature review we found principles on electoral assistance – primarily developed throughout the period 2000–2014. We clustered these and listed them in the survey questions. We noted a great variety of responses as to the continued relevance of these

principles, as well as their relative importance (some were consistently rated higher than others). IN YOUR SURVEY YOU NOTED THAT [REFER TO INTERVIEWEE SURVEY ANSWER]

Subset Questions (to be used only if there is appetite regarding the question – likely only with very experienced electoral assistance providers):

- Which principles whether codified or not! resonate deeply with you, and why?
- If you were familiar with any sets of principles, which ones?
- Did these principles explicitly guide your work in any way? To what effect?
- Have you actively been involved in developing any sets of electoral assistance principles / norms? What was the impetus for developing them, what was the outcome (where were they applied/adopted, by which communities), what are your reflections in hindsight?
- Would you see any value in updating Principles on Electoral Assistance? By which means / By whom? Involving whom? (e.g. is OECD-DAC still the right forum?)

STEP 3 Upload responses

Interviewer:

- Upload responses in Word format HERE (internal link). Name document: "NAME_EBAinterview_date" (polish and save as soon as possible because it will be hard to recall specific details after some time or several interviews).
- Interviewer provides a recommendation regarding the expert working group

Step 4 – Send thank you and follow up email

Appendix 6 – Interview report

This interim document accounts for the third research phase of the broader study on Effectiveness of Electoral Assistance commissioned by the Swedish Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA). The four research phases – literature review, survey, interviews, and expert discussion – are designed to establish a deeper and multifaceted understanding of electoral assistance effectiveness. With this survey, the EBA study team captured experts' personal stories and deeper thoughts about electoral assistance efforts' effectiveness.

The survey design drew heavily on the literature review and survey findings. The literature review revealed a range of factors that impacted electoral assistance effectiveness and outlined concomitant principles to guide electoral assistance providers and stakeholders. The survey revealed respondents' perceptions about the importance assigned to various EA stakeholders and principles, as well as personal views on EA effectiveness.

The method and implementation

Face-to-face interviews are conducted with over 20 high-profile experts representing national partners, implementers, donors and policy-makers. Interviewees were asked to share personal stories, and analyze situation relating to leading trends in electoral assistance (EA) policy and practice over the last two decades, enablers and

⁸ National stakeholders are state and non-state organizations – primarily electoral management bodies (EMBs) and CSOs – that benefit from international electoral assistance; *Implementers* include international governmental and non-governmental organizations with the expert capacity to support national partners in delivering elections; *Donors* are development organizations that avail funding for EA projects; *Policy-makers are* various organizations and individuals involved in conducting consultations and research to propose the preferred course of action in the field of electoral assistance.

obstacles of successful and sustainable EA and provide remedies for the long-term effectiveness. Finally, experts were asked about EA principles.

Questions:

- Q1: Trends in terms of how EA policy or practice has changed over the years.
- Q2: Successes of EA efforts and drivers behind success.
- Q3: Obstacles to the effectiveness of EA effort.
- Q4: Long-term sustainability of EA efforts.
- Q5: Suggestions on the next step in the process of the development of this study is an expert discussion.
- Q6: Familiarity with OECD-DAC (or any other sets of) principles of electoral assistance.

Interview findings

Trends in electoral assistance policy and practice

Looking back and at present, experts observed several tends relating to EA objectives, methods, scope, themes, funds and capacity.

In terms of *objectives*, the EA was initially focused on supporting conduct of elections and building electoral institutions and processes in countries going through decolonization, democratization or post-conflict peace and state-building efforts. Over time, and given sustainability problems, the focus of EA expanded to include the long-term consolidation of electoral institutions and processes. In recent years, protection of electoral processes and institutions in the face of democratic backsliding has surfaced as an important question for EA.

In terms of *methods*, for a long time, EA efforts were heavily reliant on international experts who approached EA as 'replication of what they have at home' and 'getting job done' mentality. An early (embryonic) exception to this rule was Spain's democratization in 1970s when the local foundations received support from Germany and Sweden peers to develop knowledge resources and policies (Willy Brandt and Olof Palme era). Emphasis on local ownership and local capacity development remains characteristic of successful EA projects.

Nowadays, there are more standards for providing EA, yet large-scale and long-term EA engagements seen in 2000s seem less realistic. Instead, EA is increasingly taking the form of smaller projects that place on the ground expert teams (embedded in national institutions) to provide focused inputs to national partners (these may relate to strategic planning, disinformation, national ID programmes that feed voter registers, OCV etc.). An example is UNDP engagement in Panama. There is a shift from long-term capacity building to professional development.

The future will likely continue to see the trend of an increased number of focused EA projects, blurring lines between EA and election observation (which should be seen as positive development that already takes place), and merging EA with broader democracy support projects. Increasingly, there will be a need to conduct assessment (e.g. political economy analysis) and conduct project jointly.

In terms of the *scope*, early electoral assistance was focused on the election day (voting event) whereby electoral observation effort attracted more interest and funding. However, over time, it became clear that voting period is only a tip of an iceberg whose bigger part is under the water.

The Electoral Cycle Approach, introduced in the mid-2000s, provided a practical framework for longer-term programming (often also meant large-scale) EA engagements. However, despite broad commitments (and successful stories build over time), the Electoral Cycle Approach was not always followed.

In terms of *capacity*, EA is implemented more professionally overall, but EA implementers will need to prepare for the new era. It is noted that the generational turnover is taking place, which is the process that needs to be managed. Otherwise, new people will start from where their predecessors started 20 years ago. Furthermore, technical capacity and knowledge – an area where much progress has been made – must be coupled with organizational knowledge and skills by both EA implementers and national partners. In terms of national partners, the emphasis is increasingly on involving civil society. Expertise in the areas of technology, cybersecurity and other IT and tech related issues will need to continue to grow.

In terms of *themes (content)*, EA has also seen a trajectory of change. Early efforts were focused on foundational elements of electoral processes (design law, develop institutions, inform and educate stakeholders, register voters/parties/candidates, organize voting, consolidate and publish results). Over time, foundational work was expanded to ensure greater participation and representation of women, minorities or disabled persons. Introduction of ICTs into electoral processes was another major area and approach to strengthening the quality of and trust in electoral processes. At present, much focus is on social media and disinformation. However, it becomes obvious that some EA themes are outside of the EA project reach/influence (such as regulation of social media). Therefore, EA will need to be able to go beyond technical assistance and include political aspects.

In terms of *funding*, EA has seen a major oscillation. Early EA efforts included a handful of people, working with small budgets. Since mid-1990s and through 2000s funding streams allowed the establishment of big and long-term EA missions. However, these

missions delivered a mixed bag of results. Some big projects failed to consolidate democracy (although in some contexts consolidation of peace was seen as more important) while national partners developed the culture of donor dependency.

Nowadays, EA funding is decreasing, and there is a broad perception that days of massive EA projects are over. Donors move from single implementer to consortia and often are able to pick and chose experienced experts ensures quality. The latter, however, does not work well for developing a new cohort of EA specialists. Some big donors, such as the EU, are moving towards a single funding instrument (of which EA is a part) to give a holistic approach.

Successes and enablers

One of the biggest successes of **EA** was the establishment of professional and independent electoral management bodies (EMBs) worldwide. The EA effort was the critical catalyst for developing norms, policies, promotion and support in establishing EMBs. EMBs, in return, remain key pillars democratic transition processes and protectors of democratic legacies and, in some instances, became providers of electoral assistance themselves.

Secondly, **EA delivered numerous knowledge products and practical tools** that enabled both EA implementers and national partners to make a real change. Some tools, such as ACE Electoral Knowledge Network and BRIDGE Project, are developed through partnerships that involved international implementors and national EMBs. These products provided a wealth of comparative knowledge, capacity development opportunities and practical assessment and analysis tools that can be used by national partners. Many of these products were specifically made to ensure gender awareness, or empower women and youth to participate in democratic processes. Other resources are sensitive to specific mandates of other state and non-state actors with responsibility or interest to support credible elections, such as security sector

agencies, CSOs, media etc. EA evaluations and lessons learned exercises, as well as election observation mission (EOM) reports constitute important learning tools for EA providers. In many instances, EA is an engine behind the habit of knowledge production and sharing.

Thirdly, **EA** was behind the forging of critical regional and global networks through which EMBs and CSOs that specialize in electoral programmes could come together to share experiences with and learn from peers, engage in discussions with EA providers, donors and policy-makers, youth organizations etc. Such networks include the League of Arab States EMBs, ACEEEO, Global Electoral Organization, to mention a few.

Fourthly, **EA** was critical for developing and availing specialized competences on electoral processes globally. Namely, these competencies not only serve transitional contexts but inform practices in matured democracies as well. Many EA organizations and experts have a wealth of experiences working in different contexts. Sensitivity to different technical and political issues (national and international) surrounding elections, and the ability to build relations (good political will) and program holistically enable EA providers to navigate complex circumstances in providing effective electoral support.

Fifth, **EA** is critical in **contributing to democratic transitions**, and broader peace and state building efforts. However, while credible elections are necessary, they alone are not sufficient for achieving (lasting) peace and stability.

Sixth, EA contributed to civic education on democratic values, implemented through collaboration with CSOs or through the system of formal educational. (Bangladesh and Tunisia).

Interviewee: "Good projects have time and money and good people".

Obstacles to the long-term effectiveness of EA

Electoral assistance may encounter obstacles that may undermine its long-term effectiveness. These may relate to the **project design**, implementation/method of delivering EA, funding, unconducive environment. Accordingly, obstacles are present when:

...the **objective** of the EA is:

- to produce a legitimate counterpart to the International Community, rather than to give democracy;
- to achieve political stability, rather than genuine democracy (which can be messy and unpredictable);
- not shared by national stakeholders or the International Community;
- to promote foreign support (branding of EA by placing stickers and flags); and
- specific electoral outcome rather than a process.

... implementation/method (is):

- old-fashioned: 'One-size fits all', 'Cookie-cutter', 'Checking boxes' approach;
- EA comes too late, hence no serious capacity development can take place;
- it leaves no space for risk-taking;
- focused on the capital city and disregards regions;
- short term programming that does not allow for relationbuilding;
- when good EA people are not on the ground (arrogant, not keen to listen);

- when internal procedures limit agility of block implementers;
- when proper pre-election needs assessment does not exist (e.g. no understanding of local dynamics);
- when EA fails to adjust and adapt from one electoral cycle to another;
- when EA implementers entrench donor dependency;
- information and experiences are not shared;
- when implementers compete and duplicate; and
- when EA provides monetary incentives to stakeholders or vendors (e.g. procurement of ICTs)

... **funding lines** not fit for purpose:

- when no donor wants to be the first to put in/commit their funding;
- when no donor wants to fund EA without having its sticker on it;
- when donors have different or competing agendas, or in case of IGOs where member state have different interests (leading to clashes and EA in the middle);
- when donors forget electoral assistance is not about the outcome of an election rather the process;
- when donors refuse to recognize that projects can fail, so implementers can't experiment, innovate and be creative;
- funding is not flexible (for example, major game-changing circumstances or force majeure such as COVID-19 that requires institutional adaptability); and
- when donors can't maintain attention span and patience (lose interest after single elections which only created preconditions for effectiveness and long-term sustainability).

...unconducive environment exists:

- the domestic political will does not exist (a reluctance not just from political stakeholders, but also an EMBs) because of no genuine interest for democracy or fear of regime change (EA is always building institutions that are not in the interest of authoritarians);
- when national stakeholders are suspicious, but keen to receive foreign expertise and funds;
- when trust between stakeholders is low, and hate-speech continues to polarize societies;
- when governments are dysfunctional (e.g. late approving electoral budgets);
- when EMBs engage in 'playing' the assistance providers (not adhering to deadlines, 'filibustering');
- when civil society and people supported by EA are in the process for wrong reasons, e.g. money and attention;
- when the international community does not call bad behaviour;
 and
- when foreign actors are able to spread malign influence, namely to intervene and manipulate elections.

Long-term sustainability of electoral assistance

At the country level, the long-term sustainability of EA efforts is achieved when the electoral process and results they yield remain credible long after the EA projects are completed. It rests on several pillars (that EA projects built or developed):

- strong electoral institutions and civil society (in terms of credibility, independence, mandates, gender equality) that own the process, cooperate and show solidarity;
- capable, ethical, and skilled national electoral officials (that inhabit such institutions at all levels, state and regional) with a clear carrier path in electoral processes, for young people in particular ('before you can do professional development, you have to develop a profession');
- availability of relevant knowledge resources (policy-focused and evidence-based) and practical tools (that back those officials in their work);
- sufficient and sustainable funds and human resources (national);
- endorsement by high-level stakeholders/elites, or at least that they do not work against it;
- broad inclusions, trust, and good will of stakeholders in the system developed; and
- there are specific **safeguards against backsliding** (to resist pressures).

This can be:

- pursued if there is a broad consensus of the international community (often expanding beyond electoral assistance), funding, long term thinking, and diplomatic support; and
- *achieved* if there is a local demand for it, holistic, inclusive and long-term programming (understanding EA as democracy promotion), skills and like-mindedness on the part of individuals involved who understand how EA works, and sufficient time to build all sustainability pillars.

More broadly, long-term sustainability of global EA effort is achieved through building a global community of practice that includes people who have influence and can make a longer-term impact. Long-term vision to support regional organizations and networks pays off. Changes can be only incremental, moving from easier toward addressing more complex challenges and building habits to implement existing EA/EOM recommendations.

Interviewee: "It is more important to produce knowledge products that to implement electoral assistance. I suggest the creation of Nobel Prize in Elections".

Discussion on long-term sustainability of EA

Possible methods and topics for expert discussion:

- Protecting / defencing / safeguarding electoral/democratic processes (including electoral justice) from democratic reversals/backsliding.
- Disinformation / polarization / social media.
- Innovation and voice Imagining New Mechanisms of Democracy.
- Electoral capacity vs. wider political environment.
- Regeneration, renewal, preserving institutional memory.
- Importance of democratic assistance make sure it remains important.
- What methodologies work best at cutting edge; technology element.
- Managerial and money discussion.
- How to maximize technical innovation in countries with limited communications / IT infrastructure.
- Digitization (standards on how to support, how to observe, how to collaborate across agencies).

- Discuss and focus on gender inclusiveness process (especially violence against women working in elections (EMB staff) and intimidation against voters).
- Local empowerment and empowerment of marginalized groups.
- Political will and donor commitment and democracy support: where are we going?
- The Human Dimension: what are the skillsets we will need? How do we develop the cohort who will make the new way of doing electoral assistance possible?
- Legitimacy and accountability.
- Be future oriented: Civic ID plus Internet Voting.
- Electoral Education at the higher level: e.g. teaching MA students how to link ESD to Human Rights.
- How we adapt and adjust assistance from election cycle to election cycle.
- Future of EA and reflection on journey to date.
- EA and democracy is contested territory that must be reexamined.
- Relevance of EA to:
 - the larger democratic governance package
 - today's challenge of inequality
- In terms of participants/modalities:
 - talk to those that we usually don't speak to avoid echo chamber. "We need to have conversations outside of our comfort zone to define common ground with people we disagree with".
 - have separate donor discussions to capture donors' perspective: the issues of sustainability and long project time frames; consider including limited number of implementers.

- have separate discussions with implementer on: how to achieve greater coordination, the need for greater democracy promotion...
- Involve: donors, implementers, local voices (EMB networks), political parties, think tanks, and academics working in the field of EA.
- Involve: those no longer working in the field people who are still involved will want to continue what they are doing.
 Look at retirees. As far as possible, invite those who don't have a vested interest. Look at intellectuals with experience.

Reflections about OECD-DAC principles of EA

- The conversations around OECD DAC norms were important, and in turn influenced the UN's own internal norms: around local ownership for example. It also forced internal UN conversations that were very important for internal coherence. Since then, all UN policy documents, while regularly refreshed (including in 2020) are always aligned with those initial policy documents.
- OECD-DAC more related to Atlantic context; less seen in the Asia Pacific.
- IDEA work influenced principles subsequently developed by other organizations.
- It may be a problem in itself if many stakeholders working in electoral assistance are not familiar with guiding principles of EA.
- Doesn't use OECD-DAC. Only local constitution and electoral laws, sometimes international obligations.
- OECD-DAC principles are underutilized and are missing some elements, such as social media and disinformation.

- Never heard of OECD-DAC guidance, never used any other either.
- OECD-DAC principles: know of them, doesn't know them, doesn't use them. Use international obligation for elections, also SADC and AU charter and ECOWAS guidelines, DoP for observation.
- Completely useless, never used, not worth investing in.
- I know about discussion, but not sure they are done. Why don't
 we have code of conduct for EA providers? Similar to what we
 have for EO.
- EA Practitioners do not live and breathe International EA Principles.
- Real value of principles is in discussion at country level, they give a common language, a common platform to talk (similar to SDGs, gold standard).
- Hold discussion on future of EA before updating principles.
- USAID staff refer to USIAD policy documents which align with international EA policies.

There would be value in producing a set of set of principles/guidelines in order to develop international consensus on issues such as responsible support to EMBs with regards to election technology.

Appendix 7 – Background paper for expert discussions

Electoral Assistance Study – Expert Working Groups

International IDEA is organizing a consultative process to compile actionable recommendations for the Swedish Government on their future engagement in electoral assistance. Recognizing a renewed concern and interest in elections and democracy, we believe that these recommendations will be influential also beyond Swedish borders.

The Study on Long-term Effectiveness of Electoral Assistance was initiated by the Swedish Expert Group for Aid Studies (EBA). EBA is a Swedish government agency that reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and directly influences Swedish development policy through its reports and recommendations. The methodology for this Electoral Assistance (EA) study, implemented by International IDEA, is to identify hinders to effective and sustainable electoral assistance through a series of research phases: literature review, survey, and interviews. The next step in the process is to convene expert working groups (EWG) to move from 'identified problems' to potential solutions. The intention with this background document is to bring EWG participants' up to speed' with the thinking of the project to date, in advance of the topic-focused EWG conversations taking place in February.

There will be four Expert Working Group sessions:

- EWG #1 Supporting Elections for the Long Haul: What works, where next? (Feb 15)
- EWG #2 The Political Dimension of Electoral Work. (Feb 19)
- EWG #3 Polling 2030: Investments needed now to support elections of the future. (Feb 22)
- EWG #4 Design, Reform and Renewal: How to support locally-owned electoral change processes. (Feb 24)

Each session is designed to tackle a cluster of the 'thorny' issues repeatedly identified in the Study's survey and interview phases. EWG 1 focusses on the oft-mentioned difficulty of moving from short-term to long-term programming, despite years of recommendations to this effect. EWG 2 will explore the impossibility (per many of the interviewees) of conducting purely 'technical' programming in what is – in reality – an arena crackling with political tension. EWG 3 addresses the point that many made: elections in the future will not look the same; EA has to adapt accordingly. Finally, EWG 4 will deal with the cluster of strong opinions expressed on the importance of design that suits the context and processes that bring stakeholders onside.

Interviewees and surveyed practitioners expressed key problematic issues with great clarity – less obvious was 'what to do about it'. One Study finding is that difficulties in Electoral Assistance require a conversation beyond the practitioner community. So – we will not look for quick fixes in these EWG sessions. Rather, we will collectively delineate the issues at hand – and why they matter. We will put forward what we know works well. We will think about who needs to be at the table in the next phases of conversation.

The next section of this document presents the 'problem' that the Study is designed to address, while following sections present some of the evidence from the literature review, surveys and interviews curated for relevance to the EWG area of focus.

The Long-term Effectiveness of Electoral Assistance – Study Scope and Problem

This section is extracted from the original project proposal.

Electoral assistance (EA) is meant to support democratic development by – among other things – strengthening the institutions mandated to ensure that electoral events proceed smoothly and ensure the legitimacy of an incoming government. In an ideal-type trajectory, this electoral legitimacy, in turn, facilitates other development objectives – from health to education, from economic progress to good governance. In development cooperation, support to electoral processes is seen as a central component of a holistic democracy assistance package that emphasizes the importance of developing state institutions' capacity, known as Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs).

Despite these holistic, capacity development objectives, the reality is that the design and implementation of EA often fall short of these 'larger picture' development ideals. This is not a phenomenon particular to electoral assistance, but rather a generalized problem that scholars and policy-makers have noted. In the heat of the moment, 'capacity development' aspirations are often relegated to a pending electoral event's imperatives. This is understandable. The pressure for solutions to immediate problems can be forceful. Senior diplomats and foreign policy officials are acutely aware of the outsize consequences for regional stability when elections fail. Because elections timelines are brutal, the logistics are daunting, and the political tensions run high, the risks of electoral failure are ever-present.

Avoiding electoral failure is not simple. Problems can be *structural*, such as inadequate laws or inadequate structures and procedures; *technical*, such as inaccurate voters registers or malfunctioning election results software; or related to *capacities*, such as wrong decisions by senior electoral officials or inappropriate

behaviour by inadequately trained polling officials working under stressful conditions and time limitations. Add societal polarization, social media disinformation and malicious political interference into the mix – and an electoral environment can quickly turn toxic. Political spoilers who systemically undermine the credibility of electoral institutions and processes that are not in their favour and wily incumbents who abuse the electoral machinery and other democratic instruments to consolidate power are elements of the 'democratic backsliding' noted in the Global State of Democracy (GSoD) report (International IDEA 2019).

The public rejection of results or a severe outbreak of electoral violence can almost instantly melt away institutions and processes that took years to develop; Kenya 2007/08 and Venezuela 2015/18 are stark examples. Even when EMBs navigate complex circumstances successfully, the next electoral cycle, just behind the corner, will inevitably bring a new array of challenges. It is no wonder if development cooperation partners grow frustrated, fatigued, or dissatisfied with EA programming.

Ignoring EA because of associated risks is not a helpful nor viable option. Strengthening institutions (SDG 16) is an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals package. Credible electoral processes require courageous and capable institutions that can organize complex large scale events, have the trust of the population, and that can withstand political pressures. Broader democratization and development efforts (support to political parties, the rule of law, media, civil society, security reform and reconciliation efforts) inevitably intersect with electoral processes. Parliaments and government institutions rely on credible electoral processes as foundational to their own legitimacy.

Sessions Background

The previous section provided the baseline thinking for the study. This section covers subsequent findings and themes from the literature review, surveys and interviews. While the selections below are chosen for relevance to the sessions, the full raw datasets (anonymized) are available upon request.

The four sessions in February are designed to address the most difficult issues emerging from the survey and interviews study phases.

- The first session 'Supporting Elections for the Long Haul: What works, where next?' on Feb 15 provides an opportunity to make the case for long term focussed work: how it is best done, and what that work looks like.
- The second session 'Political Dimension of Electoral Work' on Feb 19 addresses the difficult questions of political will (raised in interviews and surveys as the biggest hinder to effective electoral assistance), the risks of legitimising undemocratic regimes (the biggest fear expressed by donors), and how/whether to link electoral assistance with diplomacy.
- The third session focusses on necessary adaptation of the operational dimensions of electoral support. Our starting assumption is that that polling arrangements will change: our default assumption of people voting at their local polling station may be anachronistic what does this mean for electoral assistance? (Polling 2030: Investments needed now to support elections of the future, on Feb 22)
- The fourth session is about the key principles identified in the survey and lit review process: local ownership and context sensitivity. What does it mean, in practice, to support locally-owned electoral change processes? This session, on Feb 24, will cover stakeholder consultations, national dialogue, and design do's and don'ts.

Session 1: Supporting Elections for the Long Haul: What works, where next?

Study interviewees spoke of the continued importance of making institutions strong 'for the long haul'. Highlighted themes and programming components included: professional development, regional networks, capacity building, strategic planning, long term flexible funding, electoral cycle 'evenness of support' and the importance of building trusting relationships between donors, implementing organisations and national partners.

The first expert working group session, 12 CET on February 15, will establish where and if there is community of practice consensus on sustainability, capacity building and institution-building themes, and will articulate recommendations on these themes.

The following subsections are background thoughts and reflections for EWG#1 from earlier phases of the Study.

What we found in the Literature Review, Expert Survey and Interviews

Early electoral assistance (EA) focused on the delivery of elections or/and verification of results. Over time, there was a growing sense of sustainability problems and adverse effects of ad-hoc EA, such as high staff turnover, insufficient funding, or malign political interference. A broader consideration of EA effectiveness and sustainability led to a shift of focus from election-day support to longer-term programming that prioritized the role of local stakeholders; in particular electoral management bodies (EMBs).

The European Commission⁹ were early adopters of this approach. Their policy documents (see EC 2000) emphasized capacity development of national Election Commissions and CSOs, and offered resources to promote long-term sustainability by supporting remedies for addressing weakness in the electoral administration and the rule of law between elections. Looking back, EC (2006,21) explained: "The means by which these goals (democratic transition) are to be achieved have changed, the emphasis moving away from the imposition of standards and systems, which were predominantly conditioned by the experiences of the assistance providers rather than the actual situation facing the beneficiaries, towards the development of institutional capacity and national ownership through a constructive long term partnership targeting the consolidation of democracy." According to ACE (2008) "...the core mistake of past electoral assistance projects did not rest in the provision of ad hoc short term support, but in the belief that such support would suffice to ensure the sustainability of the following electoral processes, the independence and transparency of the EMB concerned and the consequent democratic development of the partner country."11

Beyond policy level documents, the concepts of national empowerment and institutional development, with EMBs at the forefront, were reflected in synergetic areas of EA: development of EA resources (knowledge, training and practical tools); design/programming of field interventions, and EMB networking. The basic idea was 'global tools for professional empowerment'. The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, representing a partnership of several electoral assistance providers, established a global online

⁹ Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation /* COM/2000/0191 final */. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52000DC0191&from=EN

¹⁰ European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p.21.

¹¹ ACE Project, Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation, 2008, p.15.

community and repository of electoral knowledge with a view of empowering electoral administrators around the world, reasoning as follows: "to foster the integrity of elections and to promote credible, sustainable. professional and inclusive electoral throughout the globe". 12 The "Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections" (BRIDGE) project was developed by five partner organisations in the democracy and governance field who jointly committed to developing, implementing and maintaining a comprehensive curriculum and workshop package available, designed to be used as a tool within a broader capacity development framework."13 Similar initiatives sprung up at the regional level and even in higher education, such as the MEPA Masters Programme in election administration. Many practical tools for assessment, planning, management and risk management topics) developed by ECES, EISA, IDEA, IFES, UNDP and other electoral assistance actors have found a broad base of users among EMBs.

In the mid-2000s, the Electoral Cycle Approach was articulated and swiftly gained broad endorsement. According to IDEA (2005) "it allowed to depict the complexity and chronology of electoral processes more effectively and for electoral assistance to be viewed as continuous, rather than one-off and short-lived support to single election events." The concept recognized critical building blocks of the electoral process that needed to be established in early phases of the electoral cycle, and that there were several years worth of activities from planning to verifying election results. Further, the electoral cycle approach advocated for the time between elections to be used for evaluation and professional development. According to UNDP (2007:2) "Electoral assistance that uses the Electoral Cycle's approach centers on longer-term support and provides a better

¹² https://aceproject.org/about-en/

¹³ https://www.bridge-project.org/

¹⁴ International IDEA 2008:15-16.

opportunity to address in a much more sustainable manner issue of capacity development; institutional strengthening; participation of women, minorities, indigenous people and other disadvantaged groups."¹⁵

An important aspect of building local ownership and strong electoral institutions was creating regional practitioner networks (e.g. PIANZEA, ACEEEO, Arab EMBs) and global electoral networks (GEO, RECEF, AWEB). According to UNDP (2000:100) "Beyond their networking function, these associations (Regional International Associations of Electoral Authorities) have played an important role in the diffusion and consolidation of standards of electoral practice worldwide, and therefore in the enhancement of EMBs as institutions of governance." ¹⁶ Global Electoral Organization Conferences, for example, served as forums at which different EA stakeholders could present and learn about most recent developments, exchange perspectives and ideas, and forge networks and partnerships.

The importance of local ownership and local empowerment also emerged strongly in documents that proposed universal or corporate EA principles. DFID principles for election support (2010:33)¹⁷ point to the "need to consider coordinating their support in such a way that national actors (for example, election commissions) are given a lead role and can drive the reform process where relevant. Based on local capacity and an assessment of the political economy, support needs to be designed to build capacity and to empower local actors." Similarly, UN 2012 refers to "National sovereignty and ownership, and Sustainability", while OECD-DAC 2014 recommends: "Embrace a full concept of ownership" "Emphasize citizens' understanding and engagement".

¹⁵ UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementation guide, 2007, p.2.

¹⁶ UNDP, Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance, 2000, p.100.

¹⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/system/uploads/stachment_data/file/67464/elect-asst-pol-less-int-supp.pdf

International IDEA conducted an expert survey as part of the EA Study. The survey experts ranked the follow statements highly:

- Contribution to a stable and trusted electoral management body is the most important benchmark for assessing the effectiveness of electoral assistance (EA).¹⁸
- Trust in electoral processes and institutions is key to sustainable EA¹⁹ and
- EA should prioritise empowerment and local ownership of electoral processes.²⁰

Nevertheless, despite knowing well (and long) the importance of local ownership of strong electoral institutions, several recent evaluations²¹ confirm that this aspect of EA did not always bear fruit. One evaluation finds that, despite EA focus on sustainability – through the development of local individuals and institutions' capacity without creating an over-reliance on donor funding – it was beyond the control of the project to ensure that these benefits are carried forward to the next election process. Another evaluation found that an EMB will remain dependent on the international

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¹⁸ Other benchmarks included: 'Elections results are widely accepted', 'EA contributes to a broader democratization process', 'Achievements of EA are sustainable', 'Election facilitate the participation of women and marginalized groups', 'EA contributes to other higher objectives', and 'EA is cost-effective'.

¹⁹ Other options included: 'National partner has the technical capacity to engage with future elections', and 'Government can fund future elections'.

²⁰ Other priorities being, EA should: 'Closely link with the electoral observation effort', 'cover a complete or several electoral cycles, 'cover both national and subnational/local elections', 'ensure proper timing and sequencing of elections', 'ensure that electoral risks are properly managed', 'entail monitoring and evaluation effort', 'support inclusiveness of marginalized groups', 'support women's participation in all aspects of electoral processes'.

²¹ Details undisclosed to avoid blame-and-shame; quotes are paraphrased.

support for the foreseeable future because domestic funding for elections is virtually non-existent. The third evaluation of EA found the least evidence of project success in addressing EMB institutional constraints to operate effectively.

The issue of strong institutions and capacity development transpired strongly during interviews with experts. Many experts shared the opinion that one of the biggest successes of EA was the establishment of professional and independent electoral management bodies (EMBs) worldwide, equipping them with knowledge and skills, and supporting networking and in the form of regional and global electoral networks. The overall consensus of the study to date is that EMBs remain key pillars in democratic transition processes and protectors of democratic legacy. In a number of cases, strong and capable EMBs and/or their excellent officials have become providers of electoral assistance themselves.

Experts' points and thoughts on this topic included:

- There is a shift from long-term capacity building to professional development.
- Technical capacity and knowledge of EMBs an area where much progress has been made – must be coupled with organisational knowledge and skills.
- In terms of national partners, the emphasis of donors is increasingly on civil society organisations.
- Some national partners developed a culture of donor dependency.

In terms of obstacles, experts particularly note challenges when:

- EA is old-fashioned (one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter, checking boxes approach);
- EA comes too late; hence no serious capacity development can take place;

- focused on the capital city and disregards regions;
- short term programming does not allow for relation-building;
- good EA people are not on the ground (arrogant, not keen to listen);
- donors can't maintain attention span and patience (lose interest after single elections which only created preconditions for effectiveness and long-term sustainability).
- domestic political will does not exist (a reluctance not just from political stakeholders, but also an EMBs) because of no genuine interest for democracy or fear of regime change (EA is always building institutions that are not in the interest of authoritarians);
- EMBs engage in 'playing' the assistance providers (not adhering to deadlines, 'filibustering');
- civil society and people supported by EA are in the process for wrong reasons, e.g. money and attention;

In terms of long-term sustainability, experts underly the importance of:

- strong electoral institutions and civil society (in terms of credibility, independence, mandates, gender equality) that own the process, cooperate and show solidarity;
- capable, ethical, and skilled national electoral officials (that
 inhabit such institutions at all levels, state and regional) with a
 clear carrier path in electoral processes, for young people in
 particular ('before you can do professional development, you
 have to develop a profession');
- availability of relevant knowledge resources (policy-focused and evidence-based) and practical tools (that back those officials in their work);
- sufficient and sustainable funds and human resources (national);

- endorsement by high-level stakeholders/elites, or at least that they do not work against it;
- broad inclusions, trust, and good will of stakeholders in the system developed; and
- there are specific safeguards against backsliding (to resist pressures).

Questions for the Expert Session are:

- what are the design elements of an electoral assistance effort that support electoral capacity with a longer-term perspective (e.g. 'robust institutions')?
- what should we, as a community of practice, recommend to the Swedish Government in support of our views on long-term focus of assistance?

Session 2: Political Dimension of Electoral Work

Throughout the interviews and surveys, 'Political Will' (lack of) was identified as the single biggest hinder to implementing effective electoral assistance. Donors spoke with concern about inadvertently legitimizing undemocratically minded regimes through electoral assistance. Disinformation and political pressure on election commissions were identified as examples of harms for which efficient strategies are yet to be developed. Where does technical support fit in the broader context of international pressure to meet international obligations? What is the role of diplomats, and how can we prepare them for, and support them in, their roles during electoral turmoil? Under what conditions is electoral assistance seen as foreign interference? This session will explore the political dimensions of electoral assistance work and discuss the optimal division of roles and responsibilities in the international community to affect positive democratic change.

What we found in the Literature Review, Expert Survey and Interviews

A clear theme throughout the first phases of the study to date that electoral assistance (EA) takes place in a highly politicized environment – and that this is difficult, even problematic, in many ways. In some cases, EA efforts need to navigate through environments that are not conducive to democratic progress, whether through lack of democratic tradition, political or structural arrangements that do not favour credible elections, or lack political will by key stakeholders to move forward with necessary electoral decisions. These dynamics are not new; these dynamics persist.

Already in 1999, Carothers (1999:130) warned that "aid providers are confronting the real limits of their interventions. To start, if a government or an electoral commission does not take the task of election administration seriously, well-designed training courses, savvy external advisers, and generous donations of sophisticated equipment will not solve the problem." Similarly, USAID (2000:50) noted that "host-country receptivity to the proposed activity is important to its success and effectiveness", while SIDA underlined that "many political problems in emerging democracies, for example, the often deep-seated problem of political mistrust, should not be met by transparent ballot boxes but by promoting dialogue between political parties, civil society and government etc". According to International IDEA (2005:102).

²² Carothers, T., Aiding Democracy: The Learning Curve, 1999, p.130.

²³ USAID, Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes, 2000, p.58.

²⁴ SIDA, The Political Institutions, 2002, p.17.

"No consensus exists about the notion of democracy-building through international intervention, as there are major unresolved questions which affect the role of elections and the perception of elections. The international community is often not in the position to maintain support for international norms of democracy and governance' against firm, if sometimes covert, opposition by significant local actors." A key UNDP evaluation (2012:xi) found that "The degree of political will among different stakeholders to hold free and fair elections was a critical contributing factor of this [UNDP EA success story] achievement..."

The emerging understanding that 'the political dimension matters – this complicates EA engagement' translated into prescriptive and normative EA guidance. DFID (2010) internal guidelines asked EA designers to "recognize limitations of development partners' role in elections support" and "be clear when to advocate for and support elections – and when to hold back." The DFAT (2017:2,9) evaluation reminds that "improving technical support alone, while important, is unlikely to improve electoral processes in challenging institutional, political and cultural environments; coordination, continual management and diplomatic engagement are also required" ²⁷ The OECD DAC (2014:81) EA principles, carefully negotiated in global community of practice discussions, landed on the following wording: "Electoral assistance should be based on the highest standards of impartiality. It should only be used to promote free and fair elections, not to advance other donor policy goals, such as burnishing the legitimacy of favoured partner governments or building friendly relationships with governments."

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²⁵ International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide IDEA, 2005, p.102.

²⁶ https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/5969

²⁷ https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264183636-10-en.pdf?expires=1612534781&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=BEF1A0B5D 243560E59EFDBA039188D14

In terms of implications for programming, the UN (2015) laid out the imperative succinctly: "Create an environment conducive to credible elections." Basically – the conditions for elections are as important as the running of the elections. Depending on perspective, this fundamental idea either broadens the scope of electoral assistance to include dimensions such as civic education and political dialogue *or* encourages a move to 'holistic' programming with electoral assistance as one dimension of broader governance programming. Both approaches can be seen, for example in UNDP and DFAT(AusAID) programming. The DFAT (2017:2,9) evaluation recommends that "electoral support should be located within DFAT's wider strategy for effective governance in a country and more clearly integrated with other governance programs, supported by effective coordination, management and diplomatic engagement."²⁸

While respect for holistic programming seems reasonably well accepted – a less easy relationship is that between electoral support and diplomacy. Tensions can arise between the relationship building critical to implementing a long-term project, and the immediate diplomatic imperatives of taking a stand. Or, conversely, diplomatic needs to foster relationships can make 'taking a strong stand electorally' difficult. Somewhere within these natural tensions comes also election observation and election observation recommendations. Every electoral assistance practitioner has come into a 'do we, don't we' standoff at some point in their career – this was clear from the interviews. There are no easy answers. As, increasingly, electoral assistance funding choices are delegated to embassies or EU delegations - these dynamics are coming to the fore. Study interviewees spoke of contending priorities, or views, on the purpose of EA: whether for relationship-building; development; on-the-ground intelligence or promotion of democracy. The 2017 DFAT report lays out these dynamics as electoral assistance

²⁸ DFAT MAKING IT COUNT Lessons from Australian electoral assistance 2006–16 December 2017:9.

responsibility shifted from a development oriented AusAID to a politically oriented DFAT, and ultimately delegated to embassies and missions. Similar dynamics are in play in the UK and the EU. Part of the reason for the shift is – precisely – recognition of the political dimension of elections.

The documents show a broad policy agreement that – because of the assumed deep knowledge of the local historical context, politics, and key actors' stakes in the upcoming election – diplomatic missions on the ground should take an increasing role in addressing political obstacles to EA efforts. According to the European Commission (2006:26) "Electoral assistance projects, though technical in nature, have an undeniable political dimension which must be recognized during the dialogue on development cooperation which takes place with stakeholders in partner countries. Such recognition can provide the EU actors with additional awareness of the functioning of national key institutions." ²⁹ This and other similar arguments were also reflected in EA principles adopted by DFID and OECD DAC.

DFID (2010:21) highlighted the need to integrate diplomatic with financial and technical support: "There is an important interrelationship between diplomatic/political, financial and technical support before, during and after elections. The key is to get the balance right, to time it well, and to ensure that all parties work closely together to maximize the returns on their effort." Similarly, OECD-DAC 2014 emphasized the importance of grounding electoral assistance in complementary diplomatic policies: "Electoral assistance should be grounded in complementary diplomatic policies that seek to nurture or reinforce the commitment on the part of partner governments to follow accepted electoral norms and meet the international obligations for democratic elections." UN Guidelines on how "to create a context that is conducive to credible

²⁹ European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p.26.

elections" offered by the UN (2017:8–13) to its "Member States and the international entities supporting them", included the following recommendations:

- Mitigating zero-sum politics well before an election
- Pursuing dialogue and consensus in setting the rules of the game
- Placing a premium on responsible political leadership
- Encouraging the broad participation of all political actors rather than disengagement."³⁰

The EBA Study survey results showed 'government commitment to democratic elections' as the most crucial context-related factor that contribute to electoral assistance's long-term effectiveness.³¹ This perception was held across respondents from different stakeholder groups. Some respondents made comments about the importance of respecting partner countries' sovereignty, the challenges that widespread corruption represents, and the importance to engage even if the situation with human rights is problematic. These answers show that the perennial sovereignty vs international obligations divide remains difficult to navigate.

When referring to effectiveness of electoral assistance, policy-makers emphasized issues with sustainability in the context of **broader democratic backsliding**. When referring to the future challenges to EA, all stakeholders (national partners, implementors, donors and policy makers) pointed to democratic backsliding, and a number of interlocuters spoke of *protection* of electoral processes and institutions from deliberate threat as the key question for EA moving forward. In response to the question on sustainability of interventions, survey

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³⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization, 2017, p.9-13.

³¹ Other options included: Respect for human rights, Women participation in political life, Political culture of key political actors, Absence of fear and insecurity, Commitment of the international community to support democratic elections.

responders spoke of the need for specific safeguards against backsliding, for electoral authorities and related agencies to resist undue pressures. In terms of context-related principles of effective EA, most respondents assigned highest importance to the 'effective EA (design and implementation) is guided by context assessment efforts', followed by 'EA should address democratic weaknesses'.³²

The political dimension of electoral work also resonated strongly during interviews with experts. Their comments included the following points. EA needs to be able to go beyond technical assistance and include political aspects. When domestic political will does not exist – due to a reluctance from political stakeholders and/or EMBs because of no genuine interest for democracy or fear of regime change – EA will not be successful nor sustainable. Sensitivity to different technical and political issues (national and international) surrounding elections, the ability to build relations (good political will), and ability to program holistically enable EA providers to navigate complex circumstances in providing effective electoral support is critical.

Also, experts underlined the importance of good-will by international development organisations that translates into political/diplomatic backing and funding of EA projects.

Excerpts On Political Will

"First, electoral support may — as a matter of principle — be rejected as "undue interference" with the national sovereignty of a country. Second, specific recommendations made or advice provided may be criticised as inappropriate interference or implementation/manifestation of a "hidden agenda" of international organisations in a given situation. A government's firm rejection of specific electoral support as undue interference or for alleged partiality is a more

³² Other options included EA being 'backed by the diplomacy effort', 'harmonization and alignment of international community', 'been supported by regional organizations', and 'need to include responses to flawed elections'.

widespread problem. The lack of political will of the incumbent party/government to improve the electoral process is much more difficult to overcome than technical insufficiencies or the lack of experience of national authorities." (Binder, C., Two Decades of International Electoral Support: Challenges and Added Value, 2009, p. 237–239).

"Domestic political will is an important condition for success, since the implementation and effectiveness of technical assistance depends crucially on cooperation with host country authorities." (von Borzyskowski, I., Resisting democracy assistance: Who seeks and receives technical election assistance?, 2016, p. 3).

"Local or Host-country Receptivity: Host-country receptivity to the proposed activity is important to its success and effectiveness." (USAID, Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes, 2000, p. 58).

"No consensus exists about the notion of democracy building through international intervention, as there are major unresolved questions which affect the role of elections and the perception of elections. The international community is often not in the position to maintain support for international norms of democracy and governance' against firm, if sometimes covert, opposition by significant local actors." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide IDEA, 2005, p. 102).

"The scope and effectiveness of the assistance also depends on the extent to which the political actors in the country are supportive of democratic processes per se—so that, for example, they are willing to see a good process as ultimately more important than achieving an outcome that favours them." (UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementing Guide, 2007, p. 24).

..democracy is ever a work in progress, and that strengthening democratic institutions and promoting truly democratic politics is the best way to overcome democratic deficits and to foster the link between democracy and human development" (UNDP Practice Note on Electoral Systems and Processes, 2004, p. 2).

Excerpts on Role of International Community

"Electoral assistance projects, though technical in nature, have an undeniable political dimension which must be recognised during the dialogue on development cooperation which takes place with stakeholders in partner countries. Such recognition can provide the EU actors with an additional awareness of the functioning of national key institutions." (European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p.26).

"Coordinated diplomatic intervention by the international community can be an effective way of responding to emerging problems...Where the government is adequately open, it may be preferable for the international community to engage privately with the government on the international standards required for the election to be considered genuine. Regional and sub-regional bodies may be able to serve as mediators" (Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, How to note: On Electoral Assistance, 2010, p.14).

"EA should only be used to promote free and fair elections, not to advance other donor policy goals, such as burnishing the legitimacy of favoured partner governments or building friendly relationships with governments." "Electoral assistance should be actively integrated into the wider domain of democracy support, especially assistance for political party development, legislative strengthening, media assistance, and civic education programmes." (OECD, Accountability and Democratic Governance: Orientations and Principles for Development, 2014, p. 82).

Session 3: Polling 2030 – Investments needed now to support elections of the future

Experts interviewed for the study indicated the importance of considering the future of electoral assistance (EA) before designing EA recommendations or updating EA guidelines. A consensus across the board is that change is afoot. Key EA trends identified for the upcoming decade included:

- Elections are changing EA will need to adapt accordingly.
- 'Old' challenges in elections remain while new emerge.
- EA will need implementation modes that require less funding
- Smaller projects with less impact over shorter periods of time and less relevance for national counterparts will impact outcomes and sustainability.

Session Discussion Questions

This session will provide a platform for discussing these future trends, their implications and how electoral assistance can adapt. The following subsections are background thoughts and reflections for EWG#3 based on the what interviewees in the earlier phases shared as their expectations of the upcoming decade of EA.

The session discussion questions listed below are based on issues identified in the literature review, surveys and interviews.

The EA journey – past and future models

One expert proposed a *four-generation* framework to understand the electoral assistance trajectory:

(1) organizing elections on behalf of the country; (2) building strong, independent, credible institutions and related laws and processes; (3) brokering peer to peer exchanges and support. Looking into the future, she envisages a fourth generation that will address challenges to the credibility of the democratic model. Another expert spoke of the same sequencing trajectory with the terms' Building, Consolidating and, now and onwards, Protecting democracy'.

At the same time, other interlocutors reminded us not to forget that electoral assistance on the ground still deals with many first and second-generation issues. On the one hand, this was seen as problematic by some survey recipients: for example that, 'in the heat of the moment, 'capacity development' aspirations are often relegated to a pending electoral event's imperatives'. On the other hand, EWG #1 participants spoke of event-focused EA as perfectly appropriate for some circumstances and advocated a 'two-track' approach to EA thinking.

Discussion Questions

Does the four-generation EA distinction of categories hold? Or are there more? Are there distinctive models, and if so: are they connected to stages of democratization? Or does every assistance project to a varying degree contain an element of each generation?

Further, based on these assumptions, what are we advocating? How does a 'multiple EA models depending on context' framing link with expectations for sustainability or electoral assistance's timing and duration? Should these differentiations be more explicitly part of project design; more clearly explained to donors? Who links the models with the reality on the ground and how; where do observation recommendations fit in the mix?

Expected shifts in the broader context of future EA

Expert responses painted a mixed picture of the future of EA – leaning towards bleak. On the supply side, democracy is again rising on the foreign policy agendas of Canada, the United States and the European Union. Dito Sweden, as evidenced by the commissioning of this study. Nonetheless, survey responses spoke of a broad-strokes, longer-term diminishing of EA support, that would, in the near future, likely be exacerbated by economic crisis.

The Study survey and interview protocols included questions on the hinders to effective or sustainable EA. The lists were long. Experts spoke of a lack of genuine commitment to credible elections by national partners; compounding perennial challenges where poverty and insecurity can derail incentives for democracy. The survey and interview findings point to anti-democratic trends of democratic reversal, backsliding, loss of faith in democratic values, mutual distrust among political parties, or civic uncertainty about democracy with tendencies to nationalistic populism or hyperpolarization. A visceral worry was the risk of EA hijacked by authoritarian-inclined incumbents to rubber stamp flawed election processes, and the risk of EA providers losing credibility and impact.

Based on the Study findings to date, the twin reality of diminishing resources and shrinking political space will – of necessity – shape future EA design.

Discussion Questions

Is this a fair description of the changes to be expected? If so, how will / should that 'EA 3.0' look?

The thematic focus of future electoral assistance

So, if we assume that the form of EA will change – what of the substance? To date, the Study has identified demographic shifts, increasing voter mobility, technology advancement, and the need to adapt quickly to crises as some of the factors creating new expectations on voting arrangements. Failure to deliver on these expectations can impact trust and participation; introducing untested new processes can compromise trust and integrity. From the study to date, we sense that – over and above the predicted development of elections - more focus is needed on trust, dialogue, and tackling political, digital and privacy threats. On this assumption, the agility to work in a fast-changing environment, the ability to innovate, and methodologies for working on cutting-edge development will become essential for EMBs and assistance providers. This agility would be a prerequisite whether managing digitalization of COVID-19. As EMBs can impossibly remain the only authority with competences in digitalization and elections (for example), cooperation will be needed with other authorities, such as data protection agencies, media regulators, etc.

The impact of new technologies and digitalization, including cost and opaqueness of technology in elections generally will remain important. Civic ID, internet voting, artificial intelligence were mentioned as specific future-oriented technologies gaining further importance; some claimed that citizen identification and related innovation would in some countries become more important than electoral assistance per se. Other observations were that domestic and foreign disinformation, misinformation, cyber-attacks; use and abuse of social media will increasingly confuse voters about the legitimacy of elections; non-acceptance of results will likely increase.

Experts also indicated that they expect attacks against integrity and legitimacy of processes and institutions, including by disinformation. to increase and that protecting and safeguarding EMB independence and credibility will remain essential.

Discussion Questions

Is this a fair description of key themes for the next decade? Any need for amendments and changes? Which current challenges for electoral management bodies will remain, which will increase in the upcoming years?

The need for new EA approaches

Suggestions made by study experts for adjusting EA to the challenges of the upcoming decade included:

- EA needs to improve electoral intelligence and build new paradigms to prevent or to be in advance of different challenges such as pandemics, natural disasters, etc. that are difficult to predict.
- EA providers will need to acquire new skills and expertise (development of specific expertise to work with different regulatory authorities (e.g. data protection bodies) and civil society organisations (such as factcheckers)).
- Better project design could include more emphasis on nonoperational areas such as 'communications' and possibly moving away from the idea that assistance MUST be throughout the election cycle, and more skill transfer.
- More work with media, journalists and citizens overall on countering malign disinformation narratives aiming to delegitimise democracies around the world.
- There is a need for departing from traditional EA approaches and working with actors beyond EBMs and addressing weaknesses of a political system.

- The problem of high costs of long-term and comprehensive electoral assistance will remain due to shifting donor priorities and donors fatigue. This will lead to smaller projects with less impact and less relevance for national counterparts. EA will become more specialised, technical and targeted, though risking to become segmented or too narrow.
- As donors will require innovative solutions for the delivery of EA and better value for money. EA providers need to adapt to digitalisation/informatisation trends in project delivery, increase the use of technology to support national partners from afar and through increasing development of online resource materials but point to challenges where EA fieldwork is demanded.
- There is also a need to think about making more effective use of regional expertise and secondments.
- The impact of limited funding is still exacerbated by a lack of collaboration between international actors. Additionally forprofit EA providers play an increasing role as a new actor. Interlocutors indicated that the assistance community know that cooperation is needed, but also that making it happen is still complicated due different donors, different priorities, projects, and results frameworks.
- Less funding will force EA providers to think strategically and optimise resources avoiding overlaps and increasing cooperation. EA will have to be suitably tailored to the funds available, possibly with some hard choices made regarding which assistance to prioritise.
- The future will likely continue to see the trend of an increased number of focused EA projects, blurring lines between EA and election observation (which should be seen as positive development that already takes place), and merging EA with broader democracy support projects. Increasingly, there will be a need to conduct assessments (e.g. political economy analysis) and to conduct project jointly.

• The impact on sustainability has to be made transparent as traditional approaches to EA are reviewed and redefined in the light of changes to the local and global context. Smaller projects with less impact and less relevance for national counterparts, hence less possibilities to impact outcome and quality of elections, lower levels of effort over smaller periods of time will limiting sustainability and limit the number of components of an electoral cycle that can be addressed.

Discussion Questions

Do these points resonate? What do we know about what works well, and how can we share those lessons? What are the implications of electoral trends for the cost of elections, infrastructure, and the skillsets needed? How do we support EMBs to manage operational change in an atmosphere where electoral processes are publicly and deliberately undermined? How can technological innovation be maximized in countries with limited communications/IT infrastructure?

Additional Food for thought from the Literature Review

Excerpts on Future EA

"The planning of future electoral assistance needs to emphasise the development of political frameworks and democratic culture. The priority placed on technical electoral assistance should become part of a comprehensive strategy of capacity building to strengthen democratic processes and institutions. The relationship between the political, foreign policy and development agendas is often sensitive and contradictory and may not necessarily be consistent with the democratisation process." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide, 2005, p. 102–103).

"The international community has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness, even a decided tendency, to spend huge amounts of money on post-conflict elections and to develop relatively sophisticated technical systems for elections in poor, physically devastated societies. None of these societies is likely to come up with the resources to sustain such systems in future elections" (Carothers, T., Aiding Democracy: The Learning Curve, 1999, p. 136).

"The planning of future electoral assistance needs to emphasise the development of political frameworks and democratic culture. The priority placed on technical electoral assistance should become part of a comprehensive strategy of capacity building to strengthen democratic processes and institutions. The relationship between the political, foreign policy and development agendas is often sensitive and contradictory and may not necessarily be consistent with the democratisation process." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide IDEA, 2005, p. 102–103).

'In order to improve the sustainability of election support activities, future election support programmes need to take a strategic approach to facilitative partnership between government institutions and other election bodies in the design stage." (UK DFID, Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme DCP Ghana 524, 2013, p. 50).

Excerpts on Technology

"Let me make clear that I am not against technology. But let us acknowledge something that we all know to be true — the election assistance world is, for many, a business. I also have no problem with business. But we all know of situations — usually in developing countries — where vendor-driven processes result in electoral materials and financial costs that are neither suitable nor sustainable. These problems will likely get worse with the global economic downturn — donor money will be less available, and countries will be stuck with systems that they, and donors, can no longer afford." (OECD, International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris — Craig Jenness' reflections, 2010, p. 2).

"There were problems with sustainability of technology-intensive registration solutions (such as biometric voter registration), related to long-term financing, technical capacity and ownership. DFAT has not routinely evaluated the effects of its investments in voter registration." (Australian Department Foreign Affairs and Trade, Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance, 2017, p.3).

Excerpts on Sharing lessons

"Electoral assistance is more effective if delivered during the complete electoral cycle, as it enables election management bodies (EMBs) to identify and apply lessons learned from previous electoral processes in the country itself." (USAID, Consortium for Elections and Political Processes Strengthening (CEPPS): Program Evaluation report, 2018, p.25).

"Knowledge and capacity development services such as ACE and BRIDGE are cost-effective and readily available tools for professional development and the dissemination of regional based knowledge. Each new electoral assistance project and electoral mission should make more use of these services, from the moment of programme design and deployment." (ACE Project, Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation, 2008, p.28).

"Good practices are built on lessons collected over time...It is difficult if not impossible to declare that something is a 'best practice' when country contexts differ so considerably.' (UNDP, UNDP Practice Note on Electoral Systems and Processes, 2004, p. 6).

'it has been difficult for electoral practitioners to systematically apply lessons learned from other countries when planning and implementing sustainable electoral assistance initiatives." (UNDP, The Longer-Term Impact of UNDP Electoral Assistance: Lessons Learned, 2015, p. 13).

"Continuous improvement is an important strategy for supporting efficiency, but the evaluation found no systematic approach to evaluating the success of electoral assistance in different contexts. Comparative analysis—for example, of alternative options for voter registration, the relative efficacy of different voter awareness campaigns, effective means of engaging civil society organisationshas not been systematically undertaken" (Australian Department Foreign Affairs and Trade, Making it Count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance, 2017, p. 6).

"Bilateral observation efforts helped build peer relations, but linking them to capacity building efforts would strengthen their effectiveness as a development tool. There was information provided to the evaluation on over 20 bilateral observation missions, mostly done by the PEA. These helped to increase Romania's visibility and the exposure of the Romanian participants to other EMBs and systems. But they were stand-alone visits, without reporting back to the country holding the election or linking them to later assistance efforts, which makes it unlikely that the observations resulted in any improvements of the processes observed." (ACE Project, Thematic Evaluation: Electoral assistance provided within the Romanian ODA programme (Final Report), 2015, p. iii—iv).

"Electoral assistance should envisage the transfer of know-how, through long-term capacity building that enables electoral administrators to become more professional and to better understand, plan for and implement their core tasks." (ACE Project, Effective Electoral Assistance: Moving from Event-Based Support to Process Support, 2006, p.26).

Session 4: Design, Reform and Renewal: How to support locally-owned electoral change processes.

The Study shows 'Local Ownership' and 'Context Awareness' as the two principles most highly valued for electoral assistance effectiveness. How does electoral assistance best support locally anchored-and-owned design and change processes? This session will discuss the necessary prerequisites for excellent design, and identify lessons learned from national dialogue processes, stakeholder consultations, and reform commissions.

What we found in the Literature Review, Expert Survey and Interviews:

In the literature review for the study, we noted that when EA projects are implemented in challenging contexts (for example, where security, social, political and economic situation is difficult), even well-funded and technically sound EA projects can fall short of yielding expected results. In the interviews, survey and the first expert working group, lack of context-awareness was identified as a critical obstacle to effectiveness; unfavourable dynamics on the ground undermined the long-term sustainability of successes achieved in the short-term. Stakeholder buy-in and co-design, and context assessments undertaken in the initial stages and through the project implementation cycle were named essential modalities for electoral assistance to support meaningful reform.

Already in 2002, SIDA emphasized that "in-depth studies should inform decisions on electoral assistance." In 2005, International IDEA³³ wrote: "Democracy assistance could be more effective and achieve more realistic objectives if it is approached from a country's historical and political context, rather than by simply applying a system of normative standards." For DIFID (2010:11) ³⁴ "understanding the context within which elections are held is key". Further, "distinguishing between immediate post-conflict or post-authoritarian elections, second or third elections and elections in more established democracies is also fundamental to tailoring the right kind of support. In each case, elections play a different role." The 2011 Declaration of Praia on Elections and Stability in West Africa 2011) ³⁵ requests "that international electoral assistance is delivered in a manner appropriate to the context, based on careful

³³ International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide, 2005, p.30.

³⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67464/elect-asst-pol-less-int-supp.pdf

³⁵ https://unowa.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/PRAIA%20DECL_ANG_0.pdf

and comprehensive needs assessment and respecting national dynamics and ownership." The OECD-DAC (2014:80)³⁶ principles for effective electoral assistance emphasize: "Take the local context seriously through careful, comprehensive assessments especially in fragile situations. Elections assistance efforts should be grounded in incisive political economy analyses that identify and examine the determinant power dynamics and political constraints that shape the electoral environment, as well as the specific roles that elections are likely to play in particular settings."

While the importance of context assessments is resoundingly clear in the literature – less obvious is how this works in practice. We found very few examples of practical guidance about how existing assessment and analysis tools from other fields – such as conflict, economy or political analysis – can be practically utilized to assess the context to the organization of credible elections. The evaluations that we reviewed rarely referred back to context assessments' accuracy that informed specific EA effort; indicating a low level of reflection and learning regarding how context assessment works in the electoral field.

We found similar dynamics around the concept of local ownership. The literature review showed widespread advocacy of the importance of local ownership for sustainability, for effectiveness and context-aware project design and as a driving force behind reform efforts. A succinct NDI (2010:3,12) summary explains: "Elections belong to the people of a country. Electoral related assistance not only should seek broad ownership of assistance but must enable domestic actors to carry forward the techniques and technologies that are provided through aid". It further adds "the aid community must therefore define and insist on a broader principle of local ownership [beyond government ownership] in the elections domain, one that stresses a wider concept of a country ownership

³⁶ https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264183636en.pdf?expires=1613142558&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=BF728A84E3 2FDDA8A1976C76AA298CA3

extending to an array of actors and sectors involved in electoral processes rather than just the political power holders". ³⁷ When promoting the electoral cycle approach, EC-UNDP (2013:41) ³⁸ pointed to the importance of national ownership in "formulating the strategic plan for longer-term objectives, continued capacity building and thorough post-election reviews."

Again, as with context-awareness, local ownership as a principle shone strongly through the literature review, while operationalizing was more tenuous. UNDP (2010:39) points out that "the recruitment of more nationals than internationals has strengthened the sense of local ownership, even though the mid-term review saw some disadvantages from the point of effectiveness." DFAT (2017:5) ³⁹ emphasized: "Reliance on a set-menu approach to electoral assistance also likely incurred efficiency losses. Even though more recent program design documents included detailed analyses of context, translating the implications into appropriate program designs appeared to be a challenge."

In the EBA survey, implementers pointed to the importance of the conducive context and relationships with national stakeholders. Overall, respondents linked the effectiveness of electoral assistance with the project's scope and conduciveness of the context. Asked to prioritize between a set of context-related electoral assistance principles, 'use of context assessment to guide the design and implementation of electoral assistance' was allocated the highest importance overall 40 across all surveyed stakeholder groups: national partners, implementers, donors and policy-makers. Specific comments in the

³⁷ https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI Pat Merloe DAC Election S upport Principles 1-March-2010.pdf

³⁸ https://aceproject.org/ero-en/misc/operational-paper-201cworking-together-in/view

³⁹ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade , Making it Count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance, 2017, p.5.

⁴⁰ Other options included: diplomatic backing; harmonization and alignment of international community; addressing democratic weaknesses; support by regional organizations; and responses to flawed elections.

open text part of the survey were that: evaluation reports can portray an ad-hoc picture of elections without situating it in the broader democratic development context; that the rapid adjustments necessary for the COVID-19 pandemic can inform how we understand 'context' in any upcoming EA paradigm shift.

The Study survey asked for preferences to be assigned to processrelated electoral assistance principles. 'Empowerment and local ownership of electoral processes' surfaced as the overall priority across different stakeholder groups. Similarly, in the Study interviews, experts identified local ownership and local capacity development as characteristics of successful EA projects. Interviewees connected with the United Nations remembered the preparations for conversations around the OECD - DAC norms as influential in that internal guidelines around local ownership were strengthened as a consequence. They also pointed out that competencies developed through EA in transitional contexts went on to inform practices in matured democracies; many EA organisations and experts have a wealth of experiences working in different contexts. Sensitivity to diverse technical and political issues (national and international) surrounding elections, and the ability to build relations (good political will) and program holistically enable EA providers to navigate complex circumstances in providing effective electoral support.

Additional Food for thought from the Literature Review

Excerpts on Local Ownership

"With so much politically invested in election events, the question for UN leadership and CEAs in each country was how to minimise the risk of dependency" (UNDP, UNDPA & UNDPO, Lessons Learned: Integrated Electoral Assistance in UN Mission Settings, 2013, p.33).

"The outcome evaluation of the 2001–2005 Governance Programme found a high degree of ownership in some of the major projects like the Election Support 2004 and the PGRI, while there were some difficulties with a number of smaller projects that lacked an exit strategy and had not managed to institutionalise their achievements. In the 2006–2010 Governance Programme, the same pattern seems to have been replicated. The Elections Multi-Donor Project was an example of a successful and gradual exit, through which the technical support for the National Elections Commission, the Election Supervisory Committee and the training of poll workers were fully taken over by GoI and managed with minimal technical assistance from UNDP in 2009." (UNDP, Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP contribution Indonesia, 2010, p.42).

"The recruitment of more nationals than internationals has strengthened the sense of local ownership, even though the mid-term review saw some disadvantages from the point of effectiveness." (UNDP, Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP contribution Indonesia, 2010, p.39).

"UNDP assistance that incorporates development and capacity-building considerations increases national ownership and contributes to more sustainable results." (UNDP, Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes, 2012, p.58).

"And in addition, the electoral cycle can contribute to a participatory and inclusive process whereby all relevant stakeholders take part in formulating the strategic plan for longer-term objectives, continued capacity building and thorough post-election reviews." (European Commission & UNDP, Working Together in Electoral Assistance: Formulating and Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC-UNDP Partnership, 2013, p.41).

"We must place sustainability and local capacity building at the forefront of our work when preparing assistance projects." (OECD, International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris — Craig Jenness' personal reflections, 2010, p.3).

"The aid community must therefore define and insist on a broader principle of local ownership [beyond government ownership] in the elections domain, one that stresses a wider concept of a country ownership extending to an array of actors and sectors involved in electoral processes rather than just the political power holders" (NDI, First Roundtable on International Support for Elections, 2010, p.12).

"Elections belong to the people of a country. Electoral related assistance not only should seek broad ownership of assistance but must enable domestic actors to carry forward the techniques and technologies that are provided through aid." (NDI, First Roundtable on International Support for Elections, 2010, p.3).

"USAID and other donors need to take stock of lessons learned and initiate at least modest support for electoral reform through available funding instruments. Doing this as soon as possible will enable these stakeholders to work toward an electoral process that is sustainable over the long term, with the goal of local ownership of the process." (USAID, Performance Evaluation of USAID Electoral Assistance to Kenya from January 2008—August 2013, 2014, p.46).

Excerpts on Context awareness

"The appropriateness of specific electoral systems to particular political settings cannot be underestimated. Choices for different constitutional and electoral systems have a large and long-term impact on the process of democratisation" (Clingendael, International Electoral Assistance: A Review of Donor Activities and Lessons Learned, 2003, p. 7).

"All electoral support should begin from a clear statement of goals and objectives that are specific to the country in question. While all electoral support may share a common high-level purpose strengthening democracy, the particular opportunities and risks are unique to each country context, and should be clearly identified in the design of the assistance" (Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, How to note: On Electoral Assistance, 2010, p. 8).

"Reliance on a set-menu approach to electoral assistance also likely incurred efficiency losses. Even though more recent program design documents included detailed analyses of context, translating the implications into appropriate program designs appeared to be a challenge. (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Making it Count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance, 2017, p. 5).

"The question is not whether to assist with elections, but rather, what kind of election support is needed. It is essential, at the same time, to manage expectations about what such assistance can deliver." (USAID Election Assistance: Lessons from the Field, 2018, p. 37).

"The starting point is a good understanding of the political and institutional context, including the strengths and weaknesses of the current electoral system." (Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, How to note: On Electoral Assistance, 2010, p. 9).

"Assistance should examine the range of techniques that could be applied and deliver the most effective ones for the national context." (National Democratic Institute, First Roundtable on International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems, 2010, p. 3).

"Democracy assistance could be more effective and achieve more realistic objectives if it is approached from a country's historical and political context, rather than by simply applying a system of normative standards." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide, 2005, p. 30).

"Sustainability can be pursued in a number of ways, through a number of different activities, but it must always be placed in the right context and must proceed along with the other institutional developments." (European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p. 43).

"We must ensure that projects are developed to meet the specific requirements of the country we are seeking to support, rather than adopt a "one size fits all" approach, which happens too frequently. As the UN General Assembly has stated on numerous occasions, there is no single recipe for democracy." (International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris – Craig Jenness' personal reflections, 2010, p. 3).

Electoral assistance is provided with the understanding that there is no "one size fits all" model or solution. A comprehensive analysis of the national social, economic and political context combined with a thorough analysis of needs should guide the type of advice that is provided. To the extent possible, options and the consequences of each should be presented for consideration." (DPPA, Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance, 2012, p. 13).

Appendix 8 – Expert Group Discussions – Findings

This document contains Preparatory Documents and Consensus Documents from four Expert Working Groups held for the EBA Study on the Long-Term Effectiveness of Electoral Assistance.

Expert Working Group Session 1 (15th February 2021)

Session-specific background information sent to expert working group members⁴¹

Study interviewees spoke of the continued importance of making institutions strong 'for the long haul'. Highlighted themes and programming components included: professional development, regional networks, capacity building, strategic planning, long term flexible funding, electoral cycle 'evenness of support' and the importance of building trusting relationships between donors, implementing organisations and national partners.

The first expert working group session, 12 CET on February 15, will establish where and if there is community of practice consensus on sustainability, capacity building and institution-building themes, and will articulate recommendations on these themes.

The following subsections are background thoughts and reflections for EWG#1 from earlier phases of the Study.

⁴¹ General background information about the study that was also sent to expert working group members has been excluded.

What we found in the Literature Review, Expert Survey and Interviews

Early electoral assistance (EA) focused on the delivery of elections or/and verification of results. Over time, there was a growing sense of sustainability problems and adverse effects of ad-hoc EA, such as high staff turnover, insufficient funding, or malign political interference. A broader consideration of EA effectiveness and sustainability led to a shift of focus from election-day support to longer-term programming that prioritised the role of local stakeholders; in particular electoral management bodies (EMBs).

The European Commission⁴² were early adopters of this approach. Their policy documents (see EC 2000) emphasised capacity development of national Election Commissions and CSOs, and offered resources to promote long-term sustainability by supporting remedies for addressing weakness in the electoral administration and the rule of law between elections. Looking back, EC (2006,21) explained: "The means by which these goals (democratic transition) are to be achieved have changed, the emphasis moving away from the imposition of standards and systems, which were predominantly conditioned by the experiences of the assistance providers rather than the actual situation facing the beneficiaries, towards the development of institutional capacity and national ownership through a constructive long term partnership targeting the consolidation of democracy."43According to ACE (2008) "...the core mistake of past electoral assistance projects did not rest in the provision of ad hoc short term support, but in the belief that such support would suffice to ensure the sustainability of the following

⁴² Communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation /* COM/2000/0191 final */. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52000DC0191&from=EN

 $^{^{\}rm 43}$ European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p.21.

electoral processes, the independence and transparency of the EMB concerned and the consequent democratic development of the partner country."⁴⁴

Beyond policy level documents, the concepts of national empowerment and institutional development, with EMBs at the forefront, were reflected in synergetic areas of EA: development of (knowledge, training and practical resources design/programming of field interventions, and EMB networking. The basic idea was 'global tools for professional empowerment'. The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, representing a partnership of several electoral assistance providers, established a global online community and repository of electoral knowledge with a view of empowering electoral administrators around the world, reasoning as follows: "to foster the integrity of elections and to promote credible, sustainable, professional and inclusive electoral throughout the globe". 45 The "Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections" (BRIDGE) project was developed by five partner organisations in the democracy and governance field who jointly committed to developing, implementing and maintaining a comprehensive curriculum and workshop package available, designed to be used as a tool within a broader capacity development framework."46 Similar initiatives sprung up at the regional level and even in higher education, such as the MEPA Masters Programme in administration. Many practical tools for assessment, planning, management and risk management topics) developed by ECES, EISA, IDEA, IFES, UNDP and other electoral assistance actors have found a broad base of users among EMBs.

⁴⁴ ACE Project, Making Electoral Assistance Effective: From Formal Commitment to Actual Implementation, 2008, p.15.

⁴⁵ https://aceproject.org/about-en/

⁴⁶ https://www.bridge-project.org/

In the mid-2000s, the Electoral Cycle Approach was articulated and swiftly gained broad endorsement. According to IDEA (2005) "it allowed to depict the complexity and chronology of electoral processes more effectively and for electoral assistance to be viewed as continuous, rather than one-off and short-lived support to single election events."47 The concept recognised critical building blocks of the electoral process that needed to be established in early phases of the electoral cycle, and that there were several years' worth of activities from planning to verifying election results. Further, the electoral cycle approach advocated for the time between elections to be used for evaluation and professional development. According to UNDP (2007:2) "Electoral assistance that uses the Electoral Cycle's approach centres on longer-term support and provides a better opportunity to address in a much more sustainable manner issue of capacity development; institutional strengthening; participation of women, minorities, indigenous people and other disadvantaged groups."48

An important aspect of building local ownership and strong electoral institutions practitioner was creating regional networks (e.g. PIANZEA, ACEEEO, ArabEMBs) and global electoral networks (GEO, RECEF, AWEB). According to UNDP (2000:100) "Beyond their networking function, these associations (Regional International Associations of Electoral Authorities) have played an important role in the diffusion and consolidation of standards of electoral practice worldwide, and therefore in the enhancement of as institutions of governance." 49 Global Electoral Organization Conferences, for example, served as forums at which different EA stakeholders could present and learn about most recent developments, exchange perspectives and ideas, and forge networks and partnerships.

⁴⁷ International IDEA 2008:15-16.

⁴⁸ UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementation guide, 2007, p.2.

⁴⁹ UNDP, Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance, 2000, p.100.

The importance of local ownership and local empowerment also emerged strongly in documents that proposed universal or corporate EA principles. DFID principles for election support (2010:33)⁵⁰ point to the "need to consider coordinating their support in such a way that national actors (for example, election commissions) are given a lead role and can drive the reform process where relevant. Based on local capacity and an assessment of the political economy, support needs to be designed to build capacity and to empower local actors." Similarly, UN 2012 refers to "National sovereignty and ownership, and Sustainability", while OECD-DAC 2014 recommends: "Embrace a full concept of ownership" and "Emphasise citizens' understanding and engagement".

International IDEA conducted an expert survey as part of the EA Study. The survey experts ranked the follow statements highly:

- Contribution to a stable and trusted electoral management body is the most important benchmark for assessing the effectiveness of electoral assistance (EA).⁵¹
- Trust in electoral processes and institutions is key to sustainable EA⁵² and
- EA should prioritise empowerment and local ownership of electoral processes.⁵³

⁵⁰ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67464/el ect-asst-pol-less-int-supp.pdf

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⁵¹ Other benchmarks included: 'Elections results are widely accepted', 'EA contributes to a broader democratization process', 'Achievements of EA are sustainable', 'Election facilitate the participation of women and marginalized groups', 'EA contributes to other higher objectives', and 'EA is cost-effective'.

52 Other options included: 'National partner has the technical capacity to engage with future elections', and 'Government can fund future elections'.

⁵³ Other priorities being, EA should: 'Closely link with the electoral observation effort', 'cover a complete or several electoral cycles, 'cover both national and sub-national/local elections', 'ensure proper timing and sequencing of elections', 'ensure that electoral risks are properly managed', 'entail monitoring and evaluation effort', 'support inclusiveness of marginalized groups', 'support women's participation in all aspects of electoral processes'.

Nevertheless, despite knowing well (and long) the importance of local ownership of strong electoral institutions, several recent evaluations⁵⁴ confirm that this aspect of EA did not always bear fruit. One evaluation finds that, despite EA focus on sustainability – through the development of local individuals and institutions' capacity without creating an over-reliance on donor funding – it was beyond the control of the project to ensure that these benefits are carried forward to the next election process. Another evaluation found that an EMB will remain dependent on the international support for the foreseeable future because domestic funding for elections is virtually non-existent. The third evaluation of EA found the least evidence of project success in addressing EMB institutional constraints to operate effectively.

The issue of strong institutions and capacity development transpired strongly during interviews with experts. Many experts shared the opinion that one of the biggest successes of EA was the establishment of professional and independent electoral bodies (EMBs) worldwide, equipping them management knowledge and skills, and supporting networking and in the form of regional and global electoral networks. The overall consensus of the study to date is that EMBs remain key pillars in democratic transition processes and protectors of democratic legacy. In a number of cases, strong and capable EMBs and/or their excellent officials have become providers of electoral assistance themselves.

Experts' points and thoughts on this topic included:

- There is a shift from long-term capacity building to professional development.
- Technical capacity and knowledge of EMBs an area where much progress has been made must be coupled with organisational knowledge and skills.

⁵⁴ Details undisclosed to avoid blame-and-shame; quotes are paraphrased.

- In terms of national partners, the emphasis of donors is increasingly on civil society organisations.
- Some national partners developed a culture of donor dependency.
- In terms of obstacles, experts particularly note challenges when:
- EA is old-fashioned (one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter, checking boxes approach);
- EA comes too late; hence no serious capacity development can take place;
- focused on the capital city and disregards regions;
- short term programming does not allow for relation-building;
- good EA people are not on the ground (arrogant, not keen to listen);
- donors can't maintain attention span and patience (lose interest after single elections which only created preconditions for effectiveness and long-term sustainability).
- domestic political will does not exist (a reluctance not just from political stakeholders, but also an EMBs) because of no genuine interest for democracy or fear of regime change (EA is always building institutions that are not in the interest of authoritarians);
- EMBs engage in 'playing' the assistance providers (not adhering to deadlines, 'filibustering');
- civil society and people supported by EA are in the process for wrong reasons, e.g. money and attention.

In terms of long-term sustainability, experts underly the importance of:

- strong electoral institutions and civil society (in terms of credibility, independence, mandates, gender equality) that own the process, cooperate and show solidarity;
- capable, ethical, and skilled national electoral officials (that
 inhabit such institutions at all levels, state and regional) with a
 clear carrier path in electoral processes, for young people in
 particular ('before you can do professional development, you
 have to develop a profession');
- availability of relevant knowledge resources (policy-focused and evidence-based) and practical tools (that back those officials in their work);
- sufficient and sustainable funds and human resources (national);
- endorsement by high-level stakeholders/elites, or at least that they do not work against it;
- broad inclusions, trust, and good will of stakeholders in the system developed; and
- there are specific safeguards against backsliding (to resist pressures).

Questions for the Expert Session are:

- what are the design elements of an electoral assistance effort that support electoral capacity with a longer-term perspective ('robust institutions')?
- what should we, as a community of practice, recommend to the Swedish Government in support of our views on long-term focus of assistance?

Expert Working Group #1 Consensus Document – Supporting Elections for the Long-Haul

This co-created document reflects EBA study convened Community of Practice reflections on the long-term effectiveness of electoral assistance. The practitioner group met virtually on February 15th and provided input to the document in the weeks following. A particular focus was practitioner experiences in programming for institution-building and capacity development in electoral management bodies (EMBs).

Recommendation: Swedish government should model and advocate for electoral assistance that is long-term oriented.

Argument / Finding: Approaches to EA would benefit from insights gained in the broader world of development support

For better or worse, Electoral Assistance (EA) is often handled 'differently' from other development fields of work. This has meant, as noted by the Study/EWG #1, there has been a lag when it comes to the use of modern development theory on the electoral assistance field. There may be a multiplicity of reasons for this: many electoral assistance practitioners do not have a development background; geopolitical imperatives trump development goals as drivers for electoral assistance; disappointing results from hoped-for synergies of integrating EA with other development support projects. Whatever the reasons, there remains no unified theory of change that aligns electoral assistance with broader development efforts.

EA has not been completely isolated from broader development principles, but rather, additional focus needs to be directed to how to strengthen the implementation of these principles. Certainly, there is an acute awareness in the EA community of the importance of sustainability and long-term perspectives: financial, technical and operational as well as political. Similarly, the emphasis on local ownership and "popular participation" as applied to elections and electoral practices is well known, as is the use of "integration" which in elections is normally translated as promoting inclusiveness in the processes. The EWG participants pointed out the importance of EA not working at cross purposes with other development work; but that the goals of coherence and coordination don't imply integration or co-dependency.

EA has already gone beyond the "traditional support to EMBs", as evidenced by work on comprehensive civic education campaigns, the promotion of the participation of women and other groups and work with other stakeholders, such as the media and civil society. This multi-stakeholder approach recognizes the inherent socio-political nature of elections. However, in EA to EMBs, what is less evident are the elements needed to forge partnerships with other stakeholders, such as civil society, media and even other government agencies.

Argument / Finding: Effective / Sustainable EA recognises that ownership and responsibility for electoral processes are shared between multiple national stakeholders

EWG#1 highlighted that ownership and responsibility for electoral processes are shared between multiple national stakeholders. These national stakeholders include governmental executive, judicial and regulatory agencies, but also non-state actors, such as political organizations, journalists / the media and citizens at large – who are often organized through CSOs.

A lack of collaboration and common goals are often a serious problem. When donors or international observers are actively engaged, their engagement also plays into the dynamics on the ground. One experienced practitioner pointed out that failure to cooperate happens not only between an EMB and other host country government institutions, but also among EA providers and among donor communities in the country. For example, MFA diplomats on the ground can disagree with their development agency colleagues.

A long-term EA orientation allows for the critical relational work between state and non-state stakeholders that underpins trusted elections. Fostering a sense of shared purpose between agencies and a culture of collaboration between and across institutions is an example of long-term oriented work that gives dividends when a crisis is averted, an electoral reform is implemented, or an election result is accepted. The EWG#1 experts agreed that a development-oriented theory of change for electoral assistance would include these essential elements of inter-agency cooperation and stakeholder engagement.

Such an approach is entirely congruent with the notion that elections are societal undertakings. Building partnerships and links with stakeholders reinforces trust and makes it less likely that an EMB will be criticised by players who don't really understand the process. One example given to illustrate this point, was that of the conduct in Solomon Islands of the media and elections BRIDGE module. This was done for a combined EMB and media participant group and proved to be transformational: the media went from being the EMB's major critic to one of its most active advocates.

EWG experts also pointed out that the international community forms part of the stakeholder equation, whether as donors, peer support, regional influencers or through diplomatic work. One expert pointed out the strengths or weaknesses of one's own government, and particularly its funding agency, constitute an important part of the context. An organisation doing EA needs, for example, to know how

the funding agency will react if things go wrong, as they inevitably do from time to time. Will everyone work together to solve the problem, or "will it all degenerate into an orgy of finger-pointing? This may well depend on personalities as much as structures".

The private sector is also part of the stakeholder mix. The sustainability advocated in EA often assumes an end state in which an EMB has all the skills and resources it needs to run elections in a country. But, as an EWG participant pointed out, that is not the case even in consolidated democracies. Increasingly, and especially as technology progresses, EMBs may outsource significant elements of their activities to the private sector: IT development and facilities management; development of advertising campaigns; production and delivery of disposable equipment; production of postal ballot packs; and so on. This gives rise to a risk of EMBs, as one EWG expert put it, 'falling into the clutches' of unscrupulous vendors.

Argument / Finding: Deepening the Electoral Cycle Approach

The electoral cycle approach, adopted and advocated since 2006, has been critical to fostering a longer-term approach to electoral assistance beyond support to an electoral event. The EWG reinforced the validity and the continued relevance of the electoral cycle. Some practitioners pointed out that there are donors who still 'ignore' the electoral cycle in their EA.

A number of experts mentioned the need for a rethink of the electoral cycle; not in the sense of reverting to an election-day focus or undermining the importance of the electoral cycle. Rather, the point was made that a new electoral cycle-type paradigm – with equally appealing and intuitive graphics – might better align EA with broader democracy and development assistance, and reflect that elections are not owned by EMBs but broader groups of stakeholders. Further, an updated cycle could reinforce the short-term (electoral event focused), medium-term (electoral cycle focused capacity development) and the long-term (multiple electoral cycle relationship and capacity

development) perspectives. Finally, the point was made that an updated electoral cycle would need to incorporate the virtual dimension to take into account the increasingly important role of social media in every part of the electoral cycle.

Argument / Finding: Different EA Models serve Different Purposes

Different EA models serve different purposes. The Study / EWG#1 experts noted the value in different contexts of electoral-event, capacity development, or relationship and institution-building perspectives. EWG experts spoke of disaggregating the concept of "electoral assistance", as a phenomenon that can range from something involving massive international intervention (such as in Iraq or Afghanistan) to something as trivial as lending the embassy down the road a few ballot boxes for their out-of-country voting. Between these two poles comes support in the form of BRIDGE training or visitor programs. The risks, planning considerations, political and contextual factors etc. will vary greatly depending on where a particular activity or program sits in this continuum. The recommendations in this study are more relevant to the interventions on the heavier side of the continuum.

While this study advocates long-term orientation, this does not mean that short-term or one-electoral-cycle-only projects are not of value. Certainly, these may be the most context appropriate model, or they may be the only viable model with available funding. The broader point is that of intentionality and informed engagement.

The EWG practitioners emphasised that a long-term approach should not cut out possibilities of support for short-term or one-electoral-cycle-only projects. Rather, the idea would be to recognise and 'be prepared to support' multiple approaches to EA. There is a place and time for electoral-event focused short-term EA, electoral cycle focused medium-term EA, and multiple electoral cycle relationship and capacity development long-term EA. In all cases however, consideration must be given to an exit strategy.

Table: EA modalities and time perspectives

Short-Term EA	Event Focus	Election Delivery
Medium-Term EA	Electoral Cycle Focus	Capacity Development
Long-Term EA	Multiple Electoral Cycle	Relational Trust Building, Institution Building

One key message from the EWG was that while EA projects can be simple or complicated, short-term or longer term, a "long haul" approach should always be maintained. At the same time, "long haul" needs to have clearly marked short-term benchmarks and objectives in order for the project or intervention to be sustainable.

Multi-track electoral assistance projects can combine the elements and benefits of short-term (event focused), medium-term (capacity-development focused) and long-term (relationship-development focused) perspectives. Context matters in determining whether short/medium/long term assistance is appropriate, and in balancing these tracks where a multi-track approach is taken.

Argument / Finding: The Need for a Context Factors Toolkit

EWG#1 spoke of the need to develop guidelines and a toolkit to assist those who are planning and implementing programs to analyse the contextual factors – including political, historical and administrative ones – which will determine the optimal approach to electoral assistance.

Argument / Finding: The Need for Systematic Evaluation and Learning

Several of the experts emphasised the importance of placing evaluation and learning processes at the heart of electoral assistance activities. It was underlined that EA implementers need to be honest and realistic in these evaluations and that donors need to facilitate this by creating an environment in which failure is not stigmatised and by treating the evaluations with care. It was also noted by one expert that evaluations can be made more effective through the inclusion of local stakeholders, whose assessments may differ from those of the international implementers.

Argument / Finding: Continued Relevance of Professionalisation and Institution-Oriented EA Programming

To ensure trusted electoral processes and sustainable outcomes, the EWG experts emphasised the continued importance of projects that strengthen professionalization and institutional development.

The ability to deal with complex challenges in a high stakes environment demands the utmost from electoral officials from the frontlines to headquarters. The same need for access to professional development opportunities applies to the regulatory agencies, domestic observation groups, journalists and courts in their respective roles to ensure accountability, accuracy, fairness and integrity.

The EWG noted that current capacity development efforts within EMBs are hindered by a lack of institutionalization. It advised that overcoming this weakness will require a shift in the focus of training programmes, from individuals to the institutions, and that winning the support of mid- and senior-level EMB management will be particularly important in this process. With regards to the content of the training, experts emphasised the need for senior EMB personnel

to develop leadership capacity and the skills necessary to run an organisation. One expert emphasised the value of post-graduate academic qualifications, such as the Master's Programme in Electoral Policy and Administration offered at Sant'Anna, which give electoral administrators a "full-bodied appreciation of elections."

Argument / Finding: Relation building and trust as central to effective and sustainable EA

As an EA provider, building confidence with stakeholders allows for acceptance of technical advice, meaningful cooperation, greater effectiveness, long-term-impact and sustainability. The EWG placed trust at the center of EA – trust in the electoral process and in the EMB as a goal of EA; and trust between EA actors as essential for sustainable outcomes. It was emphasised by the EWG that trust engenders a virtuous cycle.

Mutual respect and relation building was identified as key to the confidence of actors in EA providers. This mutual respect is achieved through co-design and co-creation of projects and activities. Local input leads to a sense of local ownership. The experts spoke of building on the expertise, experience and raw talent in the host country. By identifying existing local expertise and gaps in expertise, international recruitment can be targeted and limited.

Building a network of strategic partnerships with other democratic institutions can strengthen the credibility of implementers. Multiple stakeholders working on election related themes in their own way is mutually reinforcing (judiciary, civic education, CSOs etc).

Effective EA requires time, continuity and long-term funding. And this in turn requires a strategic vision from donors beyond one electoral cycle. The perception of development partners matters for trust; EWG participants noted that a lack of continuous presence will easily be perceived as a lack of commitment. Conversely, a reliable presence allows an EA implementer to 'be there' for partners when needed. There is a need for greater flexible funds to address

new or changing needs rapidly. Listening to EMB priorities and seeking to respond credibly sends the signal that implementers are in the country to help/support others and not for themselves.

The EWG also identified the quality of expertise and reputation of the EA teams as critical to EA trust-building. "EA is as good as the experts who provide technical and electoral advice", as one EWG expert put it; and further, that an "I-know-it-all" approach is counter-productive and can result in confrontation. These dynamics, the EWG felt, meant that there is a need for more care and attention with regards to who is selected to go to the country and work with EMBs and other institutions. While technical skills and competence are essential, soft skills should not be overlooked. These soft skills include a high degree of interpersonal and diplomatic skills to be able to handle the sensitivities around what can be seen as "interference" in a sovereign exercise. A related soft skill is the ability to recognise the impact of historical legacies on EA work. External specialists need to be able to understand how stories, myths and memories of historical phenomena such as colonialism shape the perceptions and thinking of local stakeholders, and how this in turn may affect their engagement with donors and implementers. External specialists also need to be oriented towards sharing techniques and transferring knowledge, and be able to apply and adapt their expertise, attitudes and behaviours for different contexts and countries.

This trust-focussed, relation-building approach demands a constant re-invention of electoral assistance, as one EWG expert put it. There was agreement in the EWG on the need for innovation, creativity, and new ways of providing technical assistance. EA must avoid any tendencies towards the 'same old recipe or medicine' administered to all countries that we seek to support. The cookie cutter trap is often due to time pressures. What 'worked elsewhere' is a default, tailoring methods and approach demands time and deep understanding. Addressing this need for a more experimental approach means that donors must agree to take risk and accept unknown impacts.

The appropriate use of election technologies was identified as another trust variable. The EA team should get to know the technology vendors.

Building trust in electoral institutions can begin at the local level. Using non-governmental elections can be an entry point – student council, labor unions, professional associations, etc., particularly in non-permissive environments. Assistance can be given to conduct these elections according to international standards, creating expectations and experience on the conduct of public sector elections.

Expert Working Group Session 2 (19th February 2021)

Session-specific background information sent to expert working group members⁵⁵

Throughout the interviews and surveys, 'Political Will' (lack of) was identified as the single biggest hinder to implementing effective electoral assistance (EA). Donors spoke with concern about inadvertently legitimizing undemocratically minded regimes through electoral assistance. Disinformation and political pressure on election commissions were identified as examples of harms for which efficient strategies are yet to be developed. In general, the theme of 'protection' of electoral processes and institutions in the face of democratic backsliding pervaded the interviews. Some spoke of the danger of electoral assistance work seen as foreign interference.

⁵⁵ General background information about the study that was also sent to expert working group has been excluded.

The session will establish where and if there is a community of practice consensus on the political dimensions of electoral assistance work. The discussion questions for this session are:

- What electoral assistance 'works' in difficult democratic environments? While EA design to build or consolidate electoral processes and institutions is well established, what does EA that helps stakeholders 'protect' their electoral institutions look like?
- If the political will is lacking what incentives work in favour of condition for credible elections? What incentives keep potential 'spoilers' inside the tent; that is, in your experience, what constitutes the case that what they have to gain is greater than what they stand to lose? Where does 'public demand' fit into this equation? What does the necessary political analysis and diagnosis work look like in practice?
- Where does technical support fit in the broader context of pressure to meet international obligations? Is there an optimal division of roles and responsibilities in the international community to affect positive democratic change or avert electoral breakdown? What part do diplomats play – what it is that the good ones do when they do this work well
- What role could the Swedish Government play to promote and advocate pro-democracy work in difficult times / places?

The following subsections are background thoughts and reflections for EWG#2 from earlier phases of the Study.

What we found in the Literature Review, Expert Survey and Interviews

A clear theme throughout the first phases of the study to date that electoral assistance (EA) takes place in a highly politicized environment – and that this is difficult, even problematic, in many ways. In some cases, EA efforts need to navigate through

environments that are not conducive to democratic progress, whether through lack of democratic tradition, political or structural arrangements that do not favour credible elections, or lack political will by key stakeholders to move forward with necessary electoral decisions. These dynamics are not new; these dynamics persist.

Already in 1999, Carothers (1999:130) warned that "aid providers are confronting the real limits of their interventions. To start, if a government or an electoral commission does not take the task of election administration seriously, well-designed training courses, savvy external advisers, and generous donations of sophisticated equipment will not solve the problem."⁵⁶ Similarly, USAID (2000:50) noted that "host-country receptivity to the proposed activity is important to its success and effectiveness"⁵⁷, while SIDA underlined that "many political problems in emerging democracies, for example, the often deep-seated problem of political mistrust, should not be met by transparent ballot boxes but by promoting dialogue between political parties, civil society and government etc".58 According to International IDEA (2005:102) "No consensus exists about the notion of democracy-building through international intervention, as there are major unresolved questions which affect the role of elections and the perception of elections. The international community is often not in the position to maintain support for 'international norms of democracy and governance' against firm, if sometimes covert, opposition by significant local actors."59 A key UNDP evaluation (2012:xi) found that "The degree of political will among different stakeholders to hold free and fair elections was a critical contributing factor of this [UNDP EA success story] achievement..."60

⁵⁶ Carothers, T., Aiding Democracy: The Learning Curve, 1999, p.130.

⁵⁷ USAID, Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes, 2000, p.58.

⁵⁸ SIDA, The Political Institutions, 2002, p.17.

⁵⁹ International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide IDEA, 2005, p.102.

⁶⁰ https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/5969

The emerging understanding that 'the political dimension matters – this complicates EA engagement' translated into prescriptive and normative EA guidance. DFID (2010) internal guidelines asked EA designers to "recognize limitations of development partners' role in elections support" and "be clear when to advocate for and support elections – and when to hold back." The DFAT (2017:2,9) evaluation reminds that "improving technical support alone, while important, is unlikely to improve electoral processes in challenging institutional, political and cultural environments; coordination, continual management and diplomatic engagement are also required". 61 The OECD DAC (2014:81) EA principles, carefully negotiated in global community of practice discussions, landed on the following wording: "Electoral assistance should be based on the highest standards of impartiality. It should only be used to promote free and fair elections, not to advance other donor policy goals, such as burnishing the legitimacy of favoured partner governments or building friendly relationships with governments."

In terms of implications for programming, the UN (2015) laid out the imperative succinctly: "Create an environment conducive to credible elections." Basically – the conditions for elections are as important as the running of the elections. Depending on perspective, this fundamental idea either broadens the scope of electoral assistance to include dimensions such as civic education and political dialogue or encourages a move to 'holistic' programming with electoral assistance as one dimension of broader governance programming. Both approaches can be seen, for example in UNDP and DFAT(AusAID) programming. The DFAT (2017:2,9) evaluation recommends that "electoral support should be located within DFAT's wider strategy for effective governance in a country

⁶¹ https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264183636-10-en.pdf?expires=1612534781&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=BEF1A0B5D 243560E59EFDBA039188D14

and more clearly integrated with other governance programs, supported by effective coordination, management and diplomatic engagement."⁶²

While respect for holistic programming seems reasonably well accepted – a less easy relationship is that between electoral support and diplomacy. Tensions can arise between the relationship building critical to implementing a long-term project, and the immediate diplomatic imperatives of taking a stand. Or, conversely, diplomatic needs to foster relationships can make 'taking a strong stand electorally' difficult. Somewhere within these natural tensions comes observation and election observation also election recommendations. Every electoral assistance practitioner has come into a 'do we, don't we' standoff at some point in their career - this was clear from the interviews. There are no easy answers. As, increasingly, electoral assistance funding choices are delegated to embassies or EU delegations - these dynamics are coming to the fore. Study interviewees spoke of contending priorities, or views, on the purpose of EA: whether for relationship-building; development; on-the-ground intelligence or promotion of democracy. The 2017 DFAT report lays out these dynamics as electoral assistance responsibility shifted from a development oriented AusAID to a politically oriented DFAT, and ultimately delegated to embassies and missions. Similar dynamics are in play in the UK and the EU. Part of the reason for the shift is – precisely – recognition of the political dimension of elections.

The documents show a broad policy agreement that – because of the assumed deep knowledge of the local historical context, politics, and key actors' stakes in the upcoming election – diplomatic missions on the ground should take an increasing role in addressing political obstacles to EA efforts. According to the European Commission (2006:26) "Electoral assistance projects, though technical in nature, have an undeniable political dimension which

⁶² DFAT MAKING IT COUNT Lessons from Australian electoral assistance 2006–16 December 2017:9.

must be recognized during the dialogue on development cooperation which takes place with stakeholders in partner countries. Such recognition can provide the EU actors with additional awareness of the functioning of national key institutions."⁶³ This and other similar arguments were also reflected in EA principles adopted by DFID and OECD DAC.

DFID (2010:21) highlighted the need to integrate diplomatic with financial and technical support: "There is an important interrelationship between diplomatic/political, financial and technical support before, during and after elections. The key is to get the balance right, to time it well, and to ensure that all parties work closely together to maximize the returns on their effort." Similarly, OECD-DAC 2014 emphasized the importance of grounding electoral assistance in complementary diplomatic policies: "Electoral assistance should be grounded in complementary diplomatic policies that seek to nurture or reinforce the commitment on the part of partner governments to follow accepted electoral norms and meet the international obligations for democratic elections." UN Guidelines on how "to create a context that is conducive to credible elections" offered by the UN (2017:8-13) to its "Member States and the international entities supporting them", included the following recommendations:

- Mitigating zero-sum politics well before an election
- Pursuing dialogue and consensus in setting the rules of the game
- Placing a premium on responsible political leadership
- Encouraging the broad participation of all political actors rather than disengagement."⁶⁴

⁶³ European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p.26.

⁶⁴ United Nations General Assembly, Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization, 2017, p.9-13.

The EBA Study survey results showed 'government commitment to democratic elections' as the most crucial context-related factor that contribute to electoral assistance's long-term effectiveness. ⁶⁵ This perception was held across respondents from different stakeholder groups. Some respondents made comments about the importance of respecting partner countries' sovereignty, the challenges that wide-spread corruption represents, and the importance to engage even if the situation with human rights is problematic. These answers show that the perennial sovereignty vs international obligations divide remains difficult to navigate.

When referring to effectiveness of electoral assistance, policymakers emphasized issues with sustainability in the context of broader democratic backsliding. When referring to the future challenges to EA, all stakeholders (national partners, implementors, donors and policy makers) pointed to democratic backsliding, and a number of interlocuters spoke of protection of electoral processes and institutions from deliberate key question threat as the EA moving forward. In response to the question on sustainability of interventions, survey responders spoke of the need for specific safeguards against backsliding, for electoral authorities and related agencies to resist undue pressures. In terms of context-related principles of effective EA, most respondents assigned highest importance to the 'effective EA (design and implementation) is guided by context assessment efforts', followed by 'EA should address democratic weaknesses'.66

⁶⁵ Other options included: Respect for human rights, Women participation in political life, Political culture of key political actors, Absence of fear and insecurity, Commitment of the international community to support democratic elections

⁶⁶ Other options included EA being 'backed by the diplomacy effort', 'harmonization and alignment of international community', 'been supported by regional organizations', and 'need to include responses to flawed elections'.

The political dimension of electoral work also resonated strongly during interviews with experts. Their comments included the following points. EA needs to be able to go beyond technical assistance and include political aspects. When domestic political will does not exist – due to a reluctance from political stakeholders and/or EMBs because of no genuine interest for democracy or fear of regime change – EA will not be successful nor sustainable. Sensitivity to different technical and political issues (national and international) surrounding elections, the ability to build relations (good political will), and ability to program holistically enable EA providers to navigate complex circumstances in providing effective electoral support is critical.

Also, experts underlined the importance of good-will by international development organizations that translates into political/diplomatic backing and funding of EA projects.

Excerpts from the Literature Review

On Political Will

"First, electoral support may — as a matter of principle — be rejected as "undue interference" with the national sovereignty of a country. Second, specific recommendations made or advice provided may be criticized as inappropriate interference or implementation/manifestation of a "hidden agenda" of international organizations in a given situation...A government's firm rejection of specific electoral support as undue interference or for alleged partiality is a more widespread problem. The lack of political will of the incumbent party/government to improve the electoral process is much more difficult to overcome than technical insufficiencies or the lack of experience of national authorities." (Binder, C., Two Decades of International Electoral Support: Challenges and Added Value, 2009, p. 237–239).

"Domestic political will is an important condition for success, since the implementation and effectiveness of technical assistance depends crucially on cooperation with host country authorities." (von Borzyskowski, I., Resisting democracy assistance: Who seeks and receives technical election assistance?, 2016, p. 3).

"Local or Host-country Receptivity: Host-country receptivity to the proposed activity is important to its success and effectiveness." (USAID, Managing assistance in support of political and electoral processes, 2000, p. 58).

"No consensus exists about the notion of democracy building through international intervention, as there are major unresolved questions which affect the role of elections and the perception of elections. The international community is often not in the position to maintain support for 'international norms of democracy and governance' against firm, if sometimes covert, opposition by significant local actors." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide IDEA, 2005, p. 102).

"The scope and effectiveness of the assistance also depends on the extent to which the political actors in the country are supportive of democratic processes per se—so that, for example, they are willing to see a good process as ultimately more important than achieving an outcome that favours them." (UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementing Guide, 2007, p. 24).

..democracy is ever a work in progress, and that strengthening democratic institutions and promoting truly democratic politics is the best way to overcome democratic deficits and to foster the link between democracy and human development" (UNDP Practice Note on Electoral Systems and Processes, 2004, p. 2).

International Community Role

"Electoral assistance projects, though technical in nature, have an undeniable political dimension which must be recognized during the dialogue on development cooperation which takes place with stakeholders in partner countries. Such

recognition can provide the EU actors with an additional awareness of the functioning of national key institutions." (European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p.26).

"Coordinated diplomatic intervention by the international community can be an effective way of responding to emerging problems...Where the government is adequately open, it may be preferable for the international community to engage privately with the government on the international standards required for the election to be considered genuine. Regional and sub-regional bodies may be able to serve as mediators" (Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, How to note: On Electoral Assistance, 2010, p.14).

"EA should only be used to promote free and fair elections, not to advance other donor policy goals, such as burnishing the legitimacy of favoured partner governments or building friendly relationships with governments." "Electoral assistance should be actively integrated into the wider domain of democracy support, especially assistance for political party development, legislative strengthening, media assistance, and civic education programmes." (OECD, Accountability and Democratic Governance: Orientations and Principles for Development, 2014, p. 82).

Expert Working Group #2 Consensus Document – The Political Dimension of Electoral Work

This co-created document reflects community-of-practice consensus building around the themes introduced by participants in an Expert Working Group session conducted 19 February 2021. The session forms part of the EBA study on Electoral Assistance conducted by International IDEA. Contributors to the document include Lawrence Lachmansingh, Kate Sullivan, Michael Maley, Michael McNulty, Andrew Ellis, Carlos Valenzuela, Grant Kippen and Jeff Fischer – inspired by the insights from the broader EWG group.

Finding / Recommendation: Continued Relevance of Electoral Assistance

In a global context where aid/development budgets are under pressure, the Swedish government should continue to advocate for democracy focus alongside other emerging development imperatives such as climate change and COVID-19 recovery.

While the shape and form of Electoral Assistance (EA) may change, EA remains a relevant and important part of the development portfolio. Accepted elections allow for stable transitions of government. Contested elections and electoral integrity failures rip social fabric in ways that threaten development goals, by undermining the political rights of citizens and the legitimacy and credibility of developing institutions.

New challenges to democracy are emerging while 'old' challenges remain. Cybersecurity breaches, deliberate disinformation and the pandemic are recent examples of phenomena that shook electoral authorities and demanded rapid response to keep elections on track. We can foresee that climate change will affect movements of people and sudden weather events that will disrupt electoral processes. Disruptions to 'tried and true' procedures open electoral processes to misuse or to mistakes that negatively impact their credibility. This is problematic.

Credible electoral processes remain the bedrock for protecting human rights and enabling a peaceful political transition in times of crises. Well designed and implemented electoral assistance supports the capacity of institutions to navigate predicted as well as precarious scenarios, and empowers stakeholders with tools to nourish an electoral process that is clean and fair.

Finding / Recommendation: Explicitly Recognise the Political Dimension of Electoral Work

Confronted with complex and sometimes seemingly intractable difficulties in an EA design phase, it can be tempting to turn to offering what purports to be a comparatively straightforward technological "solution". An EWG participant pointed out that it is understandable from a psychological point of view that one may subconsciously redefine one's difficulties in such a way that the "solution" will deal with these difficulties. But that may not be realistic. For example, in some countries the debate about voter registration systems seems to overlook the fact that VR systems are really little more than tools to enable honest polling officials to decide whether or not to give a particular claimant a vote. If, however, the problem in a country is that the polling officials are intimidated, suborned or corrupted by parties or candidates, the quality of the register itself becomes largely irrelevant. The role of vendors can be especially problematic when they are proposing technological solutions (such as use of biometric identification technology in polling stations) to address what may be fundamentally political problems such as endemic distrust between parties.

The EWG#2 emphasised the importance of openly recognising and engaging with the political dimension of electoral work, that electoral assistance is never only technical. Knowing this is key for 'eyes wide open' EA. The risks of EA legitimizing or being "used" to legitimize, fundamentally flawed elections are palpable.

While the strong political dimension is well known among practitioners, this consensus is not always (nor very often) reflected in the assistance projects. This is why the assertion needs to be explicit and upfront, without EA being "hidden by a technical screen" as one expert put it. Echoing this sentiment, another expert described his journey on this topic in the following way:

"Elections are, above all, a social and political process (despite the technical and operational aspects we are often so fixated upon). Elections are about distribution of power, so their nature is essentially political. Which is why electoral assistance has a basically political nature. This political dimension of electoral assistance should not only be recognized, it must be embraced. Too often electoral assistance projects are cloaked in a mantle of technical and operational "purity", trying to hide the fact that this is political work. What we don't want is to get "entangled" in the local (or international) politics (what I call "politicizing" the assistance), and be seen as advancing a particular political agenda that would compromise our "neutrality". Nevertheless, we must be keenly aware of the political context the project takes place in and our own political objectives ("support to the strengthening of electoral democracy, etc.). In that sense, an electoral project should be conceived and implemented with extreme political sensitivity. This means understanding the political context, the potential and/or probable political effects of our intervention and "managing" the project with acute political sensitivity. We should avoid trying to establish a distinction between our "technical" work and its political context and consequences (remember we have been saying for a long time that in elections, political decisions have technical and operational implications, but also that any technical and operational decisions have political implications)."

There are opportunities and risks associated with the political dimension of electoral assistance, as illustrated in the following story from one EWG participant:

"I cannot stress enough that we recognize the political consequences of our actions: a few years back I was sent to a country devastated by war and conflict, to find that a complaints commission (with a majority of internationals in it) had taken a decision regarding a recount of votes which could not be implemented in a timely manner without leaving the door open to very negative political consequences in the country. When I asked the members of the body if they realized the political consequences of their decisions, I was told: "that is not of our business, we are electoral officers, not politicians". It was then that I fully and absolutely understood that electoral officers, as well as electoral assistance providers, are also political officers and need to act in consequence."

The Problem of Spoilers and Closing Space

The EWG discussed the question "What incentives will keep potential 'spoilers' inside the tent?". These are the outcome-based assessments made by parties and their supporters whereby 'if I lose, the election was unfair, if I win then it was fair'. A key EA challenge is therefore how to get losing parties to accept defeat. "They and their supporters get so hyped up, or maybe it's a saving face strategy" as one EWG participant put it. Several examples were given of a trend towards losing parties challenging results when they lose: Cambodia 1998, Guyana 1997/2020, USA 2020.

While one can conceive of approaches to electoral assistance which could help with this, it is likely to be the broader structural features of the electoral system – for example whether it is proportional or majoritarian – which will primarily structure incentives potential spoilers face. The capacity of assistance providers to influence these structural features in most cases will not be great.

When supporting elections in difficult environments, including closing space environments, one entry point is the non-governmental elections sector. Another approach would be to have universities as implementing partners and the programming put forward as educational programming on governance rather than democracy promotion programming.

Viewing EA with a political lens is particularly important in difficult, closing, backsliding environments. Election-related programs in these challenging environments should have different objectives than those conducted in more democratic environments. The objective should not be to promote confidence in the elections or support technical aspects of election administration of a flawed process. Instead, objectives could be to protect and expand political space, promote more transparency and accountability, and defend fundamental political and civil rights.

The solution to the problem of political will lies in the areas of political party strengthening, political dialogue processes, and the fostering of political cooperation between elections. One expert pointed out the 'glaring gap' between political party development programming, and the relative absence of political dialogue processes, except in cases of sustained violence. Political party programming (ref Ian Doherty's "Democracy out of Balance") remains an EA programming gap. Good examples of inter-party programming are Ghana 2012, Guyana 2006.

One approach is the harnessing of national peace capacities, including those within political parties. Dialogue as an entry point. One participant said "Local politicians know that the internationals don't have the staying power to be of any real threat to their corrupt agendas. They are stuck with the locals, however!"

What happens between elections is an important driver of what happens at elections: winners increasingly taking all, abuse of state resources by incumbents. How to change the paradigm from competition to cooperation is a key.

Finding / Discussion – On Political Will and EA

To maximize technical assistance you absolutely need the political buy-in and will of the domestic stakeholders, especially the political leadership. This needs to be continually reinforced at the diplomatic level through coordinated and consistent messaging and interventions.

Just as there are different types of political will, a lack of political will can manifest itself in different ways. In some cases a "lack of political will" completely closes the space for any meaningful support, or allows support only in as far as it can be manipulated. In those cases, alternatives to traditional electoral assistance targeting EMBs or other common partners might be found. When political space is totally closed, it is difficult to have any meaningful intervention through any kind of governance/electoral support.

"Lack of political will" can allow for entry points (however limited) that could support, at least partially, some of the goals the assistance is trying to implement. This is why political analysis, including the risks involved in providing the assistance, is so important. "Assessments matter" when determining whether or not to be involved in a particular project, and when to stop.

Keeping in mind an approach of "assistance for the long haul", where broad and general objectives are defined, there must be an understanding that those broad objectives cannot all be realized at once and that there should be short-term benchmarks and targets that can help determine when it's time to 'pack up and go'. But having points of entry, while ensuring that EA is not trying to cover "the whole picture", can nonetheless help in the process of democratization and strengthening of electoral institutions and practices.

As one participant described:

'In the case of xyz the international community has missed an opportunity over the years to reinforce with the domestic political leadership the need to develop a more mature, professional and sustainable electoral process and institutions. In a larger sense we (the royal we) have not inculcated a shared understanding of and commitment to an inclusive and representative democratic state. Unfortunately, the system for far too long has supported politicians who put their personal interests ahead of the citizens they purport to represent."

Finding / Discussion – Political Economy Analysis and Programming the Political Dimension of EA

Because 'political context' is massively variable, political context analysis is an essential part of EA design and conduct. This analysis must look at the political issues and background that are likely to drive international community behavior, as well as addressing domestic issues. Amongst these should be any historical legacies shaping local stakeholder perceptions and thinking (see page 5 of EWG 1's consensus document for more on this).

There was EWG consensus on the importance both of thinking politically and of political economy analysis as a tool. What this means, in practice, is assessing the underlying reasons why things work the way they do, and identifying the incentives and constraints impacting the behaviour of actors in a relevant system. For example, an election reform process should be seen as a political process rather than a technical one. Working 'politically' can mean, for example, identifying and supporting local "allies" to push for reforms that align with democratic principles and obligations (see Annex for examples).

Finding / Recommendations: The Role the International Community in Advocacy and Mediation

The EWG consensus was that electoral assistance has significant potential to improve the democratic climate and commitment of political actors in partner countries. The participants have lived and experienced this – and their continued commitment to the field is predicated on this assumption.

Of the hinders to effective or sustainable electoral assistance, 'lack of domestic political will' came out as the highest ranked in the Study interviews and surveys preceding the EWG. EWG participants confirmed that high political stakes affected decisions or actions that had a bearing on the elections. Therefore, one of the recommendations emerging from the EWG was the importance of political backing in those situations, whether from donor governments or other forms of diplomatic engagement or mediation.

According to the experiences of EWG participants, a lack of international community alignment around democratic goals could be just as much of a hindrance to effective EA. They argued that EA can and should embrace political work that involves the international community, precisely because some political developments are

beyond the scope and influence of EA. Strong advocacy and dialogue between international and national stakeholders is needed at critical moments. All of this underscores the importance of diplomats that understand EA.

This speaks to the credibility of the international community and their own democratic credentials. One participant asked "given the refusal to accept the 2020 election results from a significant portion of the US electorate, the criticism of US election authorities, and the latest round of voter suppression legislation, how is the political dimension impacted? Do these events somehow tarnish electoral assistance in general? Does this open opportunities for semi-autocratic states to offer electoral assistance and assist illiberal democratic elections?"

Finding / Discussion – EA In Who's Interest? A call for transparency

The supply side of electoral assistance can also be 'political.' Criteria for making the decision on whether or not to assist has a political dimension in that there must be some assurance in the political space to assist. EWG members spoke of occasions when geo-political and other interests weighed heavily in electoral assistance choices. The EWG advocated a more honest and clear communication of electoral assistance objectives, whether they be the broader development agenda, 'solidarity' goals (e.g. when diaspora voices are strong in donor country), or regional stabilizing objectives.

Once the floodgates were opened, EWG participants shared many frustrating experiences of working in an atmosphere that undermined their EA work. This included examples of unstated political agendas and preferred outcomes driving EA approaches as well as competing approaches between donors. There were instances in which 'good electoral processes' were subordinated to peace building and conflict resolution priorities, as well as EA being used as a tool to enable desired political change. There were also examples of EA being used to further broader political, geopolitical and/or

economic strategic considerations. There may be a political decision to offer women's electoral empowerment training and programming because of a lack of female political participation in a certain country. The same may be the case with other marginalized groups.

One point made was that international actors may find it difficult to deal with the dynamics of political transitions. Where a peace or conflict resolution process is not moving forward, it was not always clear what compromises — possibly below the usually accepted standards — are acceptable in the context of keeping a longer-term process on track. In cases where a client country is suspicious of the political motives of an assisting country, providing the assistance through a multilateral mechanism, either an ad hoc group or an IGO, can diminish these concerns.

The notion of non-intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign states is still regarded as very compelling, and militates against taking too strong a stance on the question of the quality of other countries' elections. In many cases, acceptance of substandard elections constitutes, for governments and for their policy makers, the path of least resistance. In general, in the post-Cold War world vital national interests will not be at stake: the US, for example, had relatively little to lose from Hun Sen's continuation in power in Cambodia in the late 1990s, and those costs were largely domestic and limited. The international community knew it would have to live with him in the long term, and so decided to cut its losses, and to avoid complicating its future relationship with him by denying him legitimacy. The sorts of people who corrupt elections are the sorts of people who can sometimes provide the sort of "stability" which appeals to a certain mentality in other countries.

Old relationships die hard: a donor country may not wish to pressure or criticise another country which has been, in a different context, a steadfast ally. When reaching a policy on dealing with a country which is heading towards or has run a substandard election, decisionmakers may tend to place primacy on maintaining a relationship with individuals – typically those in positions of ongoing power who have let the process down or actively undermined it – and to pay less attention to the significance of the institutions which have been diminished.

Given these complexities, an inclination to provide or support electoral assistance may be driven, at least as far as the donor government is concerned, by a wide range of possible motives, of which "democratic capacity building" is only one. The recipient country may simply make a request in circumstances where it would be impolitic for the donor country to say no. Alternatively, the donor country may make an offer of assistance primarily with the aim of sending a signal to the recipient country that it supports changes underway there. Both countries might see an intrinsic value in building person-to-person or organisation-to-organisation links, as a means of strengthening ties and relationships, or as an investment "for a rainy day" in the bilateral relationship. The donor country may see the potential for economic benefits to companies based therein which could accrue from a specific aid package. The donor country may want to offer support in the area of democratic capacity as a fall-back position if other (often more expensive) forms of support for the recipient country (such as a military presence on the ground) are being withdrawn. An assistance project may be intended purely to prevent a specific election in a neighbouring country from turning into a train wreck, with no long-term development ambitions at all.

Both the donor country and the recipient country might be quite happy to agree on a support package based purely on outputs, not outcomes. This will especially be so for small, "light footprint" but useful projects which by no stretch of the imagination could be expected to lead to high level democratic outcomes.

Finding / Discussion – Preparing Diplomats for EA Interventions

Because elections are organised in a high stakes environment, and because elections are by their nature political, effective electoral assistance can be reliant on the skills of experienced diplomats to defuse the political obstacles that prevent essential electoral actions. Diplomats should be considered as "enablers" for negotiations (creating a conducive atmosphere): international and bilateral diplomats can, at best, build consensus on the rules of the game, mediate disputed elections, mediate violent elections. They can help assess domestic affairs and map strategic, political and social actors of the host country, as so called intelligence, or the political economy analysis described above. The intervention of the international community can be significant as in a "protection" role. A case provided was that of the role the UN played in the 2010 elections in Afghanistan, when the president tried to nullify the results and accused the members of the EMB of massive fraud.

There is also a link to the deployment of 'eminent persons' to help mediate electoral disputes. The EMB and EA team need to ensure that such groups have access to technical information to support their political discussions. There can be a fine line between "mediating electoral disputes" and, in effect, negotiating an election result, or, at worst, negating an election result, for example by seeking to broker a "government of national unity". Such a practice can give the losers the incentive to cry foul or even turn violent after an election, in the hope of forcing their way into a share of power.

International electoral assistance providers represent the overall international community in a given country, whether its an international or regional organization, or a donor or a group of donors. This means that EA work necessarily includes dialogue and engagement with all the representatives of the international community, keeping each other informed and trying to maintain a united front of action. One EWG participant explains as follows:

My own personal experience has been working almost exclusively with the UN, often in peace-keeping operations. I always recognized the political nature of my role, ensuring that all technical and operational assistance provided by our teams of experts was done with utmost political sensitivity and good-sense. In that sense, our relationship with the leaders and political officers of the mission was essential to meeting our goals. But even outside a mission context, the international community (diplomats) need to be partners in our endeavors, both them and us benefitting from a productive relationship — they by us keeping them informed and "educated" (when required) and they by using their "good offices" to ensure the process is kept on track. In that sense I strongly agree with the comments from some of the participants that the role of diplomats and the overall international community representatives is essential, even if we recognize that often diplomats don't have a clear understanding of the situations (which is not always the case ...).

EA actors can be of great service to diplomats, providing the key information and analysis regarding the electoral process. One EWG participant gave the example of Tbilisi, where important electoral reforms never would have happened without the US and EU ambassadors convening political parties around the table. And further, that that dialogue would never have resulted in success had she and her EA team not sat down with both ambassadors "for hours walking them through the election system, challenges, possible solutions, etc."

'In my experience working outside of UN missions, it's essential that EA teams work with the political side of diplomatic missions. I have seen several elections that have only happened or stayed on track due to the mediating role of these missions, especially early on in the electoral process. This has worked most successfully when one is in touch not just with the donors, but with other interested missions such as neighbours or regional 'big siblings'."

While the role of a diplomat can be critical, the reality is that the median diplomat does not deal often with electoral/democracy assistance during her/his career. Especially in the combined foreign and development ministry model, which is increasingly prevalent, it is unlikely that electoral issues will claim any significant place in

regular diplomat training and briefing. Result: a vertical learning curve for those diplomats who find themselves dealing with electoral issues. Ministries need to recognise this. The EA community of practice is best placed to play an important role in briefing and training, probably more formalised than at present. This will be a recurring requirement, as the typical 3-year diplomatic posting is normally shorter than even one full electoral cycle – so there is a constant issue of loss of institutional memory.

A publication produced within the context of the Community of Democracies: http://www.democratizationpolicy.org/pdf/3rd%20 edition%20Handbook%20complete.pdf provides an overview of diplomats' experience in promoting democracy and human rights in their work.

Finding / Discussion: Electoral Assistance is Relational Work

Trust building lies at the core of effective EA. It has always required an approach both to projects and to personal relationships which is based on respect and is non-prescriptive. While technical electoral issues have always been a key part of EA and there has been increasing understanding in recent years that implementation capability – finance, administration, human resources, general management – is just as much a core component of effective EA, the social media age is adding a third area. Reputations are built and destroyed on an ongoing basis: external communications and continuous relationship building not only with governments but with CSOs, political parties and other external stakeholders has become even more central.

"EMBs may also find themselves facing conflicting objectives coming from different parts of government. A foreign ministry may decide for political reasons that electoral assistance should be provided, and may see the aid budget as something of a "slush fund". But often the EMB will have to go through something of a charade with the government's aid agency, postulating all sorts of "development" goals which don't reflect the reality of the bureaucratic politics."

The USAID <u>field guide for practitioners</u> describes this programming for political EA work as follows:

- Identify political challenges/barriers, including institutions, power dynamics and incentives not aligned with supporting electoral integrity.
- Gather in-depth knowledge of the context.
- Recognize the complexities of development outcomes around elections.
- Identify entry points to support reform efforts, even if longterm.
- Engage with a diverse array of actors (including those outside our traditional comfort zones), identifying areas of shared interests and allies.
- Ensure contextually grounded programming that supports sustainability, even if this means compromising short-term results.
- Take a long-term approach to program goals and objectives, particularly in more closed contexts. The theory of change for election-related programs in challenging environments should usually focus on long-term efforts to build capacities, relationships, and preparedness for potential political openings.
- Focus more on the demand side elections, particularly in supporting citizen election observers, rights defenders, civic tech activists/influencers, and independent media/journalists.
- Support efforts to defend and, when feasible, expand existing political space for democratic activism, independent media, and election monitoring efforts.

- civil society advocacy for core human rights and freedoms
- party poll-watching
- citizen election observers to monitor pre- and post-election processes, not just election day
- supporting democratic political parties
- Support marginalized populations that are targeted by and/or disproportionately impacted by authoritarian tactics.
- Also, in some cases, we can do limited, carefully considered work
 on the supply side in working with election management bodies,
 particularly to support for future change agents within election
 management bodies.
 - However, need to be cautious to avoid being co-opted or used for publicity, and keep engagement low-key and behind the scenes as much as possible.
 - It's also important to establish benchmarks early on to determine if/when to disengage if progress is not made.
- Also, although a somewhat different topic, in these environments, we should also consider ways to counter government manipulation of the information space in elections and politics (countering disinformation, traditional and social media monitoring, expose efforts to restrict or shut down online activity, etc.).
- Promote and leverage regional and global solidarity, networks, and intergovernmental bodies, encourage peer pressure among EMBs (ACEEEO, etc.), as well as solidarity among other actors (such as GNDEM for citizen observers).
- Need to make sure there's a "do no harm" approach that considers risks and potential repercussions for local partners.

Expert Working Group Session 3 (22nd February 2021)

Session-specific background information sent to expert working group members⁶⁷

Experts interviewed for the study indicated the importance of considering the future of electoral assistance (EA) before designing EA recommendations or updating EA guidelines. A consensus across the board is that change is afoot. Key EA trends identified for the upcoming decade included:

- Elections are changing EA will need to adapt accordingly.
- 'Old' challenges in elections remain while new emerge.
- EA will need implementation modes that require less funding.
- Smaller projects with less impact over shorter periods of time and less relevance for national counterparts will impact outcomes and sustainability.

Session Discussion Questions

The following subsections are drawn from thoughts and reflections shared by Study from on interviewees in response to a question about their expectations of the upcoming decade of EA. This session will provide a platform for discussing these future trends, their implications and how electoral assistance can adapt.

The EA journey – past and future models

One expert proposed a *four-generation* framework to understand the electoral assistance trajectory:

 $^{^{67}}$ General background information about the study that was also sent to expert working group has been excluded.

(1) organizing elections on behalf of the country; (2) building strong, independent, credible institutions and related laws and processes; (3) brokering peer to peer exchanges and support. Looking into the future, she envisages a fourth generation that will address challenges to the credibility of the democratic model. Another expert spoke of the same sequencing trajectory with the terms' Building, Consolidating and, now and onwards, Protecting democracy'.

At the same time, other interlocutors reminded us not to forget that electoral assistance on the ground still deals with many first and second-generation issues. On the one hand, this was seen as problematic by some survey recipients: for example that, 'in the heat of the moment', 'capacity development' aspirations are often relegated to a pending electoral event's imperatives'. On the other hand, EWG #1 participants spoke of event-focused EA as perfectly appropriate for some circumstances and advocated a 'two-track' approach to EA thinking.

Discussion Questions

Does the four-generation EA distinction of categories hold? Or are there more? Are there distinctive models, and if so: are they connected to stages of democratization? Or does every assistance project to a varying degree contain an element of each generation?

Further, based on these assumptions, what are we advocating? How does a 'multiple EA models depending on context' framing link with expectations for sustainability or electoral assistance's timing and duration? Should these differentiations be more explicitly part of project design; more clearly explained to donors? Who links the models with the reality on the ground and how; where do observation recommendations fit in the mix?

Expected shifts in the broader context of future EA

Expert responses painted a mixed picture of the future of EA – leaning towards bleak. On the supply side, democracy is again rising on the foreign policy agendas of Canada, the United States and the

European Union. Dito Sweden, as evidenced by the commissioning of this study. Nonetheless, survey responses spoke of a broad-strokes, longer-term diminishing of EA support, that would, in the near future, likely be exacerbated by economic crisis.

The Study survey and interview protocols included questions on the hinders to effective or sustainable EA. The lists were long. Experts spoke of a lack of genuine commitment to credible elections national partners; compounding perennial by challenges where poverty and insecurity can derail incentives for democracy. The survey and interview findings point to anti-democratic trends of democratic reversal, backsliding, loss of faith in democratic values, mutual distrust among political parties, or civic uncertainty about democracy with tendencies to nationalistic populism or hyperpolarisation. A visceral worry was the risk of EA hijacked by authoritarian-inclined incumbents to rubber stamp flawed election processes, and the risk of EA providers losing credibility and impact.

Based on the Study findings to date, the twin reality of diminishing resources and shrinking political space will – of necessity – shape future EA design.

Discussion Questions

Is this a fair description of the changes to be expected? If so, how will / should that 'EA 3.0' look?

The thematic focus of future electoral assistance

So, if we assume that the form of EA will change – what of the substance? To date, the Study has identified demographic shifts, increasing voter mobility, technology advancement, and the need to adapt quickly to crises as some of the factors creating new expectations on voting arrangements. Failure to deliver on these expectations can impact trust and participation; introducing untested new processes can compromise trust and integrity. From the study to date, we sense that – over and above the predicted development

of elections – more focus is needed on trust, dialogue, and tackling political, digital and privacy threats. On this assumption, the agility to work in a fast-changing environment, the ability to innovate, and methodologies for working on cutting-edge development will become essential for EMBs and assistance providers. This agility would be a prerequisite whether managing digitalization of COVID-19. As EMBs can impossibly remain the only authority with competences in digitalization and elections (for example), cooperation will be needed with other authorities, such as data protection agencies, media regulators, etc.

The impact of new technologies and digitalization, including cost and opaqueness of technology in elections generally will remain important. Civic ID, internet voting, artificial intelligence were mentioned as specific future-oriented technologies gaining further importance; some claimed that citizen identification and related innovation would in some countries become more important than electoral assistance per se. Other observations were that domestic and foreign disinformation, misinformation, cyber-attacks; use and abuse of social media will increasingly confuse voters about the legitimacy of elections; non-acceptance of results will likely increase.

Experts also indicated that they expect attacks against integrity and legitimacy of processes and institutions, including by disinformation. to increase and that protecting and safeguarding EMB independence and credibility will remain essential.

Discussion Questions

Is this a fair description of key themes for the next decade? Any need for amendments and changes? Which current challenges for electoral management bodies will remain, which will increase in the upcoming years?

Updated EA Approaches

The following are suggestions made by experts in the surveys or the interviews for adjusting EA to the challenges of the upcoming decade. Which resonate?

- EA needs to improve electoral intelligence and build new paradigms to prevent or to be in advance of different challenges such as pandemics, natural disasters, etc. that are difficult to predict.
- EA providers will need to acquire new skills and expertise (development of specific expertise to work with different regulatory authorities (e.g. data protection bodies) and civil society organizations (such as factcheckers)).
- Better project design could include more emphasis on nonoperational areas such as 'communications' and possibly moving away from the idea that assistance MUST be throughout the election cycle, and more skill transfer.
- More work with media, journalists and citizens overall on countering malign disinformation narratives aiming to delegitimize democracies around the world.
- There is a need for departing from traditional EA approaches and working with actors beyond EBMs and addressing weaknesses of a political system.
- The problem of high costs of long-term and comprehensive electoral assistance will remain due to shifting donor priorities and donors fatigue. This will lead to smaller projects with less impact and less relevance for national counterparts. EA will become more specialized, technical and targeted, though risking to become segmented or too narrow.
- As donors will require innovative solutions for the delivery of EA and better value for money. EA providers need to adapt to digitalization/informatization trends in project delivery, increase

the use of technology to support national partners from afar and through increasing development of online resource materials but point to challenges where EA fieldwork is demanded.

- There is also a need to think about making more effective use of regional expertise and secondments.
- The impact of limited funding is still exacerbated by a lack of collaboration between international actors. Additionally forprofit EA providers play an increasing role as a new actor. Interlocutors indicated that the assistance community know that cooperation is needed, but also that making it happen is still complicated due different donors, different priorities, projects, and results frameworks.
- Less funding will force EA providers to think strategically and optimize resources avoiding overlaps and increasing cooperation. EA will have to be suitably tailored to the funds available, possibly with some hard choices made regarding which assistance to prioritize.
- The future will likely continue to see the trend of an increased number of focused EA projects, blurring lines between EA and election observation (which should be seen as positive development that already takes place), and merging EA with broader democracy support projects. Increasingly, there will be a need to conduct assessments (e.g. political economy analysis) and to conduct project jointly.
- The impact on sustainability has to be made transparent as traditional approaches to EA are reviewed and redefined in the light of changes to the local and global context. Smaller projects with less impact and less relevance for national counterparts, hence less possibilities to impact outcome and quality of elections, lower levels of effort over smaller periods of time will limiting sustainability and limit the number of components of an electoral cycle that can be addressed.

Discussion Questions

Do these suggestions resonate? What do we know about what works well, and how can we share those lessons?

What are the implications of electoral trends for the cost of elections, infrastructure, and the skillsets needed?

How do we support EMBs to manage operational change in an atmosphere where electoral processes are publicly and deliberately undermined?

How can technological innovation be maximized in countries with limited communications / IT infrastructure?

Additional Food for thought from the Literature Review

Excerpts on Future EA

"The planning of future electoral assistance needs to emphasize the development of political frameworks and democratic culture. The priority placed on technical electoral assistance should become part of a comprehensive strategy of capacity building to strengthen democratic processes and institutions. The relationship between the political, foreign policy and development agendas is often sensitive and contradictory and may not necessarily be consistent with the democratization process." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide, 2005, p. 102–103).

"The international community has repeatedly demonstrated a willingness, even a decided tendency, to spend huge amounts of money on post-conflict elections and to develop relatively sophisticated technical systems for elections in poor, physically devastated societies. None of these societies is likely to come up with the resources to sustain such systems in future elections" (Carothers, T., Aiding Democracy: The Learning Curve, 1999, p. 136).

"The planning of future electoral assistance needs to emphasize the development of political frameworks and democratic culture. The priority placed on technical electoral assistance should become part of a comprehensive strategy of capacity building to strengthen democratic processes and institutions. The relationship between the political, foreign policy and development agendas is often sensitive and contradictory and may not necessarily be consistent with the democratization process." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide IDEA, 2005, p. 102–103).

'In order to improve the sustainability of election support activities, future election support programmes need to take a strategic approach to facilitative partnership between government institutions and other election bodies in the design stage." (UK DFID, Evaluation of the Ghana Electoral Support Programme DCP Ghana 524, 2013, p. 50).

Excerpts on Technology

"Let me make clear that I am not against technology. But let us acknowledge something that we all know to be true—the election assistance world is, for many, a business. I also have no problem with business. But we all know of situations—usually in developing countries—where vendor-driven processes result in electoral materials and financial costs that are neither suitable nor sustainable. These problems will likely get worse with the global economic downturn—donor money will be less available, and countries will be stuck with systems that they, and donors, can no longer afford." (OECD, International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris—Craig Jenness' reflections, 2010, p. 2).

"There were problems with sustainability of technology-intensive registration solutions (such as biometric voter registration), related to long-term financing, technical capacity and ownership. DFAT has not routinely evaluated the effects of its investments in voter registration." (Australian Department Foreign Affairs and Trade, Making it count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance, 2017, p.3).

Expert Working Group #3 Consensus Document – The Investments needed now to support elections of the future

This co-created document includes insights and reflections from electoral assistance practitioners convened in February 2021 as part of a Study on the Long-Term Effectiveness of Electoral Assistance.

The session was designed to capture the trajectory of electoral assistance — and predict how it will play out in the future, both in terms of the broader context in which EA will fit, but also the key themes that EA will likely focus on.

A major theme for future EA is technology. The demand for (potentially) high cost technology as part of an EA package remains high. Common 'reasons' given for the need for technology include: political party trust, lower voter turnout, and – more recently – to adapt voting to the COVID-19 pandemic conditions and to resist foreign 'cyber-influence'. EWG participants spoke of the fact that the sentiment that 'with technology the problem will be fixed' still prevails.

This is not unproblematic. Technology affects the entire electoral environment. It influences efficiency and accuracy, but also trust. Whether it does so for the better or for the worse depends less on what technology is introduced, and more on how the technology is introduced.

The role of EA is not to 'buy' the technology, but rather to facilitate an environment in which there can be meaningful and informed (evidence-based) conversations about appropriate technology; transparent processes to procure technology; and the capacity to roll out and maintain the technology that is chosen.

The 'how' matters for a number of reasons, as exemplified by the 'horror' stories told in EWG#3. The time-bound nature of elections means that technology that arrives late risks the conduct of elections. Conspiracy theories about a particular technology, once entrenched, can jeopardize trust in elections. Any benefits accruing from technology will be short-lived (at best), where that technology is inappropriate — whether to the physical conditions, the infrastructure, or the EMB capacity. Recognising the expense of technology procurement, in each of the preceding scenarios it represents a serious waste of public finances.

This reality of electoral technology procurement means that future EA will have to take the involvement of citizens in electoral processes more seriously, and particularly how these citizens perceive 'their' elections.

This citizen involvement can be in the form of civic education, voter education on new platforms, and stakeholder debates about appropriate technology – including discussions of risks and benefits. International, especially regional, involvement can be important in objectively framing the factors to be considered when making a decision on whether or not to introduce electoral technology and in sharing best practice and comparative knowledge.

The EWG pointed out that the example of technology in electoral assistance (and – in hindsight, of wasted investments) underscores the continued importance of the electoral cycle approach in EA. Stop-start electoral assistance is anathema to supporting the stable, thoughtful, anchored approach to the introduction of technology necessary for credible elections.

The recent US election may prove a watershed in perceptions of the value of advanced technology in elections. Regardless of the rights and wrongs of the bitter disputes between vendors and political players that will be fought in the courts, it is clear that the complexity and opaqueness of automated systems (in contrast to manual ones)

has provided those with an interest in disputing the election an opportunity to sow distrust. And the US is by no means the only country which has encountered that problem.

It is probably fair to say that attempts to introduce complex technology in the wrong places constitute the most prominent examples of electoral assistance failure in the last decade. Too many attempts to introduce technology look suspiciously like vanity projects, driven by a desire on the part of politicians or EMBs to be seen to be at the cutting edge. That, by itself, is not a justification rooted in the basic principles of free and fair elections. Everyone involved with electoral assistance needs to be prepared to ask hard questions: what is the electoral problem this proposed technology is intended to solve? And, will it provide a better solution than a simpler and probably cheaper manual system?

The impact of COVID-19 is instructive for our understanding of the future of elections, but it also engenders a risk of building the wrong assumptions. One might be tempted to conclude, for example, that less on-the-ground assistance is necessary, given that under pandemic conditions much EA is being delivered online. This shift has certain benefits but also limitations and it is critical to recognise the importance of contacts on the ground. The future of EA should therefore not be seen as exclusively online.

There is an understandable trend towards decentralized, localized assistance. However, when it comes to technology, partner country CSOs are not always ready to engage in difficult electoral technology projects. Up-and-coming technical challenges will need more long-term and well thought through approaches and highly skilled project managers. One such example is artificial intelligence. Another is internet voting, which continues to be on the radar of many countries and will remain the subject of future debates, despite the fact that it is still rarely implemented and is unlikely to be the way of the future.

These demands that electoral technology will place on election administrators mean that one important EA intervention needed to prepare for the future, is the promotion of the professionalization of electoral administration. This can be achieved through academic degree programmes, the establishment of professional associations, the adoption of codes of ethics, and the establishment of career paths within EMBs. It is no longer the case that one can find in EMBs many people with decades of experience - this is the case even within highly respected EMBs. Civil services these days often place a premium on mobility, relying on more elaborate project management methodologies, which may be ill-suited to the more febrile environment of a difficult foreign electoral process. Electoral administration is also unusual by bureaucratic standards in that elections are intermittent events: a person can work in an EMB for six or seven years and only play a role in one election; so deep experience can take decades to build. There is a real need to emphasise the prospect of EA recipients transitioning to the role of EA providers. This is very much in line with the philosophy underpinning the BRIDGE curriculum for election administration.

The most important aspect of EA may well be the effective handling of the very complex and delicate set of interactions among stakeholders, which include: the gamut of electoral assistance providers; electoral management bodies; government institutions – including security and intelligence services; CSOs concerned with conflict mapping, election observation, and civic education; and for profit and not for profit providers of electoral material and services.

The focus of EA should remain on supporting early warning efforts and crisis management/mediation processes with key electoral stakeholders. This support may be directed to local forums, such as a panel of influential persons – including the mediation and conflict management experts advising the panel. Confidence and capacity-building dialogue initiatives (regional, national and community level) can contribute to strengthening and consolidating a wide range of electoral stakeholders' commitments and adherence to common and

shared democratic values. Support to religious networks and associations working with inter- and intra-faith dialogue has the potential to deal effectively with political and electoral challenges and contribute to the progress of democratization and peaceful conduct of elections in ways that will give meaning and direction to followers of different faiths, anchored in religious guidance.

Depending on the context, a small project may also have a high impact if it provides a solution to a problem which may have been causing problems for an EMB for some time. Large projects implemented by large international teams can be bad for sustainability, especially if the internationals work with each other rather than counterparts, at worst marginalising their direct counterparts' role. Having limited resources can force EA providers to think hard about how best to work and maximise impact, and to query whether, for example, the latest costly technology is really needed. Unlimited resources can encourage spending on the wrong things, or the adoption of a cookie-cutter approach of bringing in another expert for a few weeks or months.

Countries may have a wide range of motives for wanting to provide electoral assistance, and these will structure the form it takes. A donor may well wish to avoid any involvement with a critical aspect of an electoral process, for example voter registration or results compilation, if there looks likely to be a high risk of the donor being blamed unfairly in the event of failure, especially when aspects of the project may be beyond the donor's control.

Expert Working Group Session 4 (24th February 2021)

Session-specific background information sent to expert working group members⁶⁸

The Study shows 'Local Ownership' and 'Context Awareness' as the two principles most highly valued for electoral assistance effectiveness. How does electoral assistance best support locally anchored-and-owned design and change processes? This session will discuss the necessary prerequisites for excellent design, and identify lessons learned from national dialogue processes, stakeholder consultations, and reform commissions.

What we found in the Literature Review, Expert Survey and Interviews:

In the literature review for the study, we noted that when EA projects are implemented in challenging contexts (for example, where security, social, political and economic situation is difficult), even well-funded and technically sound EA projects can fall short of yielding expected results. In the interviews, survey and the first expert working group, lack of context-awareness was identified as a critical obstacle to effectiveness; unfavourable dynamics on the ground undermined the long-term sustainability of successes achieved in the short-term. Stakeholder buy-in and co-design, and context assessments undertaken in the initial stages and through the project implementation cycle were named essential modalities for electoral assistance to support meaningful reform.

⁶⁸ General background information about the study that was also sent to expert working group has been excluded.

Already in 2002, SIDA emphasised that "in-depth studies should inform decisions on electoral assistance." In 2005, International IDEA⁶⁹ wrote: "Democracy assistance could be more effective and achieve more realistic objectives if it is approached from a country's historical and political context, rather than by simply applying a system of normative standards." For DIFID (2010:11) 70 "understanding the context within which elections are held is key". Further, "distinguishing between immediate post-conflict or postauthoritarian elections, second or third elections and elections in more established democracies is also fundamental to tailoring the right kind of support. In each case, elections play a different role." The 2011 Declaration of Praia on Elections and Stability in West Africa 2011) 71 requests "that international electoral assistance is delivered in a manner appropriate to the context, based on careful and comprehensive needs assessment and respecting national dynamics and ownership." The OECD-DAC (2014:80)⁷² principles for effective electoral assistance emphasise: "Take the local context seriously through careful, comprehensive assessments especially in fragile situations. Elections assistance efforts should be grounded in incisive political economy analyses that identify and examine the determinant power dynamics and political constraints that shape the electoral environment, as well as the specific roles that elections are likely to play in particular settings."

While the importance of context assessments is resoundingly clear in the literature – less obvious is how this works in practice. We found very few examples of practical guidance about how existing

⁶⁹ International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide, 2005, p.30.

⁷⁰ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/system/uploads/stachment_data/file/67464/elect-asst-pol-less-int-supp.pdf

⁷¹ https://unowa.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/PRAIA%20DECL_ANG_0.pdf

⁷² https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264183636en.pdf?expires=1613142558&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=BF728A84E3 2FDDA8A1976C76AA298CA3

assessment and analysis tools from other fields – such as conflict, economy or political analysis – can be practically utilised to assess the context to the organisation of credible elections. The evaluations that we reviewed rarely referred back to context assessments' accuracy that informed specific EA effort; indicating a low level of reflection and learning regarding how context assessment works in the electoral field.

We found similar dynamics around the concept of local ownership. The literature review showed widespread advocacy of the importance of local ownership for sustainability, for effectiveness and context-aware project design and as a driving force behind reform efforts. A succinct NDI (2010:3,12) summary explains: "Elections belong to the people of a country. Electoral related assistance not only should seek broad ownership of assistance but must enable domestic actors to carry forward the techniques and technologies that are provided through aid". It further adds "the aid community must therefore define and insist on a broader principle of local ownership [beyond government ownership] in the elections domain, one that stresses a wider concept of a country ownership extending to an array of actors and sectors involved in electoral processes rather than just the political power holders". 73 When promoting the electoral cycle approach, EC-UNDP (2013:41) 74 pointed to the importance of national ownership in "formulating the strategic plan for longer-term objectives, continued capacity building and thorough post-election reviews."

Again, as with context-awareness, local ownership as a principle shone strongly through the literature review, while operationalising was more tenuous. UNDP (2010:39) points out that "the recruitment of more nationals than internationals has strengthened the sense of local ownership, even though the mid-term review saw

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⁷³ https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI Pat Merloe DAC Election S upport Principles 1-March-2010.pdf

 $^{^{74}}$ https://aceproject.org/ero-en/misc/operational-paper-201cworking-together-in/view

some disadvantages from the point of effectiveness." DFAT (2017:5)⁷⁵ emphasised: "Reliance on a set-menu approach to electoral assistance also likely incurred efficiency losses. Even though more recent program design documents included detailed analyses of context, translating the implications into appropriate program designs appeared to be a challenge."

In the EBA survey, implementers pointed to the importance of the conducive context and relationships with national stakeholders. Overall, respondents linked the effectiveness of electoral assistance with the project's scope and conduciveness of the context. Asked to prioritise between a set of context-related electoral assistance principles, 'use of context assessment to guide the design and implementation of electoral assistance' was allocated the highest importance overall 76 across all surveyed stakeholder groups: national partners, implementers, donors and policy-makers. Specific comments in the open text part of the survey were that: evaluation reports can portray an ad-hoc picture of elections without situating it in the broader democratic development context; that the rapid adjustments necessary for the COVID-19 pandemic can inform how we understand 'context' in any upcoming EA paradigm shift.

The Study survey asked for preferences to be assigned to process-related electoral assistance principles. 'Empowerment and local ownership of electoral processes' surfaced as the overall priority across different stakeholder groups. Similarly, in the Study interviews, experts identified local ownership and local capacity development as characteristics of successful EA projects. Interviewees connected with the United Nations remembered the preparations for conversations around the OECD – DAC norms as influential in that internal guidelines around local ownership were strengthened as a

⁷⁵ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Making it Count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance, 2017, p.5.

⁷⁶ Other options included: diplomatic backing; harmonization and alignment of international community; addressing democratic weaknesses; support by regional organizations; and responses to flawed elections.

consequence. They also pointed out that competencies developed through EA in transitional contexts went on to inform practices in matured democracies; many EA organisations and experts have a wealth of experiences working in different contexts. Sensitivity to diverse technical and political issues (national and international) surrounding elections, and the ability to build relations (good political will) and program holistically enable EA providers to navigate complex circumstances in providing effective electoral support.

Additional food for thought from the Literature Review

Excerpts on Local Ownership

"With so much politically invested in election events, the question for UN leadership and CEAs in each country was how to minimise the risk of dependency" (UNDP, UNDPA & UNDPO, Lessons Learned: Integrated Electoral Assistance in UN Mission Settings, 2013, p.33).

"The outcome evaluation of the 2001–2005 Governance Programme found a high degree of ownership in some of the major projects like the Election Support 2004 and the PGRI, while there were some difficulties with a number of smaller projects that lacked an exit strategy and had not managed to institutionalise their achievements. In the 2006–2010 Governance Programme, the same pattern seems to have been replicated. The Elections Multi-Donor Project was an example of a successful and gradual exit, through which the technical support for the National Elections Commission, the Election Supervisory Committee and the training of poll workers were fully taken over by GoI and managed with minimal technical assistance from UNDP in 2009." (UNDP, Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP contribution Indonesia, 2010, p.42).

"The recruitment of more nationals than internationals has strengthened the sense of local ownership, even though the mid-term review saw some disadvantages from the point of effectiveness." (UNDP, Assessment of Development Results (ADR) Evaluation of UNDP contribution Indonesia, 2010, p.39).

"UNDP assistance that incorporates development and capacity-building considerations increases national ownership and contributes to more sustainable results." (UNDP, Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes, 2012, p.58).

"And in addition, the electoral cycle can contribute to a participatory and inclusive process whereby all relevant stakeholders take part in formulating the strategic plan for longer-term objectives, continued capacity building and thorough post-election reviews." (European Commission & UNDP, Working Together in Electoral Assistance: Formulating and Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC-UNDP Partnership, 2013, p.41).

"We must place sustainability and local capacity building at the forefront of our work when preparing assistance projects." (OECD, International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris — Craig Jenness' personal reflections, 2010, p.3).

"The aid community must therefore define and insist on a broader principle of local ownership [beyond government ownership] in the elections domain, one that stresses a wider concept of a country ownership extending to an array of actors and sectors involved in electoral processes rather than just the political power holders" (NDI, First Roundtable on International Support for Elections, 2010, p.12).

"Elections belong to the people of a country. Electoral related assistance not only should seek broad ownership of assistance but must enable domestic actors to carry forward the techniques and technologies that are provided through aid." (NDI, First Roundtable on International Support for Elections, 2010, p.3).

"USAID and other donors need to take stock of lessons learned and initiate at least modest support for electoral reform through available funding instruments. Doing this as soon as possible will enable these stakeholders to work toward an electoral process that is sustainable over the long term, with the goal of local ownership of the process." (USAID, Performance Evaluation of USAID Electoral Assistance to Kenya from January 2008—August 2013, 2014, p.46).

Excerpts on Context awareness

"The appropriateness of specific electoral systems to particular political settings cannot be underestimated. Choices for different constitutional and electoral systems have a large and long-term impact on the process of democratisation" (Clingendael, International Electoral Assistance: A Review of Donor Activities and Lessons Learned, 2003, p. 7).

"All electoral support should begin from a clear statement of goals and objectives that are specific to the country in question. While all electoral support may share a common high-level purpose strengthening democracy, the particular opportunities and risks are unique to each country context, and should be clearly identified in the design of the assistance" (Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, How to note: On Electoral Assistance, 2010, p. 8).

"Reliance on a set-menu approach to electoral assistance also likely incurred efficiency losses. Even though more recent program design documents included detailed analyses of context, translating the implications into appropriate program designs appeared to be a challenge. (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Making it Count: Lessons from Australian Electoral Assistance, 2017, p. 5).

"The question is not whether to assist with elections, but rather, what kind of election support is needed. It is essential, at the same time, to manage expectations about what such assistance can deliver." (USAID Election Assistance: Lessons from the Field, 2018, p. 37).

"The starting point is a good understanding of the political and institutional context, including the strengths and weaknesses of the current electoral system." (Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, How to note: On Electoral Assistance, 2010, p. 9).

"Assistance should examine the range of techniques that could be applied and deliver the most effective ones for the national context." (National Democratic Institute, First Roundtable on International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems, 2010, p. 3).

"Democracy assistance could be more effective and achieve more realistic objectives if it is approached from a country's historical and political context, rather than by simply applying a system of normative standards." (International IDEA, Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide, 2005, p. 30).

"Sustainability can be pursued in a number of ways, through a number of different activities, but it must always be placed in the right context and must proceed along with the other institutional developments." (European Commission, EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, 2006, p. 43).

"We must ensure that projects are developed to meet the specific requirements of the country we are seeking to support, rather than adopt a "one size fits all" approach, which happens too frequently. As the UN General Assembly has stated on numerous occasions, there is no single recipe for democracy." (International Support for Elections: Effective Strategies and Accountability Systems OECD Meeting in Paris – Craig Jenness' personal reflections, 2010, p. 3).

Electoral assistance is provided with the understanding that there is no "one size fits all" model or solution. A comprehensive analysis of the national social, economic and political context combined with a thorough analysis of needs should guide the type of advice that is provided. To the extent possible, options and the consequences of each should be presented for consideration." (DPPA, Principles and Types of UN Electoral Assistance, 2012, p. 13).

Expert Working Group #4 Consensus Document – How to support locally-owned electoral change processes

Expert Working Group (EWG) convened by the EBA/IDEA Study Feb 2021 – 4th Session

This document was co-created by EWG#4 participants to build consensus around the themes of context awareness and local ownership in Electoral Assistance (EA). The focus question was how to support locally-owned electoral change processes.

In terms of programming, sustainable local ownership can be best achieved with an 'integral' (holistic, integrated) approach. The success of electoral reform processes often depends on the synergies established between the EMB, Lawmakers, the Executive, Civil Society, Political Parties, Media and Public Opinion. Therefore, electoral assistance projects should not be concentrated on the electoral aspect only; this requires more resources, and convincing donors is sometimes difficult, "but this is the way to go if we want real change to happen and processes to last" as one EWG expert put it. Real collaboration between providers of electoral assistance present in the country can help achieve this holistic approach, making it important to look for synergies and complementarity instead of competition for resources.

Dissemination of adequate technical knowledge and common understanding of issues at stake by all stakeholders and sectors is crucial. An international comparative perspective, best practices and probably more importantly, lessons learned, are elements of EA programming that facilitate local ownership. Peer-to-peer exchanges are very important for EMBs, notably at the regional level. BRIDGE is one modality that works well for this purpose. The idea is to

provide specialized knowledge and elements so that the EMB and stakeholders can themselves elaborate/be ready to produce adequate responses to challenges.

The bureaucratic hurdles to local ownership can be immense and time-consuming. As an EMB is often a constitutional body, it must be afforded the respect and professionalism such a body demands. Therefore, communications are sometimes very formal and lengthy, with snail mail letters being exchanged to set up introductory meetings before anything else can happen. Lots of time and patience are required with the formal approach. It helps to have a few "insiders" at the EMB for informal information/support but with this there is always the risk of the appearance of external interference in the internal business of the EMB.

The EMB may also be internally divided — one part wants reform, the other represents the old guard. International technical assistance providers need to try to avoid getting in the middle of these disputes. E.g., the Mozambique EMB is also divided along political party lines with political party appointees among the Technical Secretariat staff. So whose ownership matters? Similar divisions can exist between commissioners and senior staff, or field staff and HQ, etc.

Bilateral relations and perceptions can also be an impediment to local ownership.

Especially USG assistance is often controversial and technical assistance providers have to constantly manage perceptions of "Western" agendas; the only way to counter this is an emphasis on agenda-setting by local actors, with support from international partners. We often can't go and publicize our work on social media, for example, because this would directly undermine local ownership.

The EWG spoke of successes of national ownership in terms of citizen engagement. Vibrant, dynamic and knowledgeable CSOs are engaging actively in electoral reform, observation and advocacy. This is good news. Political parties – less so. Party decay and lack of organisational support are hindrances to the political buy in necessary for full national ownership. As one EWG participant put

it: "The virus seems to come back between vaccinations..." to describe agreements and reform processes that are shallow and short term.

The peacebuilding community under UN leadership has found effective ways to engage locally on peace making. There can be a model here of interest for EA. Peace and elections are linked in many ways. 'Ugly' social issues of racism and ethnicity can harm the way that electoral reforms are discussed and seen. The UN experience to harness local peace capacities is now a global phenomenon (e.g. 40+ peace and development advisors deployed to try and harness and build local capacities for peace, including for peaceful elections).

Local ownership and power relations are related. Making local ownership and context-sensitivity development goals meaningful, means recognizing that we need to have a political influence strategy, beginning with a political actor analysis. The classic approach asks who has power, and who has influence over them?

The importance of context awareness was undisputed; there was less consensus on the modality of a study preceding any intervention. Much of what affects elections – e.g. in which direction the political winds are blowing – cannot be articulated through assessments, especially if the assessments are shared with the EMB or other stakeholders. As one EWG expert put it, "It's simply too sensitive and speculative. I've found that honest verbal communication between CSOs/observer groups, donors, diplomats and technical assistance providers (and sometimes certain EMB officials) to be the best way to anchor the program in the local context."

"Technical assistance providers are often called upon to react quickly to developments e.g. Sri Lankan parliamentary elections last year during COVID. The electoral timeline was unclear until the very end, and there was no time for in-depth assessments as we were busy doing risk mitigation. In general, given that we rarely have the luxury of supporting a well-planned election (if this was the case, we wouldn't be needed), I believe it is more important and

feasible to track electoral (but also broader) developments in real time and provide regular analysis rather than to conduct elaborate assessments. Of course, if there is time to do thorough assessments, this is welcome."

Studies may also be needed to develop the metrics by which the programming's effectiveness is measured. This is often a requirement from funders. The EWG pointed out that these sorts of assessments can't just be mechanistic analyses of systems, laws etc.; a lot depends on judgements about whether key individuals are competent and trustworthy.

In-depth studies, however, may not be the right way to go. The nature of decisions being made will be affected by context. If a large program involving massive resources, substantial involvement with and responsibility for a country's elections, and major political risk is in contemplation, the need for an in-depth study is indisputable. But such programs have always been, and are likely to be, the exception rather than the rule.

Small scale, low risk cooperation between established EMBs in reasonably democratic countries, especially where they have had a long-standing relationship and there is obvious strong stakeholder support in both countries, is of a quite different character. Requiring "in-depth" studies as a pre-condition to such small scale activities is likely only to generate unnecessary bureaucracy. Embedded in the electoral cycle are a whole series of largely immutable deadlines. While studies are going on, time is ticking away. In situations where such studies are of minimal likely value, the loss of time may outweigh any potential benefit. In the worst cases, a study may drag on for so long that by the time it finishes, the recommendations flowing from it may already be out of date.

In practice, a substantial program may involve a whole range of decisions: to proceed in principle; to adopt a particular program design; to choose activities within the framework of that design; to proceed with them at a particular time; to add activities not originally contemplated as the situation on the ground changes. The amount

of study required for these types of decisions will vary greatly; at a practical level, a decision on whether to run a course is likely to be "informed" only in the most formal sense by an earlier in-depth study at the strategic level.

Dependency can arise in various ways. Electoral assistance providers may not have attempted, or may not have been in a position to attempt, to transfer skills and knowledge to local counterparts. This is more likely when large teams are deployed. But it can also arise through the use of technology, where the dependency is likely to be on a vendor rather than on traditional electoral assistance providers: themselves locked EMBs may find long-term particular technologically-driven way of doing things, the use of biometric technology being a good example. Too often technology is approached as a quick fix rather than a long-term commitment. "Technology" here needs to be broadly conceived. One participant recalled a discussion years ago about the procurement of voting screens for elections in Solomon Islands. Much concern was being expressed about the difficulties that would generate, when an easy solution was "staring everyone in the face": asking the local communities to build them, which they ultimately did.

Growing the capacities of national staff should be strongly supported in principle. Notwithstanding the existence of courses such as MEPA, almost all electoral experts have learned their trade on the job.

Beyond any formal programs, ongoing mentoring of good national staff is worth emphasising and pursuing. Project design often tends to look for a neat end or exit; but really we should be looking towards creating mature ongoing relationships between respected colleagues working in the same field. This is especially important where one is attempting not just to foster skilled EMBs, but also ethical ones: the wish to maintain the respect of one's peers, friends and mentors can help to reinforce the resolution of good people to do the right thing, especially when they may be facing political pressure. This mentoring and protective support can be through

other means than 'face-to-face'. Mentoring and the maintenance of links can and should be multifaceted. As one expert put it "Something as simple as being known to be available for a chat to friends who may find themselves facing an ethical dilemma can be very powerful".

The theme of risk appetite and risk acceptance is intertwined with the topic. One participant said: "there are worse things than wasting money or failing to produce an output or two. This is especially important given the democratic backsliding seen recently in the USA and Myanmar, and the way in which miscreants have been inclined to leverage off alleged technical defects in the election process."

Recommendation 1: The Swedish government should model and advocate for widely owned electoral processes

Perceptions that elections belong to the government and political parties may limit accountability and transparency. Consequently, securing political buy-in, rather than fulfilling citizens' aspirations, sometimes shapes electoral assistance interventions. However, winning political buy-in can require bad compromises leading to arrangements that undermine democracy in the long-run.

Electoral processes belong to citizens, and the mandate to organize elections lies with government agencies led by electoral management bodies. While electoral assistance is a critical enabler of electoral processes in many countries, interventions should be careful not to disturb this ownership. Where such ownership does not exist or remains overly narrow, electoral assistance has a vital role in promoting and facilitating widely distributed ownership. This requires electoral assistance experts sensitive to context and able to build relations with and between different stakeholders.

Recommendation 2: The Swedish government should support the development of guidelines and tools to assist in determining optimal approaches to, and protecting the integrity of, electoral assistance

When EA projects are implemented in challenging contexts – for example, where security, social, political and economic situations are difficult – even well-funded and technically sound EA projects can fall short of yielding expected results. Therefore, context awareness is essential for delivering successful and sustainable electoral assistance.

More can and should be done to devise guidelines and tools that could be broadly used by experts involved in the process. When EA assistance is comprehensive, context assessments and analysis should be undertaken in the initial stages and through the project implementation cycle. Assessment and analysis should be implemented and utilized sensitively in order to 'do no harm' by increasing tensions, providing misleading information, delaying priorities, overburdening projects that face low risks, or replacing face-to-face communication with stakeholders. Specialized tools should be used to evaluate and manage – in real time – risks to electoral integrity coming from disinformation, cyber-attacks, use of technologies, malpractice, or violence.

There is a range of tools developed and used by national partners, implementers and donors to conduct political economy analysis, conflict analysis, state of democracy assessment, or electoral risk assessment and analysis. Forthcoming is USAID's Electoral Assessment Framework developed to help its Missions and other interested users assess and prioritize needs, challenges, and opportunities, and then to develop a strategy and identify appropriate programming options for supporting credible elections. The global exchange could help to advance shared understanding about the importance of context awareness in providing electoral assistance and tools to support such efforts.

Recommendation 3: The Swedish government should support regional electoral assistance networks

Even though electoral assistance projects are limited in time and scope, they should not be understood as peninsulas. In fact, they benefit from a wealth of knowledge and experiences that have been accumulated over decades of electoral assistance. Beyond any formal programs, ongoing mentoring of good national staff is worth emphasising and pursuing. Creating mature ongoing relationships between respected colleagues working in the same field is important not just to foster skilled EMBs, but also ethical ones.

Regional electoral networks have a proven value as catalysts of electoral assistance, sources of comparative knowledge and diffusers of ideas. To deliver, these networks need support, among other, through enhanced virtual spaces.

Annex: the US-Aid Experience

USAID is well advanced in context-aware programming. A challenge we have faced at USAID is making sure we are consistently doing thorough context assessments when designing programs/SOWs:

- Assessments not always done in the same, thorough manner –
 quality often depends on based on the expertise of those on
 the ground and/or whether they have resources and time to
 bring out a team.
- Assessment sometimes done too late in the process, which limits options for engaging in electoral process.
- In need of an updated, more structured methodology for our Missions to design electoral assistance programs based on thorough context analysis.

So, over the past couple of years, we've developed a new tool – the Electoral Assessment Framework – to help our Missions (and other donors and democracy practitioners) assess and prioritize needs, challenges, and opportunities, and then to develop a strategy and identify appropriate programming options for supporting credible elections. The Framework will be published in the next few months and we look forward to sharing it with all of you. We hope it will be useful in your work as well.

Summary of the Electoral Assessment Framework

Based on three overarching analytical approaches:

- Democratic principles and obligations: whether international regional principles and obligations for democratic elections are adhered to in the host country, and political will to adhere to these.
- <u>Political economy analysis</u>/rules of the game: interests, incentives, and alliances among key stakeholders.
- Electoral cycle: continuous and inter-related series of processes, with different windows of opportunity.

The framework also integrates "Systems Thinking" / "Local Systems Approach", which takes into account interconnected sets of actors – governments, civil society, the private sector, parties, individual citizens and others – that are jointly involved in the electoral and political process. Seeks to understand how systems behave, interact with their environment and influence each other.

Four main steps of the Framework are:

Step 1: Country assessment: assesses the following:

- Political system and regime type.
- Foundational or structural factors: This includes factors that are slow to change or fix, such as economic, cultural, demographic, historical, and social considerations. Assessing foundational

factors provides insight into how a country's power structures, social and historical alignments, cleavages, and alliances influence political culture and norms.

- Regional dynamics and foreign actors.
- Conflict and security environment.

Step 2: Electoral assessment: Assessment questions to identify key electoral integrity challenges, needs, and opportunity across nine key aspects of elections (election management, parties, voter ed, information environment, EDR, etc.).

Step 3: Define objective and develop a strategy:

- This involves defining and prioritizing the EPP challenges and opportunities based on the assessment findings, developing one or more strategic objectives and a theory of change, develop a Complexity-Aware Theory of Change that Supports Adaptability and Learning.
- Helps take into account broader USG priorities and existing programs.
- Also considers available budget, personnel resources, and maps other donors' efforts.

Step 4: Identify program options that match up to the strategic objectives in Step 3. But to ensure adaptive management, really more focus should be on the WHAT (what outcomes we want) and not to be too directive/rigid on the HOW.

Local Ownership and Co-Design

Co-creation (or co-design) has been a big area of focus at USAID in recent years.

 Recently published a "<u>Co-creation Field Guide</u>" and have provided many trainings and sessions for staff globally on how to do various forms of co-design. Example: <u>Local Works</u> is a USAID locally-led development program. Local Works looks to advance locally led development in countries around the world, while also enhancing USAID's ability to support local actors in achieving self-reliance.

Adaptive Management

USAID has also prioritized building in more adaptive management into our procurements and program design. Resource that highlights this effort is the <u>USAID Paper on Adaptive Management</u>.

