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## EVALUATION

# End-term Performance Evaluation of the Managing Democratic Elections in Africa (MDEA) Activity

September 2016

This publication was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared independently by Khulisa Management Services (Pty) Ltd.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The evaluation team is grateful to the respondents that generously gave their time and insights that guided the production of this report. Throughout the evaluation, the team benefited from the contributions of Election Management Bodies' officials in countries participating in the MDEA project as well as retired Commissioners.

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This report represents a collective effort and incorporates opinions and observations of a large community of individuals. To all who are committed to improving the democratic election process in Africa, we offer these observations, analysis, and recommendations in the confidence that further progress will be realized through collective efforts.



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# **END-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE MANAGING DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN AFRICA (MDEA) ACTIVITY**

September 27, 2016

## **DISCLAIMER**

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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# ACRONYMS

ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Election and Governance
ACHPR	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
CNE	Comissão Nacional de Eleições (Mozambique Electoral Commission)
COP	Community of Practice
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECF	Electoral Commissions Forum
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sub-Saharan Africa
EMB	Election Management Body
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPTP	First Past the Post
IARS	Institute for African Renaissance Studies
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IEC-SA	Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
KII	Key Informant Interview
MDEA	Managing Democratic Elections in Africa
MOOC	Mass Open Online Course
MM&E	Mentorship, Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding IEC-SA
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa
REC	Regional Economic Community
RFTOP	Request for Task Order Proposals
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
UNISA	University of South Africa
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This performance evaluation was commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Southern Africa of the Managing Democratic Elections in Africa (MDEA) grant. MDEA is implemented by the University of South Africa Institute for African Renaissance Studies (UNISA-IARS) and its partner, the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC-SA). The \$4.1 million grant spans 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011 to estimated end date 19<sup>th</sup> June 2016 (with a prospective no cost extension). The grant purpose is to build regional election capacity building.

A mixed-methods evaluation approach was utilized in this performance evaluation. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used and six data collection methods were employed (document review, focus group discussion, key informant interviews, site visits, training observation, and case studies). After a review of the primary and secondary documents, the evaluation team conducted fieldwork with the different groups of stakeholders, the EMB trained and trainee officials, EMB senior management, UNISA-IARS, facilitators for the courses, and the funding agency, USAID. A major limitation was the unavailability of the senior EMB managers for interviews. In some cases, officials were preparing for elections (e.g. Zambia and South Africa) and in others they required permission from the Commissioners.

Throughout the evaluation, the Khulisa team noted the difficulty of evaluating the effects of this training program, due to its reach across countries and the fact that effects of training often go unnoticed because of politically sensitive situations in country EMBs.

## SUCCESSFUL MDEA ELEMENTS

This executive summary emphasizes the elements of the MDEA program that have worked well hence they remain central to its success. Designed to support capacity building in electoral processes through a harmonized approach, MDEA has succeeded in bringing the largest number of African EMB officials together. This is a paramount step in the creation of universal election principles in the region. Trainees rated the Certificate course highly and this illustrates the program's value in enhancing election management in the region. This is despite the fact that EMB officials operate in highly politicized environments. As a fledgling program, MDEA also experiences program management challenges that are associated with the unexpected rapid expansion of its activities involving 28 African countries. The high demand for training continues to exert pressure on the implementers, UNISA-IARS. The main findings are presented in this executive summary under the respective evaluation questions.

*Question 1: What have been the main successes and challenges during the implementation of the activity?*

## **SUCCESSSES**

### **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

EMBs have traditionally exchanged staff as a capacity building method for specific electoral processes. MDEA has an extensive experiential learning component that requires trainees to visit a live election activity and observe directly the management of the processes through interaction with responsible officials. This is a critical part of the training, as most of these officials do not get a chance to see practices from other countries. This enriches the learning process and trainees can identify practical modifications they need in their own offices. MDEA is the only program that offers such experiential learning outside of election observation.

### **HIGH QUALITY FACILITATION**

MDEA facilitators have shown the capacity to lead and administer the practical oriented course basing on research and empirical evidence. This model has yielded research outputs and facilitated human capacity development through the outflow of research students working distantly from their stations. All the interviewed EMBs reported that they now conduct research as an essential step in all their planning processes.

### **GENDER**

MDEA's demand on gender equality for trainees seconded to the course has gone a long way in drawing attention to the issues of gender and electoral processes.

### **QUESTION 1 CHALLENGES**

MDEA, with the expanded program, needs additional management capacity and additional training in order to improve efficiency, effectiveness and planning.

As a practitioner oriented course, MDEA requires expansion of its pool of facilitators in order to address the practical part of the capacity building effort adequately.

*Question 2: To what extent does the UNISA Certificate Training Program address the election management challenges present in the Sub-Saharan Africa region?*

*And Question 3: To what extent has the UNISA Certificate Training Program translated into improved capacity of Electoral Management Boards (EMBs) throughout Sub-Saharan Africa to manage elections more effectively?*

## **NEUTRAL TRAINING SPACE**

Universities operate in environments that respect autonomy and freedom of speech in the pursuit of knowledge. This is a critical component in implementing programs that have a direct impact on political decisions. MDEA challenges the status quo in election management in the interest of democracy and provides an opportunity for both critical thinking and reflection by EMB officials. The power that divides senior and junior officials wanes when they attend the same MDEA courses at UNISA. This has helped to break power laden communication barriers that hinder innovation amongst junior officials. University environments transcend political agendas and are thus accepted by skeptical politicians as career-oriented capacity building. MDEA implementers clearly have an edge over other capacity building actors who offer short disconnected courses on electoral processes.

## **BUILDING A SYSTEMATIC BODY OF KNOWLEDGE ON ELECTIONS IN AFRICA**

Africa experiences a major challenge in producing knowledge that is informed by empirical evidence which is essential for enhancing the performance of key officials who drive and manage democratic transitions such as election processes. MDEA is Africa's first producer of a comprehensive election management capacity building program that brings together the highest number of African election managers at any time. This success as well as the unforeseen growth of MDEA from only the SADC group of countries in 2011 to covering east, west, and central Africa in the span of five years, is largely due to the program's holistic curriculum that connects all electoral processes and the delivery of lessons by highly qualified university professors. This has instilled confidence in EMB election officials who constantly seek knowledge that connects democratic theories to election management. The comprehensive portfolios written by the trainees are an important resource for identifying and remedying the capacity gaps in the region's EMBs and for enhancing the modules. The high levels of satisfaction with the course reported by the trained officials emanate from this access to knowledge, the much-needed coaching, and the standardization of electoral management processes.

## **HARMONIZING ELECTORAL PROCEDURES/PROCESSES**

MDEA's inclusive approach to capacity building in EMBs has unified election management processes in the region. The 28 participating countries straddle some of the major cleavages that plague the region: the colonial legacy evident in the organizational cultures of the African states and addressing gender inequities. There are different EMB institutional arrangements across the countries, but MDEA makes it possible for these entities to apply the same standards and details in systematic election management.

## **CREATING MULTIPLE PARTNERSHIPS**

MDEA has brought multiple partners to work together: Academics, donors, EMB officials, CSOs, and politically-appointed EMB Commissioners. UNISA-IARS's commitment to the project is heartening and requires support. UNISA-IARS has arranged for all students' work to be managed through the university's distance education facility and this integrates the project into the university's distance education mainstream approach.

## **QUESTION 2 AND 3 CHALLENGES**

The Alumni network has yet to be mobilized appropriately.

The modules were developed in 2011, and updating is done through Facilitators own knowledge and notes, meaning that key developments across the continent may not be included.

MDEA needs to utilize the distance education model utilized by mainstream UNISA to extend its reach to all EMBs cost effectively and at a quicker pace.

*Question 4: What evidence exists linking the UNISA Certificate Training Program to operational changes/ improvements in EMB procedures and practices?*

## **CREATING CHANGE AGENTS**

Inculcating democratic management styles and values has been very successful in MDEA. All EMB officials come from very different academic backgrounds and are thrown into the deep end in managing elections. All the interviewees reported this experience. The value and role of elections as a democratizing force is thus not always clear to them and MDEA has closed this gap in those that have been trained. These trained officials become change agents who advocate for ethical, professional, and transparent behavior in election management. They can therefore influence other officials around them. MDEA's success in creating and nurturing change agents is a large value addition to democracy building in the region. Some of the EMBs have experimented with the MDEA best practices and adapted these to their needs basing on own research. Many of the recent democratic developments in the various EMBs are directly attributed to MDEA.

## **QUESTION 4 CHALLENGES**

MDEA has not instituted a mechanism for tracking the improvements in electoral management processes in the participating countries.

The MDEA certificate course can be made more inclusive by extending it to other key stakeholders such as political parties in order to create the political atmosphere that can hasten the pace of democratic change.

*Question 5: Is there evidence that project interventions will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime?*

## **PEER LEARNING**

Peer learning stands out as one of the most valuable components of the MDEA courses. With officials from as many as 24 countries training in the same session, sharing of experiences and cross learning has resulted in the evolution of strong support networks amongst EMB officials. Some trained officials have been seconded to support other EMBs outside of SADC-ECF. Some EMBs, e.g. Nigeria, DRC, Zimbabwe and Kenya, have launched their own internal trainings based on the MDEA course which means there is now both peer learning across and within EMBs.

## **LIAISING THOUGH SADC**

UNISA-IARS has devised a model that works well in terms of receiving buy-in of the respective SADC region governments. This is essential for developing a supportive environment and for sustainability. Logistical plans for MDEA trainees are done through SADC-ECF, which communicates with the EMBs. Since country EMBs are all affiliated to the SADC-ECF, this legitimizes the program and attracts large numbers of interested officials and eliminates the need for political clearance from the executive.<sup>1</sup> Extending this engagement to the rest of the other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) would increase their investments in MDEA and pull in other stakeholders in elections.

## **QUESTION 5 CHALLENGES**

MDEA is yet to engage with most of the regional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). This is important for securing governments' political support.

Roping in expertise from other election capacity building organizations would enhance MDEA's role as a unifier in regional electoral management processes.

Whilst there is high demand for the course, MDEA can only be sustainable if cost effective options are pursued.

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<sup>1</sup> SADC-ECF coordinates the logistics for the SADC member state trainees. For other countries, UNISA communicates directly with the EMBs.

# INTRODUCTION

## EVALUATION PURPOSE & QUESTIONS

The purpose of this performance evaluation was to ascertain the effectiveness of the Managing Democratic Elections in Africa (MDEA) Certificate Training Program in addressing present electoral management challenges in the region and identify areas where the program met its stated goals and where it faced challenges. USAID/Southern Africa issued the \$4.1 million grant to University of South Africa (UNISA) on June 7 2011, but to cover costs retrospectively to January 2011. The grant has been extended until December 30, 2017.

The grant is administered by the Institute for African Renaissance Studies at UNISA (UNISA-IARS) and its purpose is extracted as follows:

“The overarching objectives of USAID/Southern Africa’s regional election capacity building is to support the MoU between the IEC and UNISA on their cooperation to train election officials on electoral management principles which will contribute to the enhancement and promotion of democratic election principles.

Program goals under this objective are in line with U.S. Foreign Assistance Governing Justly and Democratically Framework for Political Competition and Consensus building: Elections and Political Processes. The long-term U.S. Foreign Assistance priorities and goals for Southern Africa are to support regional interventions that can foster integration through the promotion of democratic reforms and sharing of best practices.

The Regional Indicative program supports the goals of the SADC Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics, Defense and Security (SIPO) that focuses on the need to create a peaceful and stable political and security environment through which the region will realize its socio-economic objectives. SIPO emphasizes the need for democratic consolidation in the region, and the development of the principles governing democratic elections in the region to enhance the transparency and credibility of elections and democratic governance as well as ensuring the acceptance of election results by all contesting parties.”<sup>2</sup>

The evaluators used a **theory-based evaluation approach** that evaluated the assumptions underlying MDEA’s causal model. The primary audience of this evaluation is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Southern Africa and the MDEA implementing partner, UNISA-IARS and its partner, the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC-SA). The information and recommendations garnered in this evaluation can be used to assess the success of MDEA in meeting its goals and provides recommendations towards the program’s continuance. Secondary audiences include all other regional, national, and international stakeholders in election processes.

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<sup>2</sup> Purpose directly extracted from USAID Grant 674-G-00-11-00066-00 June 17, 2011: Section B, page 24-25.

The MDEA performance evaluation answers the following five key questions and their sub-questions.

1. What have been the **main successes and challenges** during the implementation of the activity?
  - a. How successful has MDEA been at reaching the expected results?
  - b. What have been the main challenges during implementation?
2. To what extent does the UNISA Certificate Training Program **address the election management challenges** present in the Sub-Saharan<sup>3</sup> Africa region?
  - a. Does the curriculum address the practical/operational challenges faced by Election Management Body (EMB) officials?
  - b. Do the participants identify any current gaps in the curriculum?
  - c. What is the perception and level of satisfaction of stakeholders (trainers, trainees, and respective managers) about the Certificate Training Program, including the classroom and distance learning components, post-coursework mentorship and Alumni activities?
  - d. What recommendations for revisions/updates exist?
3. To what extent has the UNISA Certificate Training Program translated into **improved capacity** of Electoral Management Boards (EMBs) throughout Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>4</sup> to manage elections more effectively?
  - a. Is there evidence that the Certificate Training Program has contributed to increased understanding and knowledge of the overall role EMBs should play in electoral democracy, as well as to improved skills for carrying out individual functional roles in EMBs?
  - b. What is the effectiveness of the trainee identification process and selection criteria? Does it lead to selection of officials most likely to bring change to their respective EMBs?
  - c. To what extent do Alumni have the potential to influence change in EMBs?
  - d. What recommendations exist for the minimum critical number of election officials or specific functional roles per EMB needed to undergo the training to bring meaningful change within an EMB?
  - e. To what extent do post-certificate Alumni activities add value to the continued learning of graduates and EMBs? What recommendations for revisions/ updates in Alumni activities exist to better benefit the capacity and operations of EMBs?
4. What evidence exists linking the UNISA Certificate Training Program to **operational changes/ improvements** in EMB procedures and practices?
  - a. Has, and to what extent has, the activity contributed to increased use of new practices in EMBs?
  - b. Has the activity stimulated a change in attitude on different levels of election management officials?
5. Is there evidence that project interventions will be **sustainable** beyond the project lifetime?
  - a. What is the sustainability of results (curriculum, training capacity, Alumni activities) and the reliability of the developed model (classroom training – distance learning – follow-up mentorship – follow-up Alumni activities)?

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<sup>3</sup> The original evaluation questions used “Southern Africa,” but in consultation with USAID and UNISA, the evaluation team has expanded the questions to apply to “Sub-Saharan Africa”

<sup>4</sup> Changed from “Southern Africa” to “Sub-Saharan Africa”

- b. What recommendations can address capacity and feasibility of UNISA and IEC to continue collaboration on the implementation of Certificate Training Program in Electoral Studies?
- c. What evidence exists indicating interest of Election Commissions and EMBs throughout Africa in using UNISA's Certificate Training Program to improve own and respective EMBs' election management capacity?
- d. How receptive are the electoral commissions throughout the region to the program?
- e. What recommended strategies are there to promote sustainability? (Evidence base for most valuable and most cost effective activities for future)
- f. What are the chances of the Certificate Training Program becoming a leading model in the continent?
- g. What adaptations/changes are needed, if any, to make the Certificate Training Program more affordable and accessible to EMB and election commission officials in less affluent African countries?

Figure 1: Evaluation Questions

These five key Evaluation Questions are in line with USAID's evaluation policy that describes performance evaluation as an evaluation that focuses on descriptive and normative questions such as:

- What a particular project or program has achieved (either at an intermediate point in execution or at the conclusion of an implementation period);
- How it is being implemented;
- How it is perceived and valued;
- Whether expected results are occurring;
- And other questions that are pertinent to program design, management, and operational decision-making.

Throughout this report, our recommendations are included in relevant sections with this icon and then collated with additional detail in the final section on Page 60.



## ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

Election Management Bodies (EMBs) in Africa continue to struggle with managing elections democratically. This is evidenced by the increasing number of election conflicts that have turned violent (e.g. Kenya and Zimbabwe in 2008, Cote d'Ivoire in 2010, Burundi in 2015, and the recent pre-election violence in Zanzibar in 2016). On average, 50% of elections in the region experience some form of violence that is blamed on the non-transparency of the EMBs and executive interference in the management of elections.

*“EMBs are post-cold war-and after Year 2000 institutions: reacting to external pressure to conform – these fall into two categories: a) those supported and controlled by the Presidency and b) those operating from some distance and supported by Parliament. There is therefore a major difference on how each of these conducts themselves and manages national elections. In a word – most have continued to beholden to the One-Party-State tendencies and structures.”*

*-Professor Shadrack Gutto, IAS, UNISA*

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The MDEA program aims to support capacity building to strengthen the democratic management of elections in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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*“With entrenchment of democracy, it is essential to train people to improve the system as democracy matures. There is a need for highly qualified staff in order for sustenance. Capacity has to transcend the generational challenge – MDEA is young and aggressive, based in a credible institution, and has managed to bring together practitioners in the region.”*

*-Chief Executive Officer of IEC-SA*

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The USAID-funded MDEA project was designed to build on a previously existing collaboration between UNISA-IARS and South Africa’s IEC. The two entities committed to building election management capacity and supporting electoral reforms in the African region. The target groups are EMB officials, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working on democracy and governance, and other key stakeholders.

MDEA’s grant focus is on strengthening electoral management bodies and other governance institutions as a way of reducing executive dominance and promoting good democratic governance in the region. Application of knowledge acquired from the program activities is expected to accelerate implementation of electoral reform measures and to build the capacity of African election officials and other stakeholders to engage in activities that will support increased implementation of electoral standards and principles that promote democratic governance.

MDEA was crafted around the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNISA and the IEC-SA and has, in five years, grown to include different sub-projects (as illustrated in Figure 2):

- Mentorship, Monitoring and Evaluation (MM&E)
- Alumni Network
- Executive Management Course
- In-Country Certificate Training Courses

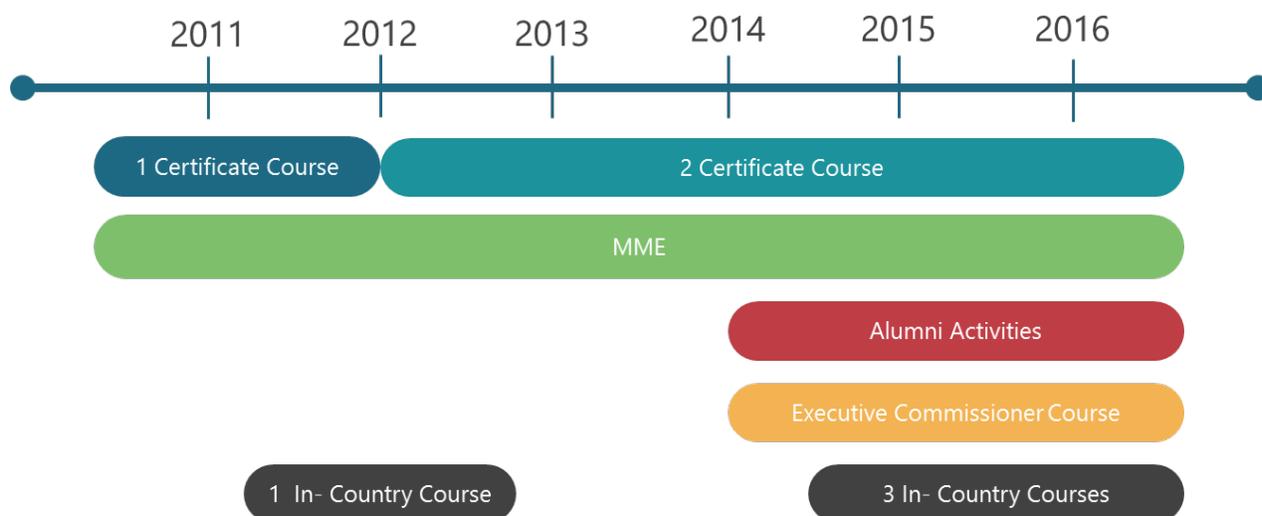


Figure 2: MDEA Activity Timeline

### SUB-ACTIVITIES

The courses started in 2011 with just one Certificate Training and in response to the demand for capacity enhancement, MDEA quickly expanded to conduct two courses per annum. 67 officials were trained in 2012 (exceeding the target of 35) and 99 officials were trained in 2015 (exceeding the target of 70). In 2016, two more classes (in-country) were added to produce 155 trained officials against the same target of 70.<sup>5</sup> By the end of 2016, MDEA will have conducted two campus-based courses, two in-country based courses,<sup>6</sup> and an Executive Commissioner’s crash course, as well as maintained the Alumni activities. Since 2011, 24 Mentoring, Monitoring and Evaluation (MM&E) country visits have been undertaken.

### Campus-Based Certificate

The campus-based Certificate is delivered through a four-week classroom period. This includes a week for experiential learning in the field (hosted by the IEC-SA). Once back at their workstations, trainees submit coursework. Each trainee submits three course assignments and three portfolios. Countries are given slots for their officials and each EMB determines the officials to send for the training. In the absence of selection criteria for the course, both senior and lower ranking EMB officials take the same course. This mixing of different levels of officers creates a learning environment that is supported by the neutral academic space offered by UNISA. This neutral space helps to keep interactions open and encourages transparent discussions. The June/July 2016 intakes had 45 and 44 trainees respectively, and each included nine civil society members. This is the first time that the course has expanded beyond EMB officials.

MDEA’s expansion is ongoing with plans for the upgrading of the Certificate Training to a postgraduate diploma<sup>7</sup>. This upgrade is a response to demands from trainees.

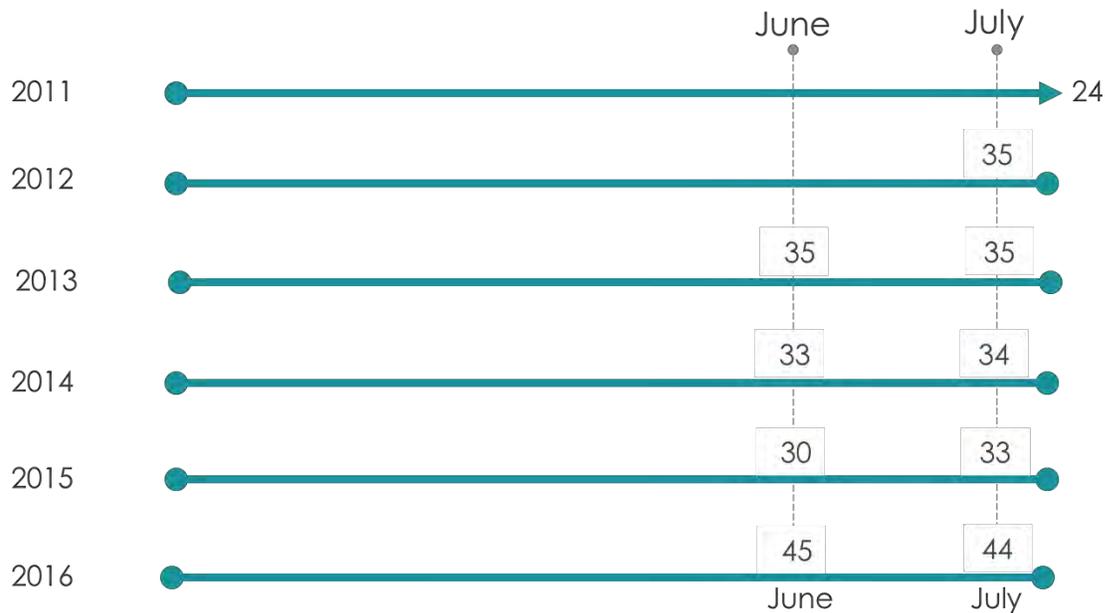
The number of participants that MDEA has trained over time is illustrated in

<sup>5</sup> Information on actual vs. targeted numbers can be found on Page 17

<sup>6</sup> To date, four in-country trainings have taken place – two in Botswana, one in South Africa, and one in Lesotho.

<sup>7</sup> IARS submitted a concept note to UNISA management on establishment of the diploma course.

## No of trainees over time 2011-2016- UNISA/SA based Certificate course June



## In-country training



**Figure 3: Trainee Totals 2011-2016<sup>8</sup>**

The Certificate is the first comprehensive program that covers most events in the electoral cycle and creates uniformity in the management of elections in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this way, MDEA provides comprehensive election management training for officials across countries.

The MDEA curriculum is broken down into three modules that cover these key electoral processes shown in Figure 4 below. Issues that cut across all these themes in the electoral cycle include the media, gender, party financing, and election security.

<sup>8</sup> Please note that all 2016 trainees included in this figure are yet to complete the assignments and portfolios for the course.

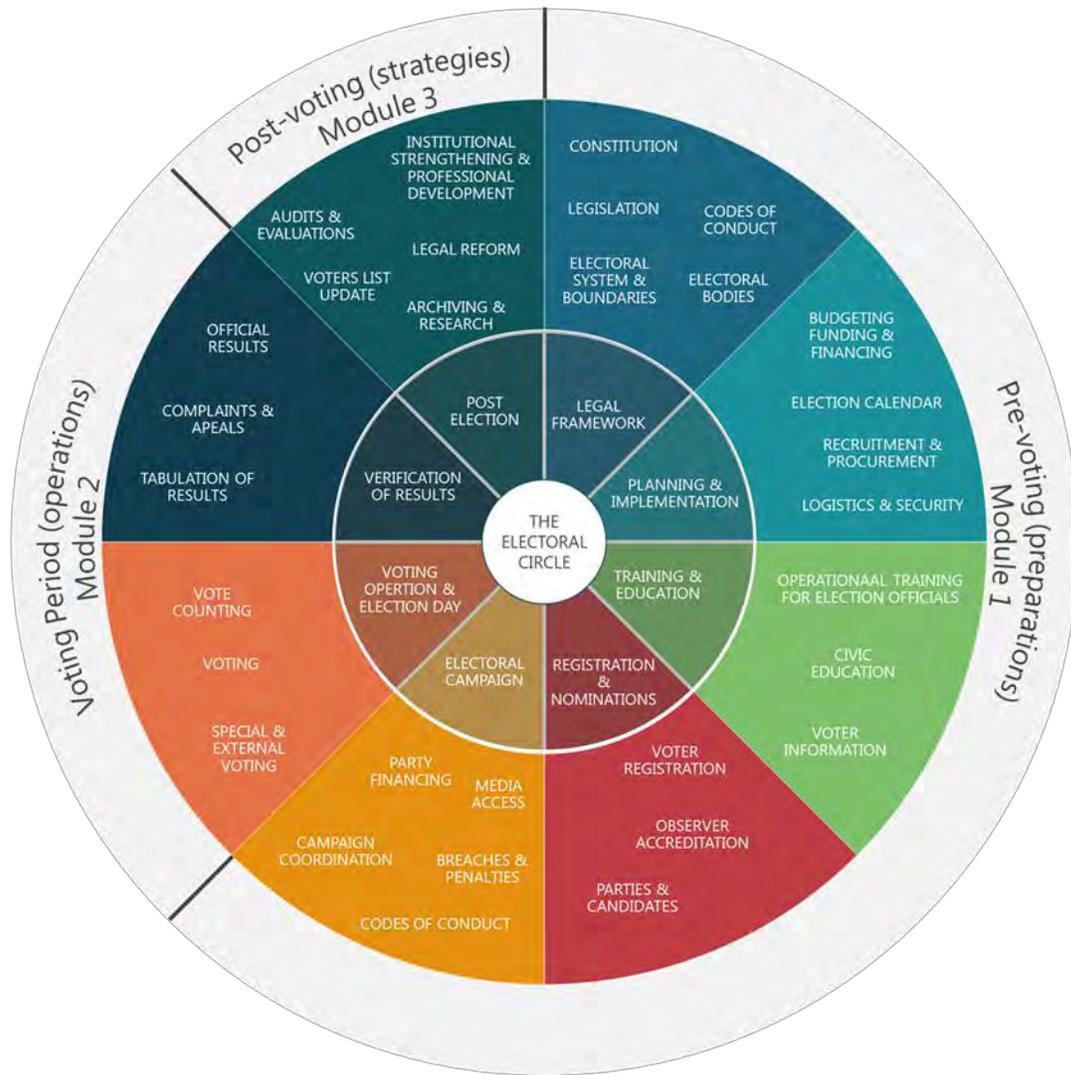


Figure 4: MDEA Curriculum

All major official national languages (English, French, and Portuguese) are represented in the countries that have participated in the MDEA courses. This is important for narrowing the performance gap in election management across different regimes and bringing harmony across the Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone divide.



Figure 5: MDEA Trainees by Country

The MDEA program has been very successful in its goal of reaching beyond the Southern African countries with the training program, as illustrated in Figure 6. Many of these countries structure their institutions along the former colonial powers' models and continue to use inherited management practices, which only increases the necessity for a comprehensive program such as MDEA.



**Figure 6: African Coverage**

Finally, the MDEA Certificate Training has been able to comply with all regional gender parity requirements due to its application of the Zebra system, which requires a balancing of both sexes in all courses. UNISA-IARS's requirement for gender balancing in the Certificate Training is that every alternate trainee should be a woman and this has been strictly adhered to. Still, less than half of the trained officials are females (216 females and 266 males have been trained in the Certificate course).

### **In-Country Courses**

The in-country courses use the same format as the campus-based Certificate Training but are paid for by the host governments. These are always conducted on the request of the EMBs in the respective countries.

### **Executive Commissioners' Course**

MDEA also launched a Commissioners' Executive Course in 2014 and by December 2015 had trained 55 Commissioners in two batches. In this course it has been difficult to achieve a gender balance since these are appointed officials and in most cases there are more males than females (as of 2015, 17 females and 38 males have been trained through the Commissioners' Course).

### **Mentorship, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The MM&E component of MDEA involves follow up visits to the trainees' countries to check on progress in applying lessons learned during the Certificate Training. The MM&E is also informed by impressions that the program had made some impact in areas of policies and practices in EMB management in the participating countries.

### **Alumni Network**

The Alumni component arose out of the need to create a Community of Practice (COP) on elections in the region and to encourage continued peer learning amongst the trained officials. This Alumni hub of knowledge on democratic election management, mostly trained students, was designed to network for continuous impact and sustained links with UNISA-IARS.

## **REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

MDEA places emphasis on compliance with the election regional frameworks (Figure 7) by emphasizing best practices in the conduct of elections that are set to improve the quality of democracy in the region. These normative frameworks and guidelines, to which almost all African countries subscribe, are aimed at promoting best practices in the management of elections for the purposes of ensuring citizens' security, political stability, and the maintenance of good governance (ACHPR Article 4 (m)).

- African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) 2007))
- 2004 Southern African Development Community's (SADCs) Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections
- Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum's Norms and Standards for Elections 2001
- Principles for Election Management, Monitoring and Observation (PEMMO)
- 2002 AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (AU Declaration)
- The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)
- The OAU Solemn Declaration on the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA)
- Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)
- The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

**Figure 7: Regional Election Management Frameworks**

## **RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

An important MDEA component is conducting research and producing publications on elections in the

region as well building research capacity for EMBs so they can use empirical evidence to inform the electoral management process. The MDEA Election Watch Quarterly, launched in 2014, includes op-ed pieces and focuses on countries scheduled to hold elections each year. Political Situation Reports from such countries are also featured in the newsletter. Currently, facilitators and other scholars write the articles, though the intention is for the Alumni to contribute articles as well.

MDEA has also been used as a platform for sharing experiences on democracy building through elections. This is done through seminars hosted by the MDEA implementing team at UNISA-IARS.

**Recommendation:** Support upgrading of good trainee portfolios from the course into publishable articles.



## CONTEXTUALIZING MDEA

MDEA is partly a reaction to the continued democratization processes in Africa. The activities in the project aim to address the election management challenges in the region. As credible elections depend on how far the electoral system and administration have been institutionalized and the confidence the political parties and other stakeholders have in election administration, the institutionalization of these two items is important to building sustainable democratic states.

The countries in the region have all accepted elections as important rituals of democracy that regularly confirm and reinforce the legitimacy of the political system by providing (i) the means for citizens to choose their representatives in a legislature, (ii) a systematic way to choose governments in a contest between competing political parties, and (iii) a means to confer legitimacy on the political system. Elklit (2007) identified four institutional factors which determine a credible election: (i) an agreed upon electoral system, (ii) a competitive party system, (iii) a non-contested constitutional system, and (iv) a credible election management system. The last factor is what MDEA aims to address.

MDEA's objectives are to:

- Increase the number of electoral personnel who understand the role that EMBs play in a democracy;
- Increase the number of electoral personnel who understand international norms, constitutional and legal regimes applicable to elections and EMBs in Africa;
- Increase the capacity of EMBs throughout Africa who are able to manage elections more effectively and who understand the central role of democratic elections to participatory electoral democracy; and
- Further enhance continuous capacity development among the MDEA Alumni and other senior officials of electoral institutions.<sup>9</sup>

## COST SHARING OF MDEA IMPLEMENTATION

Cost sharing is a component of the MDEA partnership between USAID, UNISA, and the IEC-SA. USAID has contributed a total of \$4.1 Million over the five years. In the same period, UNISA has contributed.

- Waiving the customary UNISA 9% charge on all externally funded short learning or non-academic training programs;
- Supplying training facilities and security;

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<sup>9</sup> This objective was added to the MDEA program through USAID grant amendment.

- Providing logistical support; and
- Accessing the extensive UNISA library and information system for reading and research purposes.

The IEC-SA has contributed:

- Providing Practitioner facilitators for the courses;<sup>10</sup>
- Reviewing of course materials; and
- Hosting of trainees during field experience in the provinces.

Khulisa saw evidence of all of these in-kind contributions.

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<sup>10</sup> IEC practitioners did not participate in the Lesotho in-country training and in the June 2016 course due to, among other things, preparations for the 3 August 2016 South African Local Government Elections.

# EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

## METHODOLOGY

This performance evaluation utilized a theory-based evaluation approach that evaluated the assumptions underlying MDEA's causal model. The evaluation included before-after comparisons, which allowed the evaluation team to track changes in the performance of EMBs as well as establish whether desired results are occurring and whether implementation is on track.

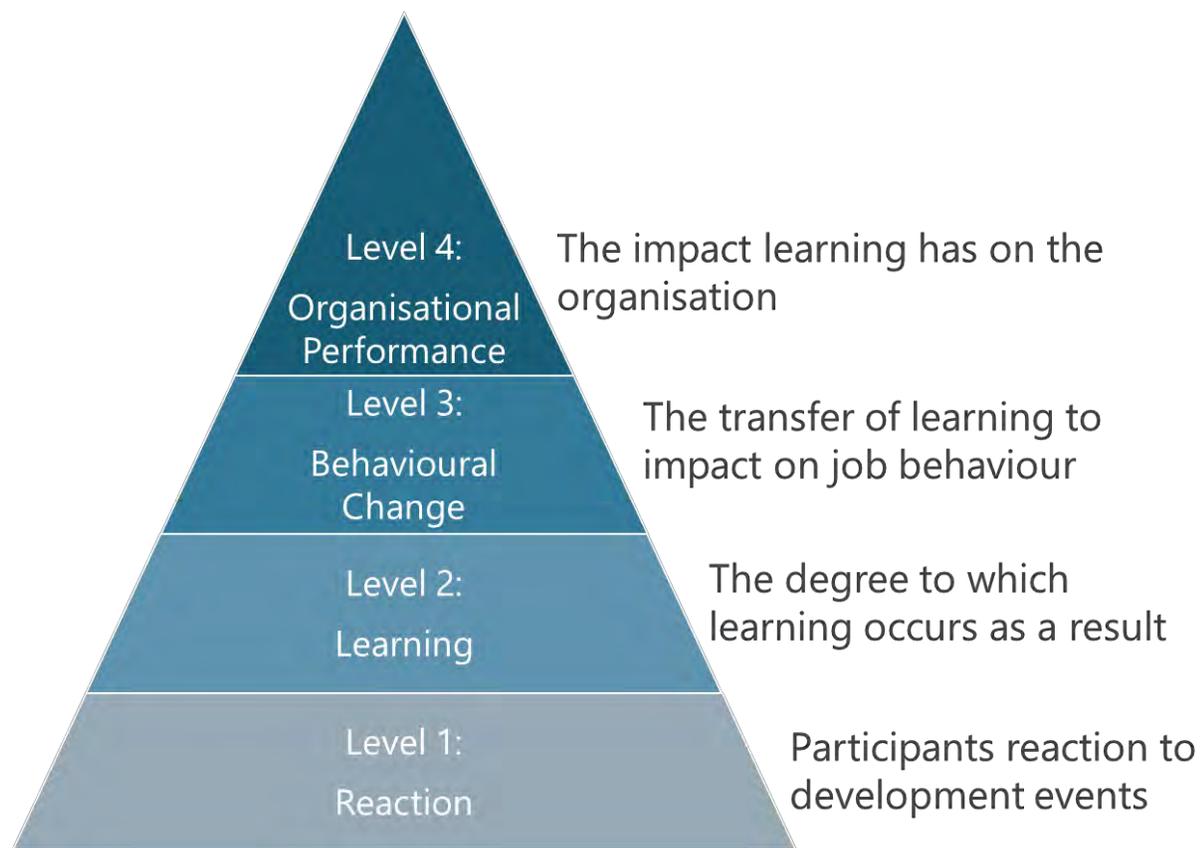


Figure 8: The Kirkpatrick Model of Evaluating Training Programs

The Kirkpatrick Model of Four Levels of Evaluating Training Programs illustrated in Figure 8.

**First, we examined participant satisfaction.** *How satisfied were the participants with the training? How satisfied were their supervisors?* This information came from document reviews of Alumni reports and trainee course evaluation questionnaires, as well as the survey that was conducted by the team.

**Second, there was an analysis of knowledge gained.** *What did participants learn from the training program?* This information was derived from course assessments, survey data and also from information gained from Alumni, EMB senior management, and participants through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

**Third, there was an evaluation of behavioral change:** what participants have done since the training. *Have they changed their own practices within their role at the EMBs?* This was assessed through the survey where we asked participants what knowledge and skills they have applied from the training program on the job and how they have applied these.

**Finally, the team evaluated the organizational performance and institutional changes** that have occurred based on the participants' application of knowledge and skills from the training. *How have the EMBs changed as institutions? Have processes, procedures, or policies within the EMBs been changed?* This information was primarily gained from the site visits and five case studies as well as through the KIIs and FGDs.

A **mixed-methods evaluation approach** was applied in this evaluation. Given the complex nature of political processes, development activities, and MDEA in particular, both qualitative and quantitative methods provided a better chance of yielding optimal results. In the MDEA performance evaluation, six data collection methods were employed:

## **DOCUMENT AND DATA REVIEW**

The team reviewed primary and secondary documents to provide a more in-depth perspective of the Certificate Training and its current achievements and challenges. An analysis of the success of MDEA required a comparison of the goals of the project to actual outcomes. A comprehensive review of the curriculum was essential in determining the effectiveness of the program in addressing present EMB challenges and making targeted recommendations for improvement. Existing Alumni reports helped to examine the sustainability of the training program and identify concrete changes in the practices of the Alumni in their respective EMBs.

A list of documents reviewed can be found in Annex V.

## **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS)**

A series of FDGs were conducted with the following:

- Trainees in the Botswana in-country training course
- UNISA-IARS staff
- EMBs (DRC, Malawi, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe)
- Trainees at the UNISA July training course

These enabled the evaluation team to garner a range of perspectives and nuanced insight into the program and the extent to which these differ across these stakeholder groups. This analysis measured the effectiveness and relevance of the MDEA program as well as observed changes in the capacity of the EMBs.

The guides used for FGDs can be found in Annex III.

## **KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIS)**

In-depth face-to-face and Skype interviews were conducted with the EMB officials in many of the 26 countries as well as with the course facilitators. The KIIs targeted a wide range of key individuals:

- Trained participants in MDEA - provincial and district level in Zimbabwe/Alumni
- EMB Commissioners
- EMB Secretariats' senior managers
- USAID technical staff
- UNISA-IARS staff
- MDEA course facilitators (some of these are also curriculum reviewers)
- SADC-ECF

Some of these were iterative interviews i.e. respondents were interviewed several times to follow up on a particular issue, clarify concepts, or check the reliability of data. The interviews were designed to capture perceptions on the strengths and weaknesses of MDEA's Certificate Training Program, its relevance and ability to improve the capacity of EMBs throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, and its effectiveness in causing operational changes and improvements in EMB procedures and practices. The questions and data collection were customized for the different levels of interviewees. Individuals were selected based on their relevant experiences and availability.

The guides used for KIIs can be found in Annex III and a list of organizations and persons contacted can be found in Annex VI.

## **SITE VISITS/TRAINING OBSERVATIONS**

Site visits were undertaken to the EMBs of Botswana (February 23-26, 2016), South Africa (April 28-30, May 11, 2016), and Zimbabwe (May 20-22, 2016). The Botswana visit was undertaken prior to finalizing the questionnaires and these interviews were important in shaping the final evaluation instruments. The evaluation team also conducted course observation during the Botswana visit in addition to many observations in South Africa (June and July 2016). Several visits were made to the UNISA campus to observe various parts of the course. The Khulisa team interacted with the trainees and directly observed their procedures and practices. The site visits to the Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe EMBs enabled the team to collect data on operational changes/ improvements in electoral procedures and practices and the capacity of EMBs in Sub-Saharan Africa in general.

The guides used for training observations can be found in Annex III.

## SURVEYS

The first survey questions were sent out to 323<sup>11</sup> MDEA Certificate Trainees in the 28 countries and just under half responded (148/323). This electronic participant survey was designed to collect information on the successes and challenges of MDEA’s Certificate Training Program and its effectiveness in improving capacity of EMBs and enacting operational changes and improvements in procedures and practices. To increase the response rate, another survey was sent out to the current trainees who are yet to graduate (some of the questions were customized for this group). Out of the 110 invitations sent in this second group<sup>12</sup>, 40 responses were received. The information from the survey made it possible to identify areas of program success, challenges, and concrete changes in election management practices arising from the Certificate Training Program.

The survey tool can be found in Annex III.

## CASE STUDIES

The evaluation team selected five countries (Figure 9: Case Study Countries) in which in-depth KIs were conducted for the case studies. These five countries are fairly representative of the spectrum of electoral and political regimes in the region. These case studies of EMBs serve to link the MDEA

# The Democratic Management of elections EMB Case Studies

South Africa proportional representation	Botswana first past the post	Lesotho mixed member party lists	Kenya first past the post	Zimbabwe first past the post
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of autonomy</li> <li>• General consensus on legal &amp; institutional framework</li> <li>• Sophisticated web based process</li> <li>• Extensive use of ICT &amp; social media platforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A history of peaceful elections</li> <li>• Some political interference in IEC</li> <li>• No stand-alone electoral law</li> <li>• Inadequate ICT systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political interference in IEC</li> <li>• Legal &amp; institutional framework constraints</li> <li>• History of Coups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducive legal &amp; institutional framework</li> <li>• High levels of press freedom</li> <li>• Strong use of social media</li> <li>• Low levels of trust in IEC</li> <li>• History of electoral violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate legal &amp; institutional framework (2013)</li> <li>• High political interference in IEC</li> <li>• Restricted political space</li> <li>• History of electoral violence</li> <li>• Use of social media temporarily banned</li> </ul>

Figure 9: Case Study Countries

<sup>11</sup> This number is lower than the total number of trainees due to the fact that UNISA was unable to provide the evaluation team with correct email addresses for every trainee.

<sup>12</sup> Again, this number is lower than the total number of trainees as it only reflects the correct email addresses the evaluation team received.

Certificate Training Program to operational changes/improvements in EMB procedures and practices as well as identify the extent that the program has improved the capacity of EMBs throughout the targeted communities. The case studies were informed not only by the data collected in the KIIs, FGDs, and surveys, but also through site visits with three of the selected EMBs.<sup>13</sup>

These case studies can be found in Annex IX but the information garnered from them is present throughout this report.

## DATA ANALYSIS

KIIs and FGDs were recorded and transcribed into a Word document, except for Zimbabwe’s EMB, which refused to be recorded. The Lusophone and Anglophone interviews were conducted in their respective languages (by home language speakers) and later translated into English.

The participant survey was captured through an online survey tool, Survey Monkey, to collect and tabulate data. All open-ended responses were coded and analyzed.

## LIMITATIONS

The following limitations affected data collection and analysis by the evaluation team. For more information on these issues, please see Annex VIII.

Limitation	Description
<b>Availability and Weak Use of Routine Data</b>	The MDEA program lacks strong administrative systems thus challenging the Evaluation Team’s ability to access routine data including trainee demographic data and numbers, end-of-course performance marks, and course assignment feedback.
<b>Communication Issues</b>	The implementing partner was asked to notify EMBs in advance of the evaluation, but only sent the notification to the IEC and to SADC ECF. Thus, EMBs were unaware of the evaluation and many interviewees needed time to prepare and address bureaucratic concerns. Additionally, connectivity was an issue in conducting remote interviews with some countries.
<b>Self-Censorship</b>	It was very clear that EMB officials exercised self-censorship during the interviews since many are heavily monitored and controlled. Thus some participants feared being victimized for expressing themselves freely.
<b>Perceptions</b>	This evaluation measured perceptions and behaviors of participants which are inherently difficult to quantify. The team designed survey and interview questions to address this. Additionally, retrospective analysis was used due to the lack of strong baseline data.
<b>Kirkpatrick Model</b>	Some criticize the model as it does not take “cognizance of primary intervening variables such as – motivation to learn; trainability; job attitudes.” Holton EF: 1996

Figure 10: Data Collection Limitations

<sup>13</sup> Please note that the Kenyan Case Study is based entirely on a document review, as the Kenyan EMB consistently deferred interviews.

# FINDINGS

In this section, we discuss our findings by examining each evaluation question and its sub-questions.

## I. WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY?

The sub-questions to this evaluation question are:

- How successful has MDEA been at reaching the expected results?
- What have been the main challenges during implementation?

Considering the broad nature of the first evaluation question, this section provides a summary of the findings of the MDEA evaluation report, and additional data and detail can be found in the discussion of the relevant evaluation questions further in the report.

### 1a. How successful has MDEA been at reaching the expected results?

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*“The great success is that MDEA can bring together in the same space most of electoral management technicians for dissemination of good practices in electoral administration. The challenge is that each country is a country, has its practices, culture, etc. We're not going to have the same practices, but we'll get the best practices from this training.”*

*-EMB Director from Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Region*

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The successes that the evaluation team found with the MDEA program are summarized in Figure 11. These items are all addressed in the proceeding evaluation questions.

	<b>Success</b>	<b>Description</b>
	<i>Curriculum</i>	MDEA developed a comprehensive election management training and curriculum, while those available previously had only been incremental two- or three-day courses offered by different actors.
	<i>Number of Trained Officials</i>	MDEA has trained a total of 537 participants since 2011 of which approximately 344 were Certificate Trainees and 55 Commissioners paid for under the USAID grant. The remaining 138 Certificates were directly funded by EMBs. The course expanded in 2013 to offering two sessions each year allowing for additional trainees and has started in-country trainings.
	<i>Trainees Overall Satisfaction</i>	A very high proportion of the trainees, 87%, reported overall satisfaction with the course and 96% expressed that the course met their expectations.
	<i>Peer learning</i>	Trainees have been able to exchange experiences during class sessions allowing for a cross-fertilization of ideas across country lines.
	<i>Managed Diversity</i>	MDEA adopted an inclusive approach to capacity building: training officials across the English, French, and Portuguese divide; covering most of Sub-Saharan Africa; and including almost equal numbers of male and female trainees (216 vs. 266).

Figure 11: Main Successes of MDEA

When including the in-country courses, MDEA program has exceeded its training targets. This can be seen in their performance against the USAID targets illustrated in the tables below. When including all participants, it is obvious that MDEA exceeded USAID targets in the Certificate Training Course.

Year	Intake	Intake Total	Yearly Total	Yearly Target	Performance (Total/Target)
2011	UNISA	24	24	24	100%
2012	Botswana	32	67	35	191%
	UNISA	35			
2013	UNISA June	35	70	70	100%
	UNISA July	35			
2014	UNISA June	33	67	70	96%
	UNISA July	34			
2015	IEC-SA	36	99	70	191%
	UNISA June	30			
	UNISA July	33			
2016	Botswana	32	155	90	172%
	Lesotho	34			
	UNISA June	45			
	UNISA July	44			
<b>Total</b>			<b>482</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>134%</b>

Figure 12: Performance of MDEA Certificate Training Course against USAID Targets

When subtracting the in-country training which was paid for directly by the EMBs, the picture is very different. IARS reports state that there were 38 dropouts but it is unclear what year these occurred. Therefore, it appears that they have achieved an 86% performance against targets.

Year	Intake	Intake Total	Yearly Total	Yearly Target	Performance (Total/Target)
2011	UNISA	24	24	24	100%
2012	UNISA	35	35	35	100%
2013	UNISA June	35	70	70	100%
	UNISA July	35			
2014	UNISA June	33	67	70	96%
	UNISA July	34			
2015	UNISA June	30	63	70	90%
	UNISA July	33			
2016	UNISA June	45	89	90	99%
	UNISA July	44			
<b>Total</b>			<b>348</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>97%</b>
Dropouts			38		
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>310</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>86%</b>

Figure 13: USAID-Funded Trainees vs. Targets

The Commissioner’s Training Course only started in 2014 and since has exceeded its targets.

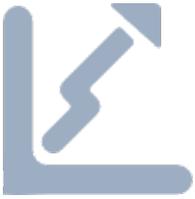
Year	Yearly Total	Yearly Target	Performance (Total/Target)
2011	0	9	0%
2012	0	15	0%
2013	0	15	0%
2014	28	15	187%
2015	27	15	180%
Total	55	69	71.01%

Figure 14: Performance of MDEA Commissioner's Training Course against USAID Targets

**1b. What have been the main challenges during implementation?**

There are clearly many successes with the MDEA program and it is an exciting initiative that has attracted regional interest and support. As a burgeoning program, however, it still faces challenges that while important, are not insurmountable.

Figure 15 summarizes the challenges that the evaluation team found with the MDEA program. The first, weak overall program management, is discussed in this section as it is the largest challenge the evaluation team encountered. The others are addressed throughout relevant later sections.

	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Description</b>
	<i>Weak Overall Program Management</i>	Overall program management has not kept pace with the demands brought by the expansion over the years. <sup>14</sup> There is a missed opportunity in terms of stakeholder communication and the relationship between UNISA-IARS and IEC-SA has not been adequately coordinated.
	<i>Imbalance between Theoretical and Practical Components</i>	In the MDEA curriculum, participants continue to express a desire for more practical modules and experiences to help them with their work.
	<i>Lack of Module Updates</i>	The three modules that the course is based on are printed materials and thus updating of the curriculum is done through Facilitators and their teaching notes. Rapidly changing technologies and political environments need to be reflected in the modules to be relevant. Additionally, the course lacks translation services for the French and Portuguese speaking participants.
	<i>Inadequate Preparation</i>	The management of the MDEA course not only fails to prepare trainees in advance for the training, they do not adequately plan ahead resulting in last minute facilitation and curriculum discrepancies.
	<i>Lack of Participant Feedback Loop</i>	The course evaluations collected at the end of each session have never been collated or analyzed by the MDEA team leading to a large amount of information and feedback that have never been incorporated into the program.
	<i>Escalating Training Costs</i>	Since 2011, the campus based Certificate Training costs (per trainee) have risen by 35% which threatens the planning for the continuation of the program as costs will continue to escalate in the face of dwindling resources.
	<i>Difficulty Managing Expansion (Alumni)</i>	The goal of the Alumni was to build a Community of Practice but it has not been very successful in triggering peer-to-peer support. The current organization lacks clear goals and focused steering.

<sup>14</sup> For example, Zambia also requested facilitation for in-country based courses but were unable to fund the training.

**Figure 15: Main Challenges of MDEA**

As noted in the first row in Figure 15, overall program management of MDEA has not kept pace with the demands brought by the expansion over the years. The new activities (in-country courses, Alumni, MM&E, the Executive Commissioner’s Courses) all place an enormous burden on the already strained management resources.

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*“Biggest problem is with UNISA-IARS logistics. This needs a lot of improvement. Planning times and sequencing are not friendly for participants from many of the other countries. Accommodation, travel, etc. (timeliness of logistics) is problematic and needs improvement.”*

*-SADC-Electoral Commissions Forum (ECF)*

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Whereas USAID outlined some targets in the project agreement, no identification of targets across the new activities (or specific qualitative results) have been documented. Quarterly reports emphasize the quantitative component of the USAID agreed-upon target, which applies mostly to the Certificate Training only.

During the FGD with the implementation team, these challenges were acknowledged:

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*“We are planning to incorporate interpretation this year.”*

*“We need to conduct a longitudinal study to see how our trainees have been doing. It is important to follow over time and get field experiences.”*

*“There is an absence of mentoring in the program – we need more intensified mentoring when we go to the countries.”*

*-UNISA-IARS Faculty*

*“Subject matter recommendations have not been taken into account; we need to see feedback from participants themselves.”*

*-Trainee (Commissioner who attended Executive Course)*

*“Mode of delivery, planning teaching schedules is all very chaotic. Things shift all the time and the time allocated to teach is not adequate.”*

*-Trainee (Commissioner who attended Executive Course)*

---

**Recommendation:** Establish a comprehensive M&E system for all of the activities with clear targets and indicators



Below we explore specific areas of concern within the overall program management of MDEA. The issues are interrelated, which means individual elements are often present in different domains.

### Institutional Capacity

MDEA is implemented by the IARS, which has a staff complement of six academics, one MDEA Administrator, and three program assistant coordinators (hired to support the MDEA program). The three assistants have not been fully utilized as they all conducted similar tasks around training logistics yet they could have been tasked with M&E, or analysis of the course evaluations and course performance data. Whilst the rest of the staff is paid for by UNISA-IARS, the three assistants were on the USAID program budget which ended on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. Two of them have since left the Institute and it was not clear if they would continue after the extension. Most of the administrative workload is shouldered by the MDEA Administrator, which is quite overwhelming and poses a threat to the institutional memory of the program.

For instance, the evaluation team communicated with the MDEA Administrator for all the information on MDEA whilst he was simultaneously arranging all trainings and MM&E country visits.

**Recommendation:** Strengthen overall program management to cater to the expanded activities including comprehensive planning and allocation of resources to all the activities.

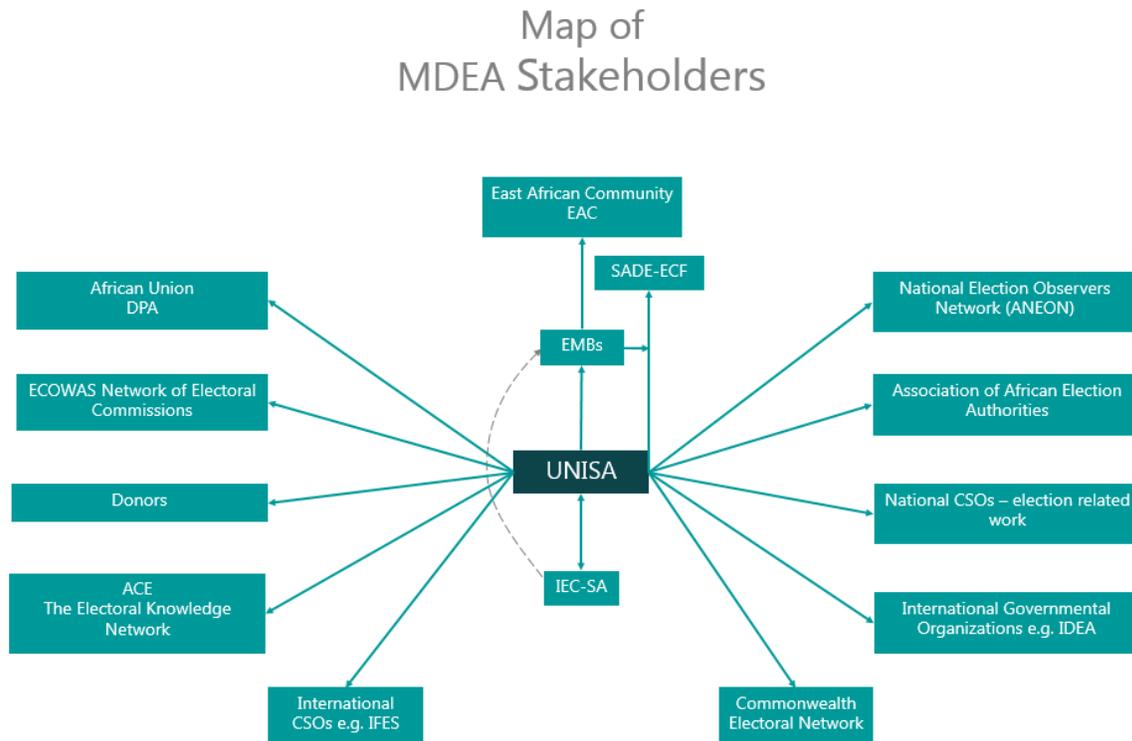


**Recommendation:** Improve project management to ensure that training preparation, especially finalizing the program and the facilitators and ensuring that participants can do adequate preparation (pre-readings, register for the University, etc.).



## Liaison and Stakeholder Communication

A notable recent success in linking to stakeholders is the partnership forged with the African Union and signed on 31 May 2016. Figure 16 shows the range of stakeholders MDEA either is or ought to be engaging with. Each stakeholder reveals the challenges and amount of work needed in creating a COP in election management and the missed opportunities where MDEA does not engage.



**Figure 16: Map of MDEA Stakeholders**

For example, the Association of African Election Authorities is in a position to exert some influence on EMBs to meet some of the training costs; the expertise of CSOs with proficiency in election support could have provided a pool of practitioner facilitators; and the IEC-SA has well-trained officials all across electoral processes who could have complemented the theoretical lessons, as mentioned in the following section.

### Relationship: UNISA-IARS and IEC-SA

MDEA is designed to merge the theory and practice of election management through a coordinated system between UNISA-IARS and the IEC. The IEC-SA has been involved in reviewing the curriculum and in facilitation of some of the courses. Their most recent facilitation contribution was in February 2016 when one official travelled to the Botswana in-country training.<sup>15</sup> The MoU serving as the

<sup>15</sup> The IEC-SA's failure to participate since then is due to, among other things, preparations for the 3 August 2016 South African Local Government Elections.

connection between UNISA-IARS and the IEC-SA is not operationalized through any written brief or Terms of Reference (ToR) on what is expected of the IEC's input throughout all the activities. IEC-SA officials and some facilitators have observed that:

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*“Since the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) was signed in 2010, we have never sat down to review the MOU jointly with UNISA-IARS.”*

*-IEC-SA Official*

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For instance, facilitators from the IEC-SA could lessen some of the administrative burden of the networks- the Alumni and MM&E, as the IEC already has developed systems for engaging other national stakeholders in election management.

**Recommendation:** Establish a stakeholder/ liaison system for engaging with key regional actors and governments as well as all partners.



## Facilitation

Some former facilitators from the IEC-SA questioned the selection of some of the facilitators who do not have any background work or known expertise in elections. Those from the IEC-SA revealed that they are in touch with many experts who could add value to the course. SADC-ECF also pointed that they have lots of experienced and highly qualified practitioners who would be able to fill the practical element gaps in the course. However, the MDEA program is not currently utilizing these resources and in the absence of a system for identifying experts in electoral processes, it has been difficult for UNISA-IARS to find experts across the region. Rather, the facilitators are drawn mainly from UNISA-IARS, UNISA departments, and South Africa.

The program seems to have acknowledged this issue, and the MM&E Lesotho report for 2013 noted the need to broaden the facilitation team and methods, however much does not seem to be done since then.

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*“There is a need for UNISA-IARS to review with facilitators on how to improve the facilitation... What is the criteria on selecting facilitators?”*

*-MDEA Facilitator*

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**Recommendation:** Compile a roster of experts (database) on various election themes in line with the curriculum comprised of both academics and practitioners.



Changes to the curriculum are especially necessary to escape the course's current South African focus

and tailor it to the context of different countries.

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*“The course is a bit too South Africa-centric. It cannot be that only the IEC of SA is a source of lessons and practice when many trainees could supplement that with presentations of video material and others to show what is done in their own countries... The course could identify a few IECs that can make a presentation on their best practices.”*

-MM&E Lesotho Report 2013

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**Recommendation:** Make content country-relevant; indigenize the issues during in-country training and also use examples from countries represented in each group undergoing training.



### **Weak Communication between UNISA-IARS and EMBs**

EMBs have responded positively to this program, but UNISA-IARS struggles to keep track of EMBs' developments around MDEA trainees, as it does not communicate directly with all the EMBs.<sup>16</sup>

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*“UNISA-IARS sends information to us on everything to pass on the EMBs and this process is tedious – it is because they don't have direct relationships with the EMBs.”*

-SADC ECF

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This slows down communication and affects planning for the courses. The absence of direct relationships with EMB institutions affects the extent to which UNISA-IARS can track the impact of its work and receive buy-in from governments.

**Recommendation:** Improve communication and implement data-driven decision making (and other M&E) processes such as completing and recording the assessment of assignments, providing reports to participants and their EMBs, and refining and analyzing participant feedback.



## **2. TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE UNISA CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM ADDRESS THE ELECTION MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES PRESENT IN THE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REGION?**

The MDEA Certificate Training Program addresses the election management challenges present in the sub-Saharan Africa region to a moderate extent. While the training program is a significant step, it is

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<sup>16</sup> In the SADC region, MDEA goes through the SADC-ECF to liaise on its behalf.

still emerging and is yet to succeed in addressing all electoral challenges. It has the elements of a program that could do this, but is not creating the final linkages.

## 2a. Does the curriculum address the practical/operational challenges faced by EMB officials?

The curriculum does address the practical and operational challenges faced by officials, but the overwhelming feedback is that participants want more practical training than is currently included in the curriculum.

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*“We had no opportunity to do practical work in the classroom. They should have provided some simulations for better understanding of certain electoral issues.”*

*-Trainee Survey Respondent*

*“[The course should address] practical fieldwork. The course should occur when an Election was in progress so we have a hands-on experience on the challenges.”*

*-Trainee Survey Respondent*

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**Recommendation:** Revise the curriculum every two years to reflect the latest electoral developments on the continent and to ensure relevance.



EMBs in Africa continue to operate in a stifling political environment and this affects technical aspects of the electoral management process (see Figure 17). Literature by other organizations such as Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) and the Electoral Institute for Sub-Saharan Africa (EISA) on election and integrity continues to reveal the lack of autonomy the EMBs struggle with and how this translates into contested and volatile elections. Despite the MDEA capacity building efforts, EMB senior officials throughout our interviews and focus group discussions concurred that they face the following challenges.

### Election Management Challenges in the Region

- Compromised autonomy of the EMBs and executive interference in election management
- Complete turnover of staff in some countries after elections- continuously draining election management capacity
- Authoritarian political systems
- Partisan coverage by the media during campaigns
- Election related violence and gender based violence
- Inadequate civic education
- Non-inclusive governance practices- particularly regarding gender and ethnicity
- Inadequate resources, EMBs are lean structured and rely on short-term workers during elections
- Differing levels of democratic maturity and rights
- Alleged fraudulent printing of ballot papers
- Reported electoral fraud
- Contestation of election and administrative boundary demarcation
- Questionable election integrity and security, the disputed role of the security sector in democratic processes particularly in elections
- A reluctance by politicians to make needed electoral reforms

Figure 17: Election Management Challenges in the Region

**Recommendation:** Aim to strike a balance between theory and practice amongst the course facilitators.



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*“...we can’t change the system in our EMBs in our countries. We are a small part of broadening the horizon, in some years these may be the key change agents.”*

*-Senior EMB Official*

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Trainees echoed these sentiments during observations in Botswana in February 2016 and at UNISA in June and July 2016.

Still, all interviewed EMBs concurred that MDEA trainees have clearly demonstrated agency in their institutions in their daily operations. As stated in interviews, EMB officials are demonstrating awareness of the direction they would like to go in.

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*“In new electoral processes, we talk about voter and civic education- so this civic education is something we interested in – it is broader and it is about what does it means to be a citizen in the country.”*

*-Prof Paul J. Isaak, Namibia EMB.*

**Recommendation:** Broaden voter education to include civic education (speaking to issues of citizenship in a country)



As illustrated in Figure 18 below, managing election logistics, a source of many electoral conflicts, is one component of the curriculum that 50 trainees (30% of respondents) pointed out as relevant for their work. This was the third most common response, behind research and knowledge management for elections (58 (34.5% of respondents)) and managing voter registration and voter education (56 (33.3% of respondents)). Following these, 49 respondents (29.2%) referred to the understanding of democratic elections in an African context.

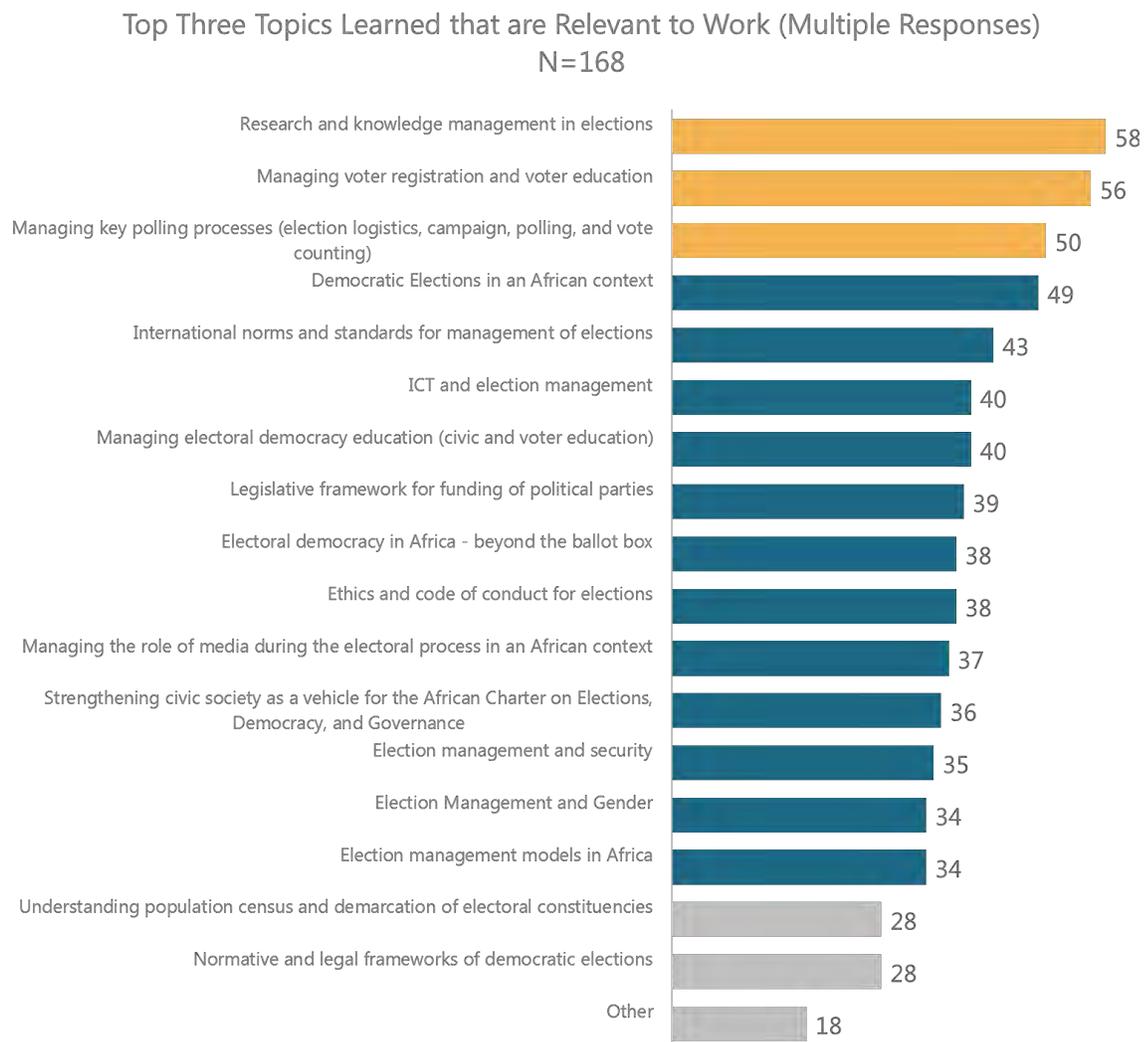


Figure 18: Relevant Topics Learned<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Please note that trainees could select multiple answers to this question, explaining the high number of responses per item.

**Recommendation:** Utilize trainees to generate information on practical experience of EMBs in the region.



However, despite this comprehensive coverage, the three modules on which the MDEA course hinges on, Creating Conditions for Democratic Elections in an African Context; Understanding Key Issues and Processes for Democratic Elections in an African Context; and, Managing Key issues Processes for Democratic Elections in an African Context, were printed in 2011 and are updated through Facilitators teaching notes and class discussions. Changing technologies used in elections and rapidly changing political environments have made election management a fast-paced affair, which must be reflected in the curriculum. Concerns on what is missing in the modules are presented below:

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*“The course should be extended – new technologies and we need to move in tandem. EMBs need to embrace these IT changes and we need to come up with our own devices to enhance management of elections and make them more accurate.”*

*-SADC ECF Official*

*“MDEA must closely work with SADC-ECF in designing courses that respond to emerging EMB capacity requirements.”*

*-SADC ECF Official*

*“As trends in elections evolve, MDEA should be sensitive to the development and make them part of the course (e.g. electronic registration and voting, use of social media) and incorporate learnings from case studies in different countries.”*

*-EMB Senior Official in Mozambique (noted by MDEA team during MM&E visit)*

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UNISA-IARS reported that they are currently reviewing and updating the three modules.<sup>18</sup>

**Recommendation:** Incorporate annual curriculum updates including additional short manuals and a comprehensive review every three years.



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<sup>18</sup> UNISA, however, states that the curriculum is constantly updated, and demonstrated this by showing the evaluation team individual presentations by facilitators for numerous training sessions. They also provided evidence of a planning meeting held in November 2015 to plan revisions.

Importantly, UNISA-IARS has missed out on using the MM&E reports to update the curriculum and document EMB challenges in the region. For instance, between February and June 2012, ten MM&E visits were conducted to different countries, and these could have been used as a learning opportunity to collect information on the challenges these EMBs experienced and thus contextualize the theoretical components of the course.<sup>19</sup>

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*“Providing a learning process that balances the interests of democratic experiences in the region – training of this nature must be context-sensitive to each country.”*

*-UNISA Professor*

*“Entire curriculum [of the executive commissioner’s course] needs major improvements. The course was too basic for such senior personnel and the program was not adhered to – not well organized, very few facilitators turned up. There is an overall need for course management improvement. SADC-ECF should consider ensuring that all Executive trained Commissioners and others identify the content that is relevant to their work needs so that an adequate course is defined for the Executive level.”*

*-Commissioner involved in MDEA since inception*

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## **2b. Do the participants identify any current gaps in the curriculum?**

In addition to the desire for more practical components noted above (Page 28), several participants identified the following gaps in the survey:

### **Survey Question: What challenges should have the course addressed?**

- “How to set up EMB where institutions are bigger than individuals in it. Currently the appointments are influenced by ruling parties.”
- “Funding. Rigging of elections by ruling party in government.”
- “The difficult relation between electoral management bodies and politicians in elections, especially in the ruling party.”
- “Funding of EMBs vs. their independence”

**Figure 19: Survey Respondents Reporting Challenges the Course Should Address**

**Recommendation:** Include additional practical sessions on designing models for political parties’ financing that are fair.



Additionally, one area where the course needs to improve is in respect to the language barrier. The lack of translation services for the French and Portuguese speaking participants during the training courses has affected some trainees in every cohort since 2011. Though some trainees are bilingual, they still struggle immensely with participation during the class sessions and with the literature since the

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<sup>19</sup> The MM&E visits are mainly spent with management and trained staff to check on progress, however, the evaluation team believes the initiative could have been easily expanded.

modules are yet to be translated from English.

For example, as indicated in Figure 20 below, when asked about challenges participants experienced in the training, 37 individuals (24.8% of respondents) reported a challenge being that “Course content and delivery was in a language I am not familiar with.”



**Figure 20: Participant Challenges**

This was a recurring theme in the interviews conducted.

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*“...participating in a training course in which people don't understand most of the content is also problematic. Teachers do all, speak and teach, in English. And as you know, for some it is easy to understand what they say, but it is very difficult for us to learn something from others. So maybe looking at simultaneous translation or something like that would be very positive for the student.”*

*-Portuguese Trainee*

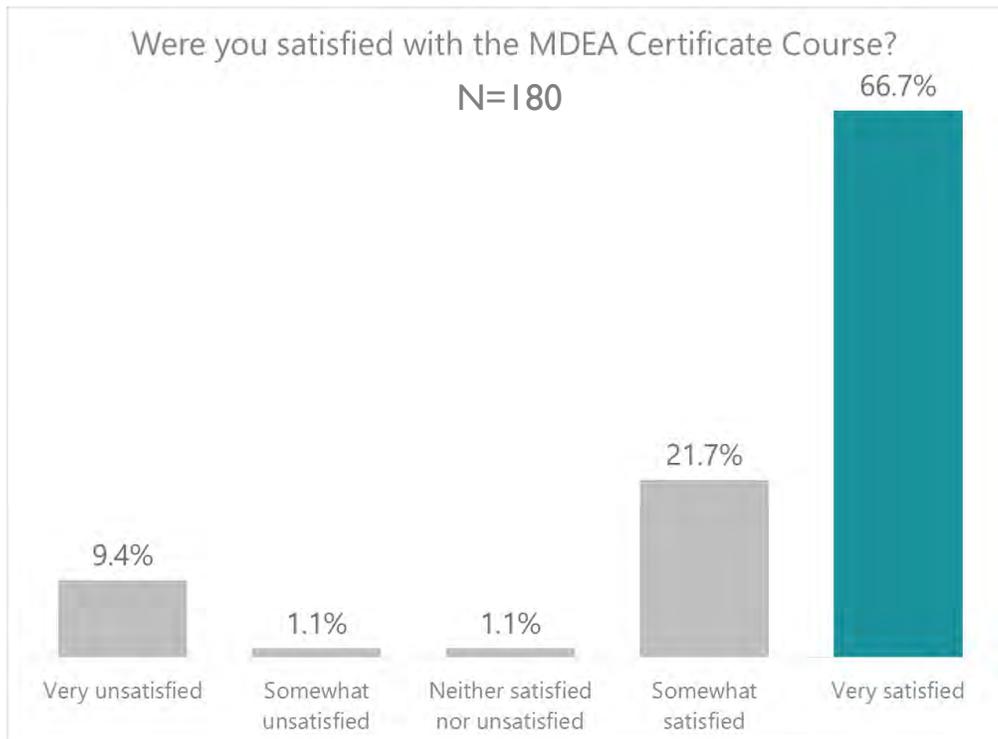
*“The language has been a major obstacle to us. I especially have no mastery of the English language, so that when they asked for the interview I said I wouldn't be able to conduct an interview in English.”*

*-EMB Official (Portuguese Speaking)*

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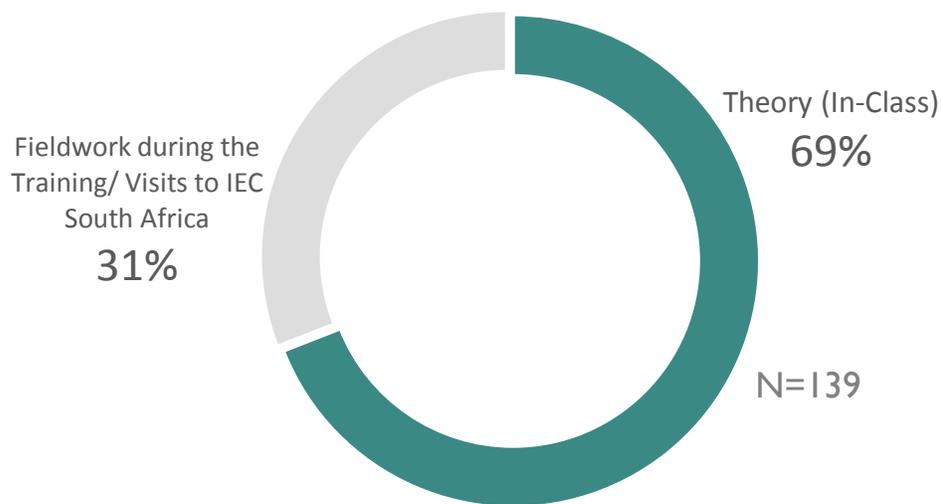
**2c. What is the perception and level of satisfaction of stakeholders (trainers, trainees, and respective managers) about the Certificate Training Program, including the classroom and distance learning components, post-coursework mentorship, and Alumni activities?**

MDEA participants report high levels of satisfaction with the course. A very high proportion of the trainees, 88.4% (159 respondents), reported overall satisfaction (“Somewhat satisfied” or “Very satisfied”) with the course.



**Figure 21: Trainee Satisfaction**

When asked about the two components of the course (classroom and distance learning components), 69% (96 respondents) reported that they were more satisfied with the in-class component than the fieldwork (see Figure 22).



**Figure 22: Training Components Satisfaction**

During the interviews, trainees reported satisfaction with the content of the classroom courses.

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*“After training, I came out with a deeper understanding of running elections.”*

-Trainee

*“We are more equipped for hands-on work – we can implement voter education more effectively, which should be an ongoing activity that is usually limited to election time in many countries.”*

-Kenyan Trainee

*“The MDEA course inspired me to shape my PhD study topic. After the course I realized that capacity challenges facing EMBs in Africa can be eradicated if principles of corporate governance are adopted to form the yardstick upon which election management is measured. So I am currently working on a PhD proposal on ‘Corporate Governance in Election Management’.”*

-Trainee

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Exposure to technology was another area that trainees emphasized satisfaction.

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*“Attending MDEA forced me to learn how to use computers. In my line of work I never really used a computer, since the work is largely logistical and manual and doesn’t require one to be in possession of a computer. In any case our EMB doesn’t supply most of its workers with computers, instead we rely on the typing pool. But due to the need to do MDEA assignments I ended up learning fast on using a computer. I am glad this MDEA exposure improved my computer skills.”*

-Trainee

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However, both the EMBs and students continue to complain about the course workload. The six

assignments (three course work items and three portfolios) are regarded as too many.

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*“The course content was too much for time allocated. I feel the program was too condensed giving little time for deep discussions on all topics. Participants were expected to learn a lot within a short space of time. Doing the assignments presented a torrid time to us as it proved difficult to balance work requirements and completion of assignments.”*

*-Senior Manager in EMB District Office*

*“Demand from EMB and students is that they have too much work to do so they need it to be scaled down... it is assignments that they complain about.”*

*-UNISA Official*

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Regarding other stakeholders, EMB managers are generally satisfied with the course. Across the 14 EMBs interviewed in this evaluation, an overarching theme was that they appreciated that trainees show a difference in their work (see Page 47), but still do not believe it is enough to address all of the challenges they have. They expressed a desire for much more training to be done more quickly.

Facilitators expressed some dissatisfaction, especially around the fact that the course places more emphasis on theory than practice. More importantly though, they are not receiving adequate preparation time in advance of the course. This is due to the program management challenges discussed earlier (Page 21). Finally, there is no sharing of assessment data which was a cause for concern by some facilitators.

Determining participant satisfaction with the Alumni activities remains a challenge as many of the trainees reported that they had attended the Botswana Alumni conference but there was not much information outside of this. Many of the KII respondents were not aware of the Alumni’s activities.

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*“I am not sure of other Alumni activities outside the Alumni Conferences.”*

*-Trainee*

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**Recommendation:** Establish a steering group for the Alumni that will be tasked with ongoing peer learning and capacity building to train regarding election management.



### 3. TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE UNISA CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM TRANSLATED INTO IMPROVED CAPACITY OF ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BOARDS (EMBS) THROUGHOUT SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA TO MANAGE ELECTIONS MORE EFFECTIVELY?

The MDEA Certificate Training program has translated into improved capacity of individuals within the Electoral Management Boards throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Although the evaluation determined the course affected some changes across EMBS in general, the overwhelming perception of participants is that the course contributed to improvements in their respective EMBS' operations and procedures.

#### 3a. Is there evidence that the Certificate Training Program has contributed to increased understanding and knowledge of the overall role EMBS should play in electoral democracy, as well as to improved skills for carrying out individual functional roles in EMBS?

When asked in the survey, participants did report changes in their EMB after the MDEA Certificate Training Course. Specifically, they reported improvements in "Civic and Voter Education" and "Voter Registration" as shown in Figure 23.

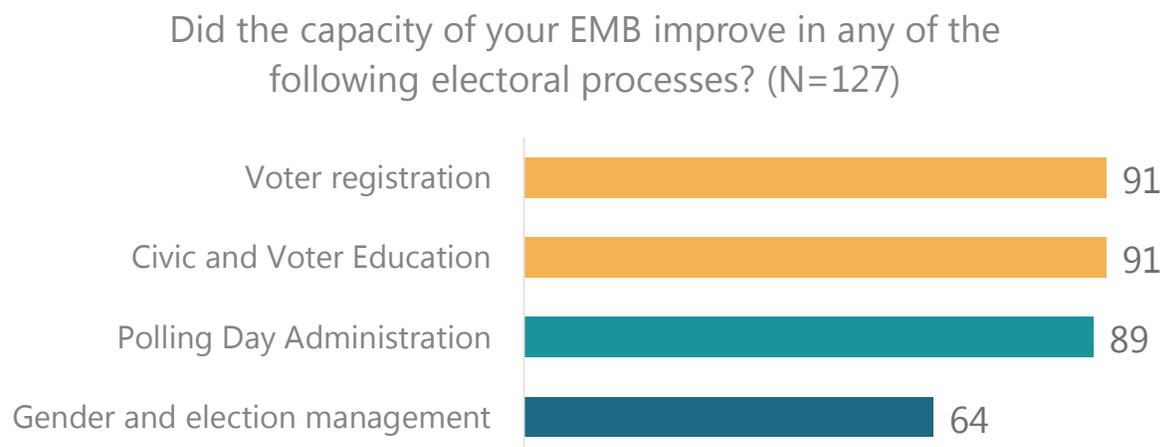


Figure 23: EMB Capacity Improvement<sup>20</sup>

Countries reported different improvements, but one that cuts across all countries was voter education and overall voter engagement.

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*"It should be noted that the relationship with stakeholders in the electoral process was one of the widely debated issues during the course. As can be seen, this method was a big gain for our 2014 election process, by being able to reduce to the minimum the outbreaks of conflict."*

*-Mozambique EMB*

*"[The course addressed] understanding more of voter education code of conduct for political parties."*

*-Survey Respondent*

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<sup>20</sup> Note that this question allowed for multiple answers from respondents.

“[The course addressed] strengthening the role of civic and voter education.”

-Survey Respondent

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**3b. What is the effectiveness of the trainee identification process and selection criteria? Does it lead to selection of officials most likely to bring change to their respective EMBs?**

The countries participating in MDEA use different criteria to select officials to attend the training. Only 1/3 of survey respondents stated that their country had selection criteria to appoint trainees for the Certificate Course (Figure 24). This clearly shows that all EMBs may not be aware of the course content possibly leading them not to send the most relevant officials. Most respondents stated they were chosen because “My Senior Management Nominated Me” (Figure 25<sup>21</sup>).

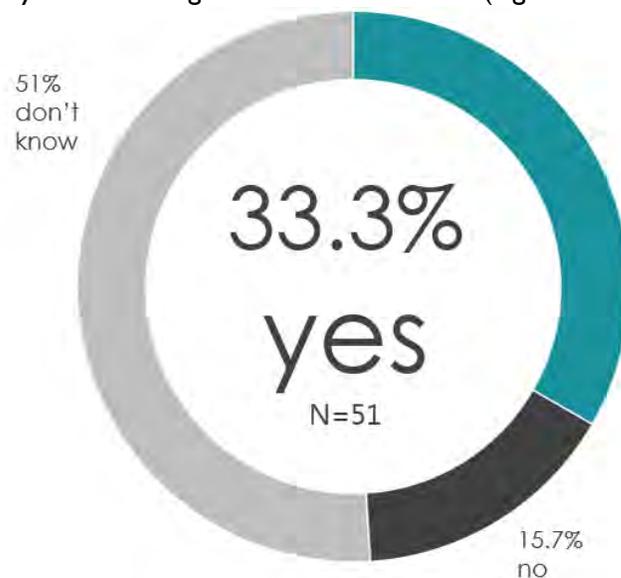
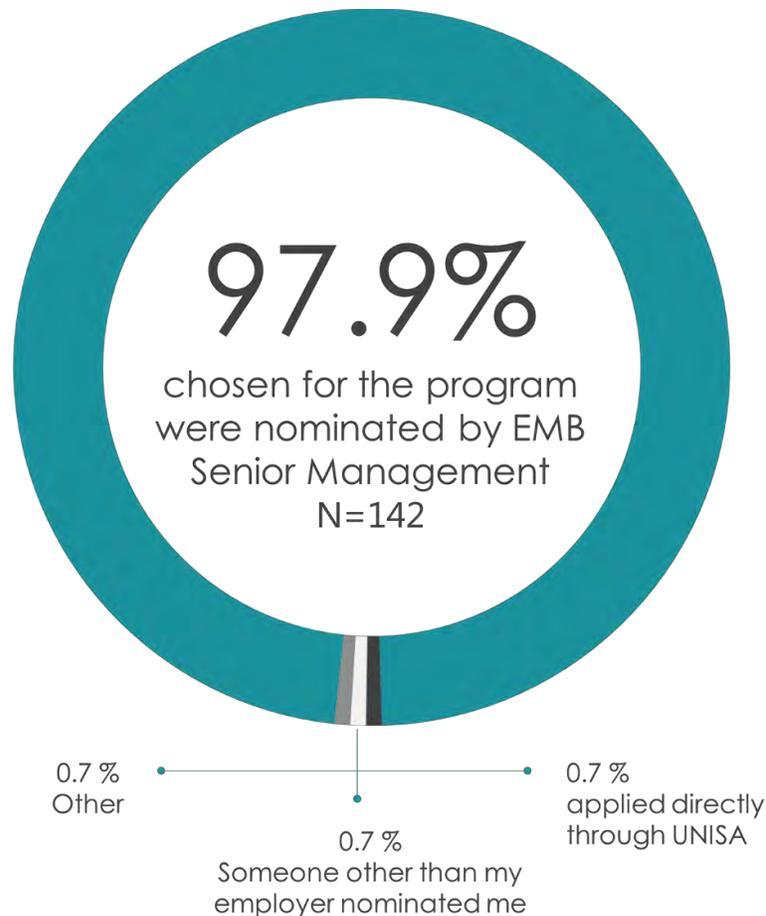


Figure 24: Does Country Have Selection Criteria

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<sup>21</sup> Explanation of “other” response was: “A friend of mine from Lesotho told me about the program and I contacted the coordinator who then wrote to my EMB, and management consented.”



**Figure 25: Chosen for Program**

In the February 2012 Quarterly report, UNISA-IARS noted that EMBs were requesting to be informed on the selection criteria for identifying candidates to be sent for the MDEA program, however it appears that the program has not acted on this.

Some officials in charge of the selection, like those in Mozambique, are very much aware of their capacity needs.

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*“The CNE (Comissão Nacional de Eleições – Mozambique Electoral Commission) looks first to the areas where people are in, then if this training will add value for that particular directorate and the position in which the person is and then appoints the person for the course.”*

*-Mozambique EMB Official*

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At the same time, it seems countries face challenges in who to send for training. According to interviewed trainees from West and East Africa, this is also a political decision. Some countries send temporary officials as trainees to participate in the courses (e.g. DRC).

### 3c. To what extent do Alumni have the potential to influence change in Election Management Bodies?

Given the geographic spread of the Alumni organization, they have the potential to influence EMB reforms but only if they engage in many more activities that pull in many election stakeholders. Senior EMB officials and SADC-ECF pointed out that this COP can only succeed if it embraces the entire electoral spectrum and not just emphasize the MDEA post trainees.

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*“The Alumni should be open to all election stakeholders. I am not a member and I have not heard of it.”*

*-EMB Official*

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**Recommendation:** Create a longitudinal study to assess how the trainees have been doing as part of the Mentorship program.



### 3d. What recommendations exist for the minimum critical number of election officials or specific functional roles per EMB needed to undergo the training to bring meaningful change within an EMB?

Many of the interviewed EMBs indicated that they would like to see at least half of their permanent staff complement trained in order to effect more changes. Some countries, such as Botswana in particular, insist on targeting to have everyone trained. Others expressed that if they could have between 20 and 30 trained there would be a large effect on their EMBs.<sup>22</sup>

This issue is complicated by the fact that a number of the interviewed officials could not give the total permanent staff complement in their EMBs and neither could they all give the number of all trained staff in their EMBs. Only countries that have had in-country training have significantly high proportion of trained officials (South Africa, Botswana, and Lesotho).

### 3e. To what extent do post-certificate Alumni activities add value to the continued learning of graduates and EMBs? What recommendations for revisions/ updates in Alumni activities exist to better benefit the capacity and operations of EMBs?

The Alumni, a noble idea of building a COP, has not been very successful in its goal of triggering peer-to-peer support. The current organization lacks clear goals and focused steering. Though all trained EMB officials qualify as members, very few have signed up<sup>23</sup>. Organizing a voluntary network, the Alumni, on such a vast scale is difficult and becomes more complicated when the different regions require support. The Alumni newsletter has not been active enough; only one newsletter has been published. Additionally, as the main platform for the Alumni, Facebook is not experiencing an increase in traffic and not much activity occurs.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> It is not clear how those EMBs arrived at those numbers.

<sup>23</sup> The data on membership was not provided.

<sup>24</sup> Website traffic data is only available since October 2015 and has never been analyzed for use in improving the Alumni's work.

In the survey the evaluation team sent out, many trainees reported being members of the Alumni (Figure 26). However, a recurring theme in interviews and discussions were that many were not involved, providing evidence of lack of organization of the Alumni.

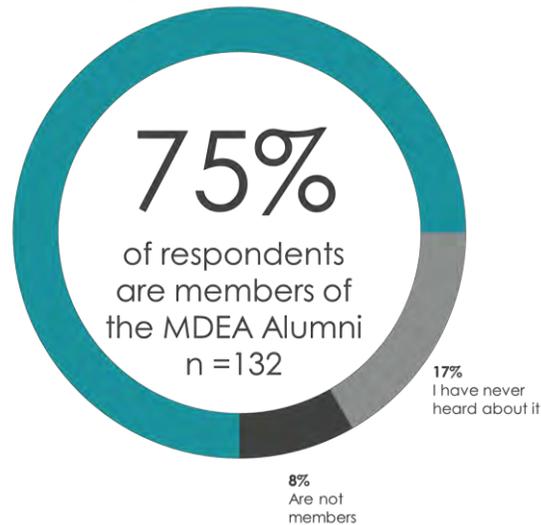


Figure 26: Alumni Membership

*“Though all trained EMB officials qualify as members, very few have signed up.”*

*-EMB Official from Botswana*

Regardless of the number of active Alumni, the activities they have participated in are very few (Figure 27), and this is indicative of the relatively low impact of the network. The category showing highest levels of participation (56 respondents, or 59.6%), is the most expensive option, the conferences<sup>25</sup>.

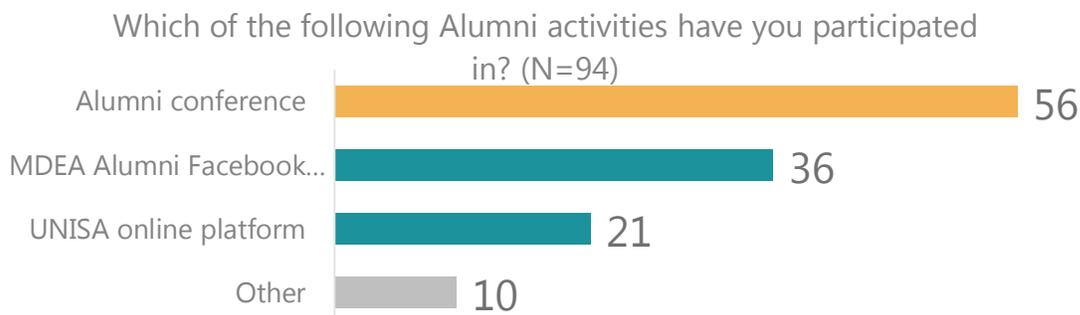


Figure 27: Alumni Activities<sup>26</sup>

Alumni activities are largely confined to expensive regional conferences (two held since 2013), Facebook interaction, and the MDEA website<sup>27</sup>. The conferences were dialogue platforms that resulted in an

<sup>25</sup> Additionally, when current trainees were asked in their survey which Alumni activities they would be most interested in after the conclusion of the course, they chose the conference as well.

<sup>26</sup> Note that respondents were permitted to select more than one answer to this question, resulting in the higher numbers.

<sup>27</sup> [www.unisa.ac.za/cgs/mdea](http://www.unisa.ac.za/cgs/mdea)

exchange of ideas and experiences. However, additional products (e.g. policy briefs on thematic election issues) could have come out of the debates and did not. While the Alumni can facilitate peer interaction, the Facebook page does not show much activity, hence the program is missing out on an opportunity to stay updated on election related developments from all of the countries.

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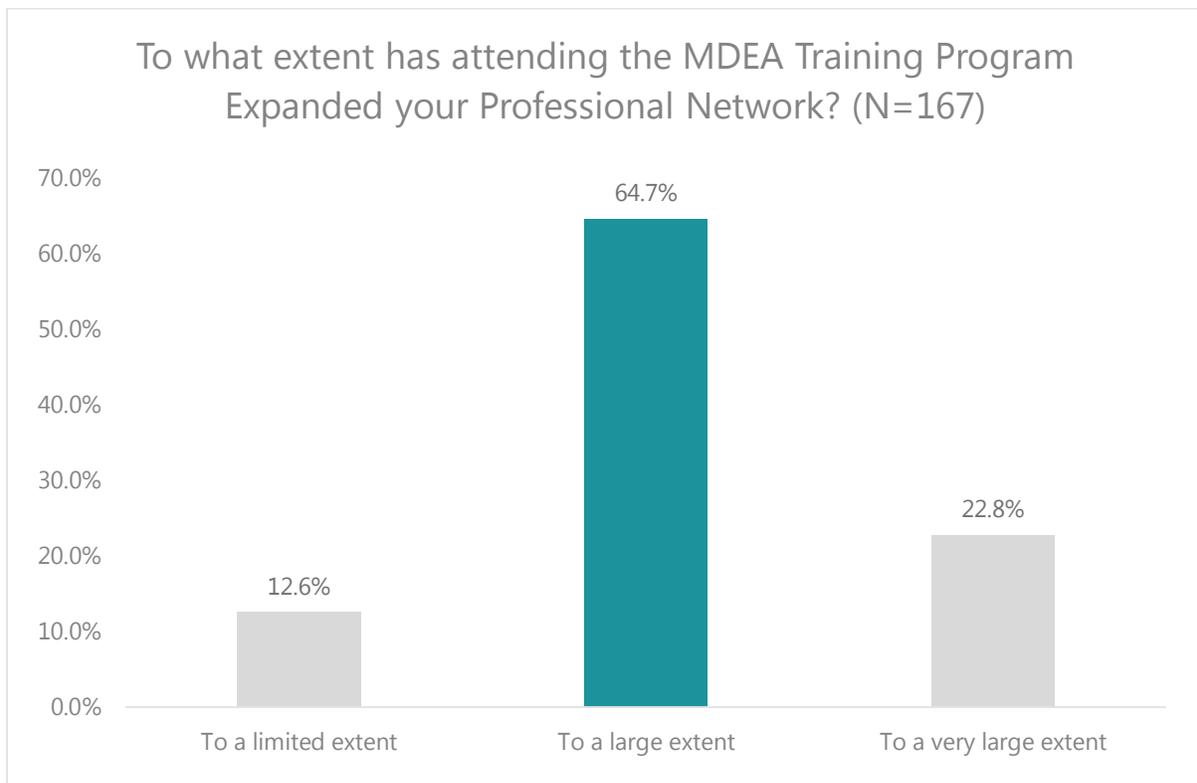
*“[The Alumni’s] low energy is due to the fact that the Alumni was largely composed of former trainees and has not broadened into an inclusive COP on election management in the region.”*

*-MDEA Facilitator*

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Interviews revealed that many election stakeholders, as well as facilitators and EMB senior management, are not even aware of this Alumni. It therefore needs proper identification of goals with set targets and monitoring of activities and impact on EMB processes.

The evaluation team believes that this is a feasible goal because throughout the evaluation, it was clear that participants appreciated the opportunity to interact with their fellow trainees, thus indicating a demand for continued participation. As illustrated in Figure 28 and Figure 29, the majority of respondents (87%) said that attending the training program expanded their professional network to a large or very large extent, and (80%) that interacting with their fellow trainees and Alumni impacted or improved their learning experience to a large or very large extent.



**Figure 28: Professional Network**

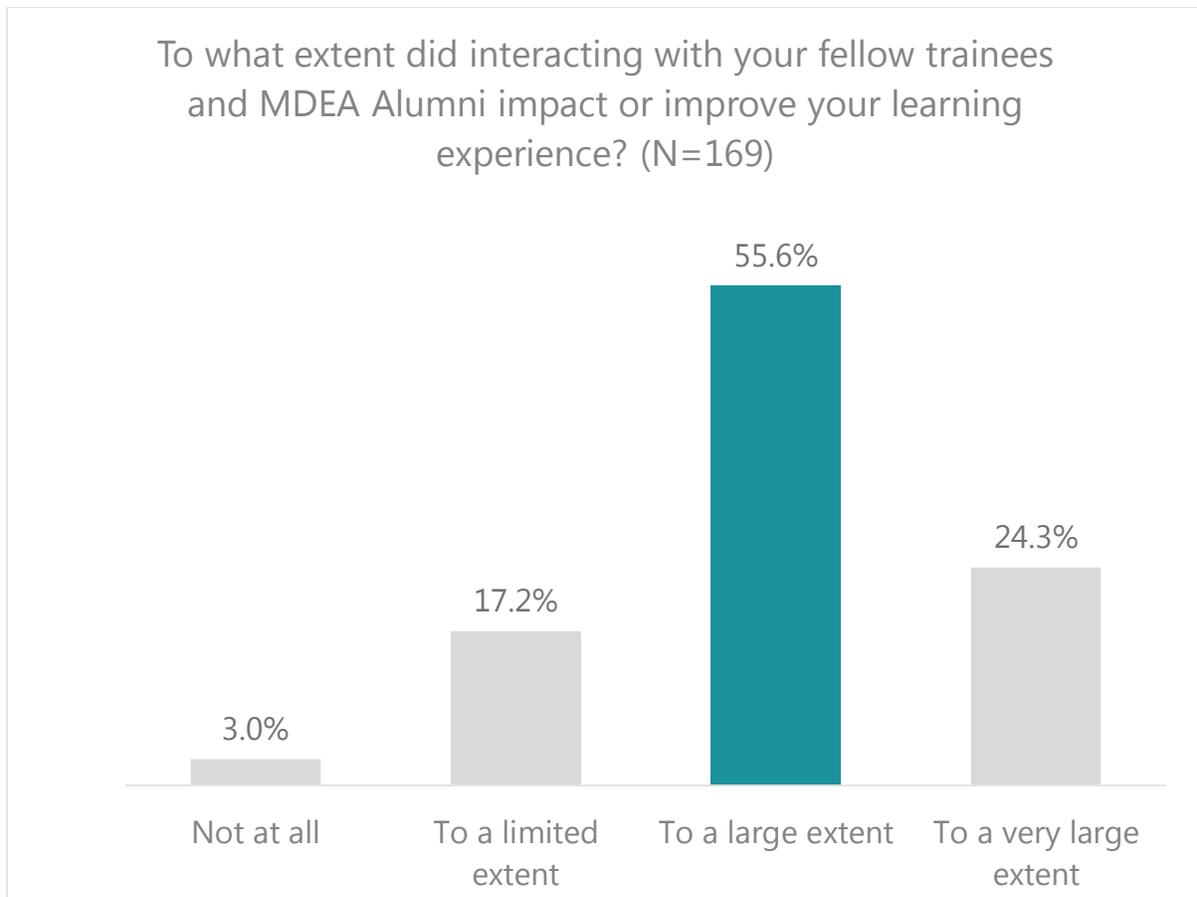


Figure 29: Interaction

**Recommendation:** Hold a consultative process to identify activities for the Alumni that can be monitored at a sub-regional level.



The MDEA Alumni could be incorporated into the vibrant UNISA alumni that has been active for many years. The UNISA Alumni is well developed with different chapters and has a sustainability mechanism through membership fees. A MDEA chapter could be one of the options. The benefits to Alumni members are explained and the MDEA emphasis can be added as one strand of the career options.

The UNISA Alumni explains itself online as follows:

“The Alumni Association consists of UNISA graduates organized to help the university meet its social and educational responsibilities. The Association and the Alumni Chapters are a vehicle to advance the vision and mission of the university as it strives to become “the African university in the service of humanity”. Alumni and students wishing to join the association will be requested to donate a fee which is a minimum of R150, 00 per annum. The contribution made is tax deductible and a tax certificate is issued. Through such donations, the university is able to build and strengthen relationships with alumni, staff members, and students. Donations also enable the university to generate a sustainable income for various university initiatives and to enable the funding of bursaries for UNISA students.”

#### 4. WHAT EVIDENCE EXISTS LINKING THE UNISA CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM TO OPERATIONAL CHANGES/ IMPROVEMENTS IN EMB PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES?

Though the evaluation team was not able to visit every EMB that has sent trainees to the program, the team did an in-depth look at five countries (South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, and Zimbabwe) as examples and completed fieldwork in three of them (explained on Page 16). This section is based on those case studies as well as remote interviews conducted.

##### 4a. Has, and to what extent has, the activity contributed to increased use of new practices in EMBs?

Figure 30 below summarizes verbatim quotes on adoption of new practices and improvement in electoral processes from the respective EMB officials.

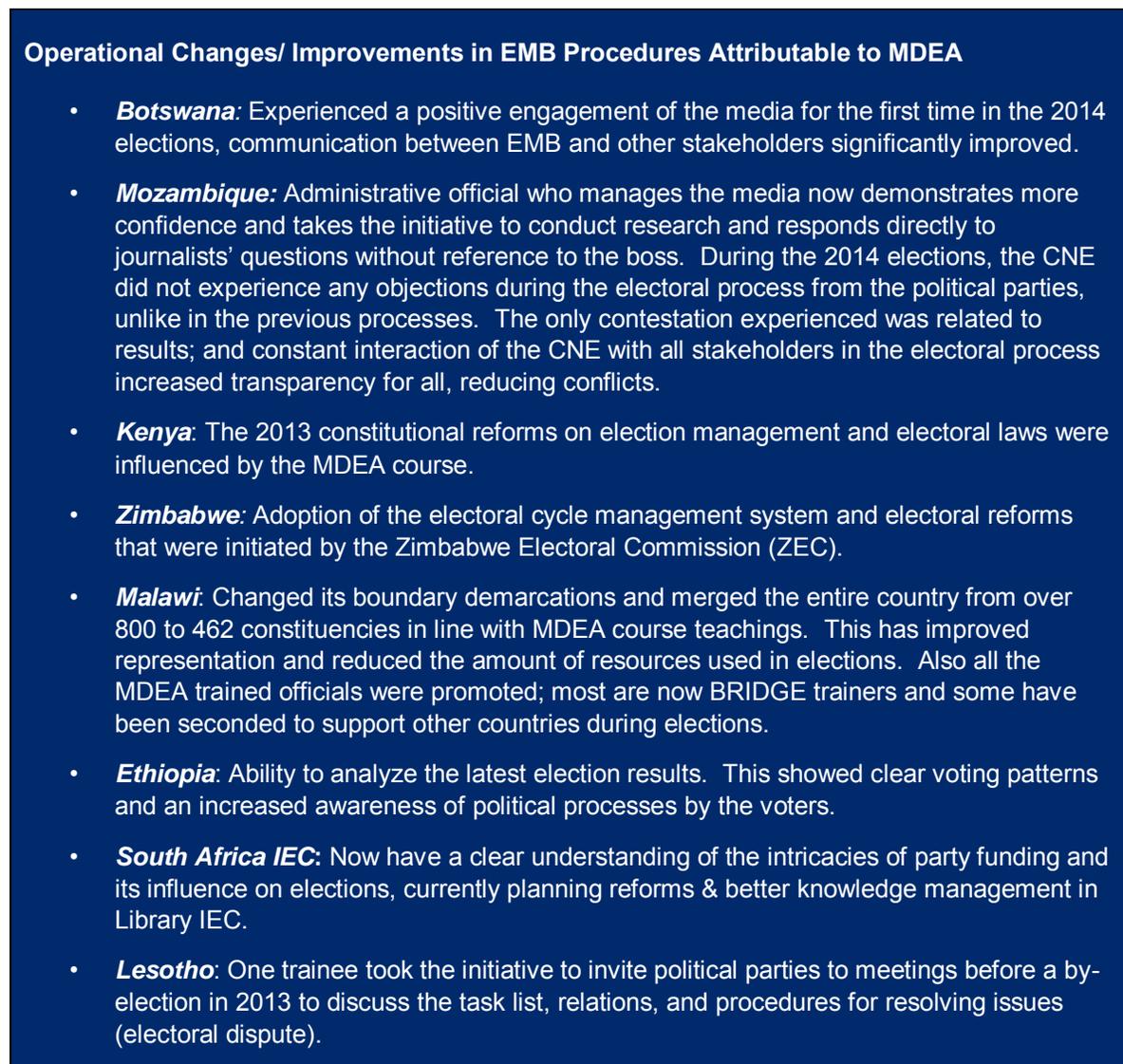


Figure 30: Changes/Improvements by Country

Most of the EMB officials who participated in the survey are either in middle management (45%, 82 respondents) or senior positions (35%, 65 respondents) (Figure 31), and this places them in the driver's seat in technical electoral operations, which gives them a vantage point for applying what they learned.

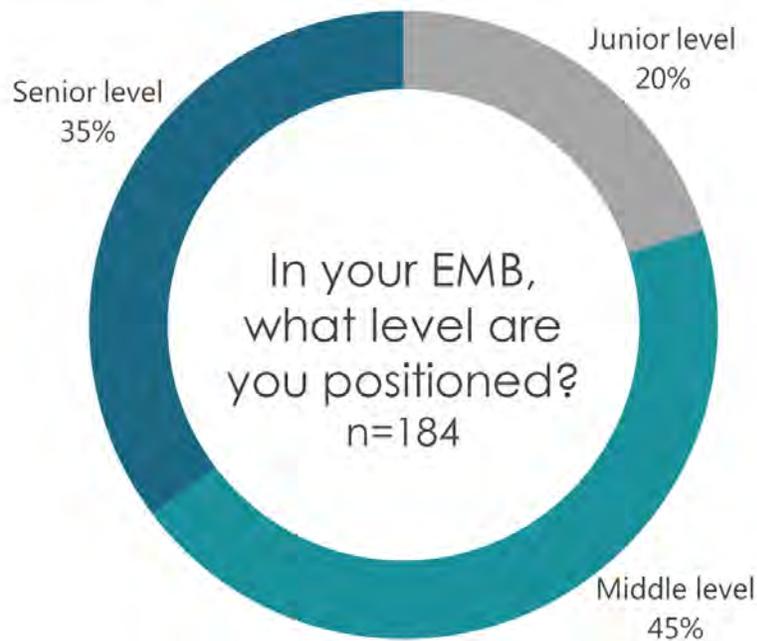
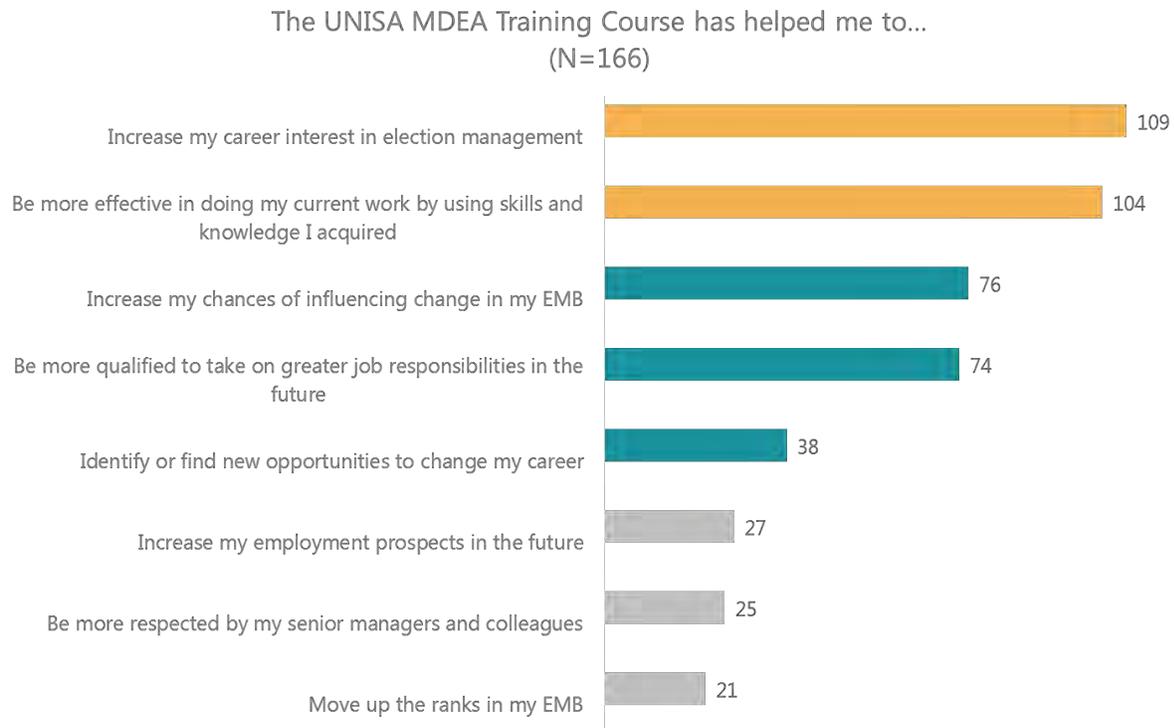


Figure 31: Professional Level of MDEA participants

This is supported by the fact that (in Figure 32<sup>28</sup> below) many survey respondents (104, or 62.7% of respondents) reported that the MDEA Course helped them to “Be more effective in doing my current work by using skills and knowledge I acquired.”

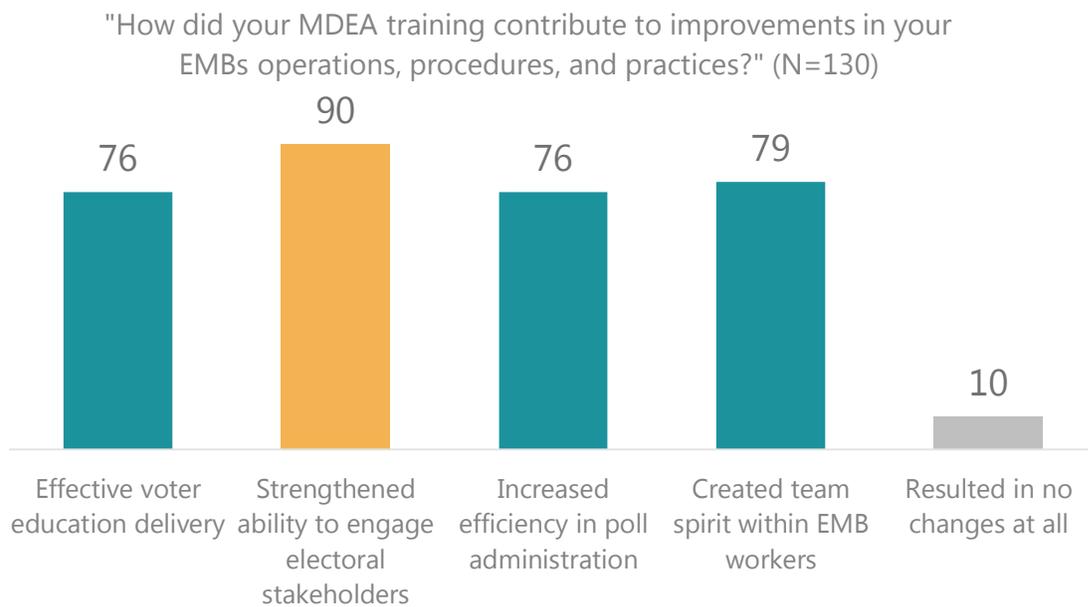
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<sup>28</sup> This survey question allowed for multiple responses, explaining the high number of respondents per item.



**Figure 32: Helpfulness of Program**

As illustrated in **Figure 33** below, only ten people (7.7% of respondents) reported no change in their EMBs' operations, procedures, or practices due to the MDEA training.



**Figure 33: EMB Improvements<sup>29</sup>**

<sup>29</sup> Note that this question allowed for multiple answers as well.

**4b. Has the activity stimulated a change in attitude on different levels of election management officials?**

All EMB officers interviewed indicated the noticeable attitude improvement in their trained staff. All are reportedly exuding more confident behavior and are more diligent with their work. The trained officials are seemingly more motivated to initiate research; catch up with technological developments; and expand their range of skills. The trainees also reported that they felt more positive about their work, and felt increased confidence knowing that other countries face similar difficulties.

In one example, the EMB in Mozambique reported the use of research skills acquired from MDEA to lobby for electoral policy reforms.

**4c. Has the activity stimulated a change in skills on different levels of election management officials?<sup>30</sup>**

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*“Practitioners trained by UNISA-IARS are doing a research project (on electoral reforms). We intend to take the document and deliver formally to the EMB to take into consideration all aspects of the research that are found. This would have a direct influence in the electoral process. It is important not to do so sporadically and spontaneously or individually, but as a group”*

*-EMB Director*

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Almost two-thirds of the trained officials (65%), mentioned that they had acquired an excellent understanding of election administration. As Figure 34 below shows, the understanding from before the course to after the course grew. When participants were asked to rate their understanding of election management before the course, most (90%) answered in the middle categories (“Had some” or “Had good knowledge of election management”). However, when rating their understanding after the course, most (99%) rated their understanding in the top two categories (“Have good” or “Have excellent” knowledge of election management”).

This was consistent over all levels of election officials when the data was disaggregated by position in EMB.

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<sup>30</sup> The Evaluation Team added in this evaluation question to the report in order to address level 2 (skills) of the Kirkpatrick Model (see Page 11) and differentiate from question 4b (addressing attitude).

## Understanding of Election Management **Before** and **After** Attending the MDEA Certificate Program n= 182

### **Before** Attending MDEA Certificate Program

---

3.8%

7 Attendees

reported not understanding  
Election Management

42.3%

77 Attendees

reported some understanding of  
Election Management

47.3%

86 Attendees

Had a good understanding  
of Election Management

6.6%

12 Attendees

Had an amazing understanding  
of Election Management

### **After** Attending MDEA Certificate Program

---

0%

0 Attendees

reported not understanding  
Election Management

0.6%

1 Attendee

reported some understanding of  
Election Management

34.3%

62 Attendees

Have a good understanding  
of Election Management

65.2%

118 Attendees

Have an amazing understanding  
of Election Management

Figure 34: Understanding before and after course

## 5. IS THERE EVIDENCE THAT PROJECT INTERVENTIONS WILL BE SUSTAINABLE BEYOND THE PROJECT LIFETIME?

### Sustainability Framework

In addition to answering the sustainability questions posed by USAID (starting on Page 52), the evaluation team evaluated the MDEA training program according to the sustainability framework adapted from <https://sustaintool.org>. The Sustainability Framework identifies a small set of organizational and contextual domains that can help build the capacity for maintaining a program. Capacity for sustainability is defined as the ability to maintain programming and its benefits over time. The definition for each category and more information on the sustainability framework can be found in Annex X.

**Recommendation:** Review MDEA status on each element of the following Sustainability Framework biannually.



The following table summarizes the findings of the sustainability of the MDEA program:

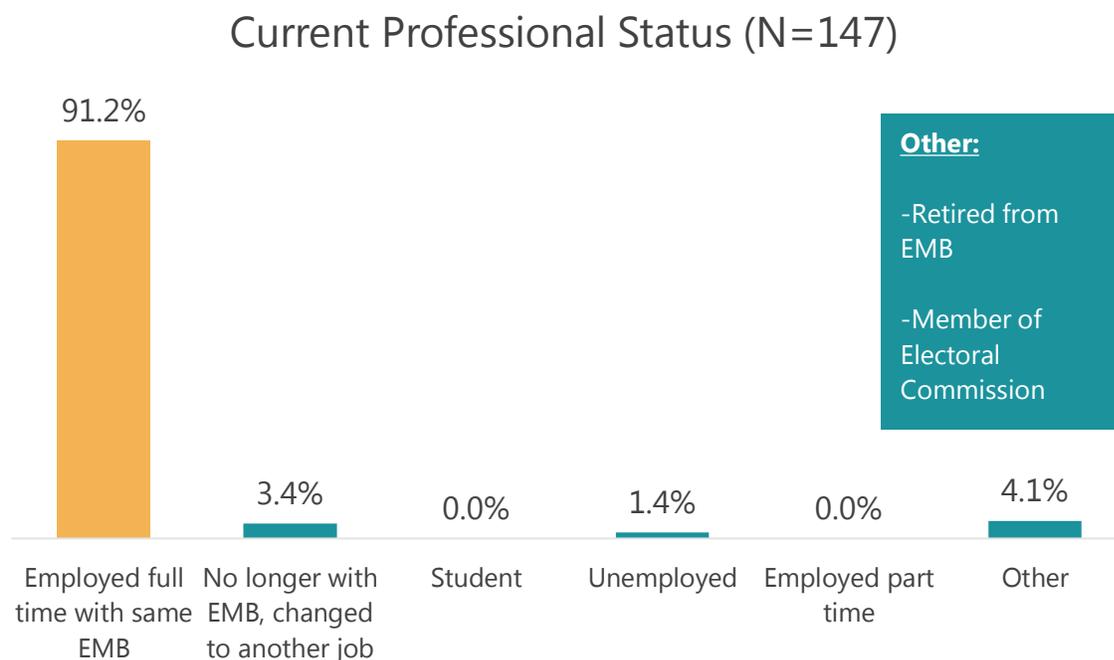
Title	MDEA
<p><b>Environmental Support</b></p> <p><i>Having a supportive internal and external climate for the program</i></p> 	<p>The EMB climate for MDEA’s operations has been quite positive. The feedback from both senior management and the trained officials has indicated that the MDEA is filling a large gap in capacity building for election management through its courses.</p> <p>All the EMB senior managers concurred on its positive impact on ‘unifying African standards in election management transformation’.</p> <p>Prof Maphunye stated that it would have been good to see collaboration between UNISA-IARS and a string of EMBs, because the continent has pockets of success and professionals who can add value.</p>
<p><b>Funding Stability</b></p> <p><i>Establishing a consistent financial base for the program</i></p> 	<p>The USAID grant has provided stability for MDEA for the last five years and has allowed MDEA to expand and have a wider reach.</p> <p>USAID remains supportive of MDEA but diversified funding is crucial for continuation of the program in its current format of campus-based course because the grant has a set end-date.</p>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p> <p><i>Cultivating connections between the program and its stakeholders</i></p> 	<p>MDEA’s reach to different partners has been quite narrow and the program has missed out on some opportunities and resources that other election stakeholders bring.</p> <p>The MDEA-IEC South Africa partnership is a very strategic one that has not been fully utilized to open doors with all other stakeholders especially with EMBs. In the IEC’s words, this partnership has to be mutually beneficial to both academics and EMB’s needs; there has to be praxis between the two. There should be a written agreement specifying the roles of the key actors (IARS and IEC) and possibly others such as SADC-ECF to develop strategic partnerships.</p> <p>SADC-ECF pointed out that UNISA-IARS should go into partnerships with other institutions to expand program, e.g. with Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU).</p> <p>A facilitator, Professor Maphunye, suggested that such a continental body as the African Association of Election Authorities would create better leverage and a vantage point.</p>
<p><b>Organizational Capacity</b></p> <p><i>Having the internal support and resources needed to effectively manage the program</i></p> 	<p>MDEA has managed to expand the projects over the last five years. However, this has not been matched by capacity in acquiring skills such as new relevant systems for activity resource allocation, financial management, reporting, and M&amp;E that are necessary for successful organizational development.</p> <p>The MDEA Administrator indicated that the accounting system “lumps together” program costs (e.g. travel, insurance, accommodation, airport transfers, MM&amp;E costs) as one line item. This complicates financial forecasting and planning since it is difficult to separate costs and thus plan or adjust accordingly. Itemized budgets would make planning more efficient.</p>
<p><b>Capacity building</b></p> <p><i>Having intentional actions and initiatives that support people in improving their knowledge, behaviors, skills, and techniques</i></p> 	<p>MDEA’s core implementing staff is an all-academic team who often lack practical development program administration competencies. The new projects: Alumni, In-country trainings, MM&amp;E require comprehensive planning and rigorous monitoring. Long-term planning for financial management is a big challenge for the program. Facilitators have commented that logistics and administration is very chaotic.</p>

<p><b>Program Evaluation</b></p> <p><i>Assessing the program to inform planning and document results</i></p>		<p>MDEA has collected some trainers' evaluation data, which they term course evaluation, which can be used for improving course delivery. More rigorous comprehensive evaluation data after class sessions and completing of the assignments is needed to document elements of the program and align goals to the intended outcomes. Analyzing the data and using it to inform program developments is lacking. Neither the course evaluation data nor the performance data has ever been analyzed.</p>
<p><b>Program Adaptation</b></p> <p><i>Taking actions that adapt the program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness</i></p>		<p>MDEA courses have largely remained in the mode they were first crafted in as shown in the three course modules, as these are printed materials, and all updates are made through facilitators' teaching notes and presentations. All of the Botswana February 2016 trainees and many of the facilitators expressed that current facilitators were all too South Africa-heavy and this did not reflect the diversity in the region. They demanded that the course be adapted for in-country courses by emphasizing more local content. A facilitator from the Botswana 2016 class remarked that UNISA-IARS must market themselves to the different countries and customize to each country's needs. He also posed a very telling question: "The Botswana training, was it customized for the country? Did we respond to the country's needs?"</p>
<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p><i>Strategic communication with stakeholders and the public about the program</i></p>		<p>Communicating about MDEA remains problematic for UNISA-IARS as it admits it needs to publicize the courses. MDEA is not very visible in the region and more post-training activity has not been used to advertise the programs. It is largely only EMBs that are aware of its existence. Neither trained officials nor facilitators are actively communicating and collaborating or providing support and advice to each other.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Planning</b></p> <p><i>Using processes that guide the program's directions, goals, and strategies</i></p>		<p>There was a lack of strategic planning at the beginning of the program and expanded projects were not matched to the capacity of the implementing unit.</p>
<p><b>Program Management</b></p> <p><i>Using processes that ensure that program objectives are met</i></p>		<p>UNISA-IARS requires systems to create an enabling environment for meeting core program objectives. Major weaknesses persist: i) assessing the EMBs response to the MDEA projects and ii) identifying and organizing additional professional and experienced practitioner facilitators.</p>

**5a. What is the sustainability of results (curriculum, training capacity, Alumni activities) and the reliability of the developed model (classroom training – distance learning – follow-up mentorship – follow-up Alumni activities)?**

As illustrated in

Figure 35, the majority of the trained officials have remained with their respective EMBs and this successful retention of this expertise signals the potential of the course to sustainably transform the electoral management processes in the continent.



**Figure 35: Current Professional Status of Trainees**

Planning for the increasing MDEA activities is threatened by the rising costs year on year. From 2011, campus-based Certificate Training costs (per trainee) have risen by 35%<sup>31</sup>, as illustrated in Figure 36<sup>32</sup>, and as demand increases, the costs will continue to escalate in the face of dwindling resources. Campus courses cater to many countries so UNISA-IARS uses a quota system in which EMBs are given a certain number of slots – between one and three. Some EMBs pay for extra officials to attend. At this pace, it takes a long time for the countries to have a significant number of officials trained.

<sup>31</sup> The evaluation team believes this increase is mainly due to travel costs. A lack of direct flights is a major problem in Africa. This is exacerbated by high costs due to fuel taxes that have increased along with rising fuel costs. In addition, travel arrangements are often made at the last moment. Finally, the expansion of the participating countries from the initial 14 to 28 also increased costs.

<sup>32</sup> This figure must be interpreted with caution as it could be much higher. It is informed by UNISA-provided information and data which excluded the administrative costs that USAID contributed to for three administrative staff members.



Figure 36: Cost of training one official (campus-based course)

On the other hand, the in-country courses, which are paid for by the host countries, clearly offer more value for money as the tuition costs generate 300 000 R (US \$27,270 at current rates) for the project and this alternative model produces a large group of trained officials within a very short time. This is likely to result in higher levels of success in influencing EMB performance.

It is quite evident from the cost escalation shown in Figure 36 that the course in its current model is unsustainable.

**Recommendation:** Separate the financial management from overall program management for more effective resource allocation and better planning.



All interviewed EMBs lamented that at the current pace, they can only send one or two officials per course, and therefore it will take very long to build capacity in their EMBs. While there is much value in the face-to-face and peer interaction, the costs are prohibitive for a wide-reaching training. Amongst some of the EMBs' recommendations was the need for a two-pronged approach where MDEA i) is grant-funded, or ii) adopts a partial fee payment system where trainees paying fees in an approved and accredited field of study would anchor MDEA as a solid continuing course. Grants can be taken partly from UNISA-IARS's income generated from the in-country courses.

In relation to other activities, the Alumni has conducted two regional conferences where experiences were shared but more activities that can be organized online are needed to keep the community connected. The MM&E project in its current form does not add much value. Mentoring has to be designed as a proper scheme with goals and constant follow-ups and feedback given to UNISA-IARS by the EMBs with clear indicators and monitoring system. In addition, the short country visits produce reports that are not used to enrich the classes.

**Recommendation:** De-link the Mentorship component from M&E. This should be a comprehensive support system function that can be performed by the Alumni with a system for feedback to UNISA-IARS.



### 5b. What recommendations can address capacity and feasibility of UNISA and IEC to continue collaboration on the implementation of Certificate Training Program in Electoral Studies?

The evaluation team has laid out different models as recommendations to continue the UNISA-IARS and IEC collaboration of the Certificate Training Program.

#### 1. Model 1: Continuing Course As-Is

Currently, the barrier to continuing the course as-is is simply the escalating costs in the face of the end of the USAID grant.

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*“Given that the electoral organs are all financed by the State Budget only, it would be very hard to finance a similar project, despite acknowledging its importance. However, it might be possible through a partnership with an NGO (Nongovernmental Organization).”*

*-EMB Official (SADC Region)*

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One way to continue would be to charge EMBs or participants themselves who attend. Almost two-thirds of the respondents in the survey said that they would pay for the course even if it wasn't sponsored (Figure 37).

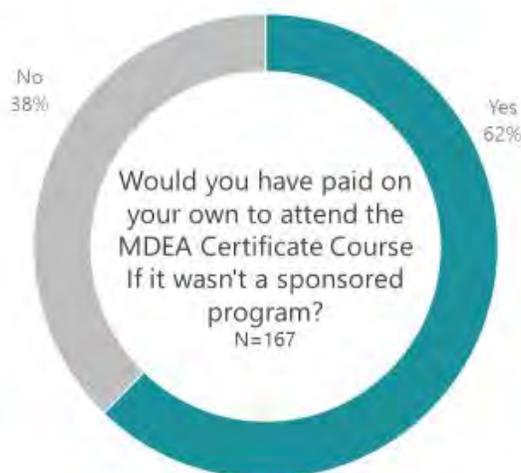


Figure 37: Would Participants have Paid for MDEA Course

#### 2. Model 2: Creating a Diploma Course

The current Certificate course is worth 108 credits at UNISA, and South African educated trainees express that it is worth at least 120 credits, which would make it a diploma. However, this is an expensive option and managers of MDEA clearly need to adapt to the realities of dwindling donor funds in the rapidly changing global funding environment. Especially in the face of financial challenges and competing interests, there are difficulties in scaling the course up to diploma level.

*“We will be scaling up to diploma to ensure African ownership. The difficulty is that we still go on to rely on grants and (hopefully) sponsors get their value for money as we are keen to keep it going.”*

*-UNISA-IARS FGD participant*

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On the other hand, this places the course into a career enhancement category and therefore trainees are more likely to pay for it. Though trainees and EMB senior managers emphasize the importance of the course, most of them pointed out that they cannot afford to pay for a course that doesn't give them additional certification in South Africa due to the high travel and accommodation costs.

### **3. Model 3: Combined Online and In-Person Course**

As a distance education college, MDEA has missed the opportunity to use the university's distance education resources to target a broad audience of potential trainees.

One option to utilize these resources is to create a hybrid model involving a shorter period on campus (one week) that would reduce the contact period and the cost of facilitation. This period could be used for the fieldwork/observation with the IEC and allow for participants to still interact with those from other countries. The rest of the curriculum would be covered through distance learning online.

### **4. Model 4: Decentralized training**

Alternatively, MDEA could adopt a train the trainers' model to upscale a decentralized training model. This may involve decentralized training to the five regional hubs- East, West, Central, Southern, and Northern Africa with revolving facilitators. In this case, UNISA-IARS should consider fashioning the MDEA Course into a Train the Trainers' model where those attending training at UNISA in South Africa will be tasked with cascading the same through in-country training in individual countries. This would mean lower costs for UNISA-IARS. Additionally, countries offering in-country courses could open them up to participants from neighboring countries.

However, this decentralized model should still be controlled and supervised by UNISA-IARS in terms of designing courses and learning materials. Assessing performance would ensure the maintenance of standards while at the same time, this model would address country and regional contexts as more local facilitators could be brought on board.

As SADC-ECF has emphasized, expanding this course in a sustainable manner to the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa requires many partnerships with different stakeholders. Universities in the region can be part of the training process. Modules developed by UNISA-IARS can be shared with other universities in participating countries who would then deliver the same training under UNISA-IARS' supervision. Strategic partnerships are clearly important for a sustainable MDEA and countries have also pointed this out.

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*“Monitoring and evaluation of the Namibian students of MDEA should continue and UNISA-IARS should explore establishing relations with local institutions (e.g. University of Namibia and Namibia Institute for Public Management) to ensure collaboration with local experts on issues pertaining to democracy and elections.”*

*-Prof. Isaak, director of Namibia EMB (from the MDEA June 2014 Quarterly Report)*

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MDEA offers an opportunity to create new change agents who can drive election management reforms.

In two countries, Namibia and Zimbabwe, directors reported that the trained staff members made significant contribution toward the review of the new Electoral Act. They also led the preparation processes for the registration of voters and the election logistics.

### 5. Model 5: Mass Open Online Course (MOOC)

The program could also be transformed into a Mass Open Online Course. In this way, all materials would be offered online for free and public consumption. This option would not come with any type of Certificate, but would achieve the goal of spreading information.

Additionally, this online course could be designed as an introductory course that all EMB officials can take prior to participation in the MDEA main course.

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*“It is more sustainable if the MDEA training is decentralized to member countries, with MDEA Professors coming in as quality controllers and to co-facilitate with local election professionals and MDEA Alumni.”*

*-Senior EMB official in SADC country*

*“We need to establish centers across Sub-Saharan Africa – scrutinize structures and see how to cut costs. The problem is that we are losing coherence of the project... We need to use UNISA facilities across the continent (their regional centers) so the infrastructure already exists.”*

*-IEC-SA Senior Manager*

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**Recommendation:** In order to ensure sustainability consider which of the five identified models would be most appropriate to continue and potential expand the MDEA course.



### 5c. What evidence exists indicating interest of Election Commissions and EMBs throughout Africa in using UNISA’s Certificate Training Program to improve own and respective EMBs’ election management capacity?

Despite being given slots for the number of their country officials who can attend the course, some countries have consistently paid to send extra officials to the courses, especially Botswana, Kenya, and Nigeria. For instance, in the June 2016 course, Nigeria sent four trainees and another five in July. As noted earlier, EMBs have expressed exasperations with the few slots they get for each course. All EMBs point out that the course is on a slow pace since only one institution is offering such a program and only few limited participants are allowed to attend per annum from each country.

### 5d. How receptive are the electoral commissions throughout the region to the program?

Interviewed EMB Directors, mostly from the SADC region, agreed that the following themes present in the MDEA course were very relevant for their work:

- Situation comparisons in African EMBs;
- Effective managing free and fair elections;
- Understanding financing political parties policies;
- Voter registration and election democracy education;
- The role of Media in EMBs during elections;

- Importance of capacity building of election officials; and
- Electoral boundary delimitations.

#### **5f. What are the chances of the Certificate Training Program becoming a leading model in the continent?**

Respondents indicate that MDEA is already recognized across the continent as a key training provider for EMBs. The only other sources of EMB training are short courses run by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and EISA.

#### **5g. What adaptations/ changes are needed, if any, to make the Certificate Training Program more affordable and accessible to EMB and election commission officials in less affluent African countries?**

The common theme running through this evaluation is that MDEA needs to become more efficient and effective through:

- Revising **the modules** every two years to reflect the latest electoral developments on the continent and to ensure relevance;
- Improving **project management** to ensure that training preparation, especially finalizing the program and the facilitators and ensuring that participants can do adequate preparation (pre-readings, register for the University, etc.); and
- Implementing **data-driven decision making** (and other M&E) processes such as completing and recording the assessment of assignments, providing reports to participants and their EMBs, and refining and analyzing participant feedback.

UNISA-IARS recognizes that they need to make the course more affordable and accessible by adopting an online-based model that would lower the high face-to-face tuition costs in South Africa. For instance, the 2016 courses in particular signal a need to schedule in-country trainings well in advance so as to be able to manage the workload. All of the 2016 trainees (Botswana in February, Lesotho in May, and South Africa in June) were only able to start submitting their assignments on 1 July 2016, after registration with UNISA. This requirement increases the pressure on those who attended training earlier in the year.

Additionally, UNISA-IARS is considering making the course of higher value by escalating the level of qualifications (to a diploma course) in order to increase the likelihood that participants would pay for it.

University registration processes are clearly a factor to be considered and addressed, with all trainees registered before they attend. EMBs have also expressed concerns on the timing of the campus based training that run concurrently in June and July. The ideal situation for EMBs would be to have them spread over different times throughout the year.

Finally, we recommend a combination of face-to-face and online training which would reduce the amount of travel time.

**Recommendation:** consider a combination of face-to-face and online training which would reduce the amount of travel time and make the MDEA course more affordable for less affluent African countries.



# CONCLUSION

Overall, MDEA can be summarized as having a very positive influence on the participating EMBs in improving some key electoral processes.

The fact that the courses are administered by a reputable academic institution appeals to the EMBs which find it to be a neutral space for discussing the technical and political challenges that deter democratic management of electoral processes in the region. The course design offers an opportunity for combining different experts in capacity building on election management to address EMBs' needs. EMBs have been responsive to the courses and this indicates its relevance for their tasks.

MDEA implementers are overwhelmed by the demands and needs of managing an expansive regional project and this makes it difficult to eventually assess the impact of the program. UNISA-IARS and the IEC-SA need to come to some common understanding on redesigning the delivery modalities of the course for the urgent capacity building needs of the EMBs in a cost-effective manner. This delivery process must also be oriented towards the practical elements of election management. Despite this, all the interviewees clearly indicate the successes of MDEA in harmonizing election management on such a big scale.

Findings from this performance evaluation point to the need for strengthened program management in order for MDEA to increase its potential in transforming election management. MDEA can only improve if UNISA-IARS implements the recommendations made in the facilitator evaluations, and in this report. An important area is addressing the program's sustainability as outlined in the Sustainability section.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table summarizes the Evaluation Team’s recommendations for the MDEA Certificate Training Course that have been presented throughout this report and also responds to evaluation sub-questions:

**2d. What recommendations for revisions/updates [of the curriculum] exist?**

and

**5e. What recommended strategies are there to promote sustainability?**

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Responsible Body</i>
<p><b>Program Management</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strengthen overall program management to cater for the expanded activities: comprehensive planning (some log frame) and allocation of resources to all the activities. Those appointed to manage the program must have the following expertise:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience in programming using a logical framework</li> <li>• Financial management, donor liaison and reporting experience</li> <li>• Qualifications and demonstrated experience in M&amp;E in complex regional projects</li> <li>• The official status to engage with all stakeholders especially senior politicians and policy makers</li> <li>• Database management and quantitative data analysis skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Improve project management especially training preparation and finalizing the program to ensure facilitators are prepared and that participants can do adequate preparation (pre-readings, register for the University, etc.)</li> <li>3. Improve communication and implement data-driven decision making (and other M&amp;E) processes such as completing and recording the assessment of assignments, providing reports to participants and their EMBs, and refining and analyzing participant feedback.</li> <li>4. Separate financial management from overall program management for better and more effective resource allocation planning</li> <li>5. Establish a comprehensive M&amp;E system for all the activities with clear targets and indicators- useful for demonstrating relevance and impact to the EMBs,</li> <li>6. Establish a stakeholder/liaison system for engaging with key regional actors and governments as well as RECs mandated with election support (e.g. SADC-ECF and the African Association of Election Authorities)</li> </ol>	<p><b>UNISA/USAID</b></p>

Activity	Responsible Body
<p><b>Revisions of Curriculum</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Broaden voter education curriculum to include civic education, which speaks to issues of citizenship in a country- an essential step for the EMBs on engaging with the citizens.</li> <li>2. Increase practical sessions on designing models for political parties' financing that are fair</li> <li>3. Make content country relevant - indigenize the issues during in-country training and also use examples from countries represented in each group undergoing training. This requires advanced planning so that facilitators can prepare the content in good time.</li> <li>4. Revise the modules every two years to reflect the latest electoral developments on the continent and to ensure relevance</li> </ol>	<p><b>UNISA-IARS/IEC</b></p>
<p><b>Facilitators</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. UNISA-IARS should compile a roster of experts (database) on various election themes in line with the curriculum. This should be composed of both academics and practitioners</li> <li>2. Strike a balance between theory and practice amongst the course facilitators</li> </ol>	<p><b>UNISA-IARS/IEC &amp; other stakeholders</b></p>
<p><b>MM&amp;E</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. De-link the Mentorship component from M&amp;E- this should be a comprehensive support system function that can be performed by the Alumni with a system for feedback to UNISA-IARS.</li> <li>2. Establish a steering group for the Alumni that will be tasked with ongoing peer learning and capacity building to train on election management. This could be infused into the mainstream UNISA alumnus (with an MDEA chapter) that has a sustainability mechanism through membership fees.</li> </ol>	<p><b>UNISA/Alumni</b></p>
<p><b>Research and knowledge generation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilize trainees to generate information on practical experiences of EMBs in the region</li> <li>2. Support upgrading of good portfolios into publishable articles</li> <li>3. Conduct a longitudinal study to assess how the trainees have been doing as part of the Mentorship program</li> </ol>	<p><b>UNISA-IARS</b></p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In order to ensure sustainability consider which of the identified models would be most appropriate to continue and potential expand the MDEA course.                       Model 1: Continuing Course As-Is                      Model 2: Creating a Diploma Course                      Model 3: Combined On Line and In Person Course                      Model 4: Decentralized Training                      Model 5: Mass Open On-Line Course (MOOC)</li> <li>2. Review MDEA status on each element of the Sustainability Framework biannually.</li> </ol>	<p><b>UNISA-IARS, SADC ECF and IEC-SA</b></p>

Figure 38: Recommendations Summary

# ANNEXES

**ANNEX I: FINAL STATEMENT OF  
WORK**

## SECTION C – STATEMENT OF WORK (SOW)

### C.1 PROJECT TO BE EVALUATED:

<b>Title:</b>	Managing Democratic Elections in Africa (MDEA)
<b>Number:</b>	Grant No. 674-G-00-11-00066-00
<b>Dates:</b>	June 20, 2011 – June 19, 2016
<b>Ceiling:</b>	\$4,100,000
<b>Obligated Amount:</b>	\$3,600,000 (as of January 14, 2015)
<b>Place of Performance:</b>	Southern Africa (regional)
<b>Implementing Partner:</b>	University of South Africa (UNISA)
<b>AO's Representative:</b>	Bertha Sihlahla

### C.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In June 2011, USAID/Southern Africa launched a five-year, \$4.1 million grant agreement with UNISA to implement the MDEA Project—a regional elections capacity building activity to support the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and to build and enhance the capacity for effective and responsible management of elections both in Southern Africa and in the rest of the continent, through the creation of a Certificate Program in the Management of Democratic Elections in Africa. The overarching objective of the activity, as stated in the USAID Program Description, **is to support the MOU between the IEC and UNISA on their cooperation to train election officials on electoral management principles, which will contribute to the enhancement and promotion of democratic electoral principles.**

MDEA supports the Pretoria-based Institute for African Renaissance Studies at UNISA to develop the Certificate Training Program in Electoral Studies, working closely with the IEC and drawing from their technical expertise and lessons learned from experience with Election management Bodies (EMBs). The aim of the program is to provide election officials with both theoretical and practical skills necessary to manage elections more efficiently. It targets a wide range of elections-related officials across the continent, including members of political parties, party agents, civil society organizations and election observers, monitors, senior electoral officers, top, middle and lower EMB management, as well as EMB administrative staff. Upon UNISA's solicitation, electoral commissions from the region nominate EMB representatives to participate in the UNISA Certificate Training Program.

The Certificate Training Program comprises two components: a classroom component with three weeks of coursework at the Institute of African Renaissance Studies at UNISA, followed by a week-long practical assignment with the IEC, and a distance learning component, where trainees return to their respective countries and continue to study and submit assignments and portfolios for summative assessment until fulfillment of the 108 credits requirement for the Certificate Training Program. UNISA obtained permission to offer the program as a full 120 credit bearing Certificate Course accredited with the Department of in South Africa in 2012. Over the course of two years, UNISA was able to extend the number of regular training sessions to two per year beyond the originally planned target of one session

per year. In addition, based on demand, UNISA also developed and delivered a one-week course tailored for Election Commissioners. To date, 256 election management officials (including 28 Commissioners) from 23 African countries<sup>1</sup> have completed the Certificate Training Program and received credit from UNISA.

In October 2014, USAID amended the grant agreement with UNISA to incorporate support for alumni activities as an extension of the Certificate Training Program to further enhance continuous capacity development among the alumni of the MDEA program and other senior officials of the electoral institutions they represent. These include development of an online platform for alumni to share lessons learned and new ideas, engagement of alumni as mentors, and annual alumni conventions.

The Expected Results of the activity, as outlined in the USAID Project Description, are as follows:

- Increased number of electoral personnel who understand the role that EMBs play in a democracy;
- Increased number of electoral personnel who understand international norms, constitutional and legal regimes applicable to elections and EMBs in Africa;
- Increased capacity of EMBs throughout Africa which are able to manage elections more effectively;
- Improved buy-in from High Level Election Managers, such as Commissioners, as part of continued capacity development in the management of democratic elections in Africa.

### **C.3 BACKGROUND**

The quality of electoral processes varies across the Southern Africa region. More than half of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States have regular elections. Many elections deemed free and fair, however, have been subsequently de-legitimized due to factors ranging from use of state resources to control media during election campaigning to voter fraud and intimidation. These irregularities often result in court cases against election commissions, which face the majority of the blame for poorly managed elections. While some are improving technical capacity, the majority lack the ability to demonstrate independence from the ruling party and the ability to adjudicate impartially electoral processes. Many election commissions lack constitutional independence and answer to the executive.

On August 18, 2010, UNISA signed a MOU with South Africa's IEC to provide expertise on election management to the overall Center for Electoral Democracy, that is to strengthen and promote electoral democracy and develop knowledge and expertise in election management and administration through the provision of education and training programs for EMBs. Specifically, the MOU envisioned development of a curriculum and a certificate course in election administration and training of election officials.

## C.4 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The Contractor should provide answers to the following questions:

1. *What have been the main successes and challenges during the implementation of the activity?*
  - This is a general question that the Contractor shall answer based on the evidence gathered as all other questions throughout the evaluation process are explored.
2. *To what extent does the UNISA Certificate Training Program address the election management challenges present in the Southern Africa region?*
  - Explore the relevance of training materials. Does the curriculum address the practical/operational challenges faced by EMB officials? Do the participants identify any current gaps in the curriculum? What is the perception and level of satisfaction of stakeholders (trainers, trainees and respective managers) about the Certificate Training Program, including the classroom and distance learning components, post-coursework mentorship and alumni activities? Make recommendations on the revisions/updates, if any, needed in the Certificate Training Program curriculum to make it more relevant and aligned to the existing needs and priorities.
3. *To what extent has the UNISA Certificate Training Program translated into improved capacity of EMBs throughout Southern Africa to manage elections more effectively?*
  - Is there evidence that the Certificate Training Program has contributed to increased understanding and knowledge of the overall role EMBs should play in an electoral democracy, as well as to improved skills for carrying out individual functional roles in EMBs? Explore the effectiveness of the trainee identification process and selection criteria and analyze whether the applied approach leads to the selection of officials most likely to bring change in their respective EMBs. Analyze to what extent alumni have the potential to influence change in EMBs; explore and make recommendations for the minimum critical number of election officials or specific functional roles per EMB needed to undergo the training to bring meaningful change within an EMB. Explore to what extent post-certificate alumni activities are adding value to the continued learning of graduates and EMBs and make recommendations for revisions/updates needed in alumni activities, if any, to better benefit the capacity and operations of EMBs.
4. *What evidence exists linking UNISA Certificate Training Program to operational changes/ improvements in EMB procedures and practices?*
  - Analyze whether and to what extent the activity has contributed to increased use of new practices in EMBs? Analyze whether the activity stimulated a change in attitude on different levels of elections management officials. It is encouraged to demonstrate the changes observed through a case study.

5. *Is there evidence that project interventions will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime?*

- Analyze the sustainability of results (curriculum, training capacity, alumni activities) and the reliability of the developed model (classroom training – distance learning – follow up mentorship – follow-up alumni activities). What recommendations can address capacity and feasibility of UNISA and IEC to continue collaboration on the implementation of the Certificate Training Program in Electoral Studies? What evidence exists indicating interest of Election Commissions and EMBs throughout Africa in using UNISA’s Certificate Training Program to improve own and respective EMBs’ election management capacity? Analyze the receptivity of the electoral commissions throughout the region toward the program. Recommend strategies to promote sustainability: evidence base for most valuable and most cost efficient activities for future. Explore the chances of the Certificate Training Program becoming a leading model in the continent. Explore what adaptations/changes are needed, if any, to make the Certificate Training Program more affordable and accessible to EMB and election commission officials in less affluent African countries.

Each one of the above mentioned evaluation questions will be analyzed based on the research protocol proposed and approved for this evaluation. Where applicable, the contractor shall include analysis of how the activity addressed gender gaps and issues of gender equality and equity during the implementation, as well as identify any gender-specific effects of the activity.

## **C.5 DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **a) Methodology**

For the purposes of this performance evaluation, the Offeror shall propose both qualitative and quantitative methods and approaches for collecting and analyzing the information required to address the evaluation questions. The methodology should include a data analysis plan, including details on the process to transcribe and analyze qualitative data, as well as procedures to analyze quantitative data. Triangulation of data across multiple sources will be required to validate findings.

The Offeror shall propose a methodology that will generate the highest quality and most credible evidence and will be most appropriate to answer the evaluation questions, taking into consideration availability of resources and data limitations. The following is a suggested, non-exhaustive list of tools and methods:

- Document and Data Review – The Contractor must conduct a document and data review of all sources cited in the Sources of Information sub-section below and all other sources the Contractor deems necessary.
- Key Informant Interviews – The Contractor must conduct qualitative, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including representatives from implementing partner organization, beneficiary election commissions and EMBs, partner donor/international organizations, etc., as specified in the approved methodology.

- Surveys – The Contractor may choose to use surveys to collect self-reported data from program beneficiaries.
- Focus Group Discussions – To follow up on the insights of the survey results, the Contractor may choose to conduct focus group discussions with different levels of election management/administration officials, and Certificate Training Program alumni, as specified in the approved methodology.
- Site Visits – The Contractor must conduct site visits to an agreed upon sample of (provincial, district level) EMBs for face-to-face interaction with election management officials and direct observation of new/updated procedures and practices. The Contractor must plan site visits in at least one country in addition to South Africa (e.g. Botswana).
- Case Study – The Contractor must conduct a case study to answer Question # 4, i.e. demonstrating evidence linking the UNISA Certificate Training Program to operational changes/improvements in EMB procedures and practices.

**Limitations:** Given the lack of strong baseline data for this activity (especially in terms of level of knowledge and inventory of procedures and practices in EMBs), it is expected that there will be certain limitations to data analysis for this performance evaluation. The Contractor shall clearly identify such limitations and establish a clear expectation of the level vigor and validity of the evaluation protocol and findings in the final evaluation report.

**Participatory Process:** The Contractor shall conduct the evaluation in a participatory manner. The Contractor shall consult with the relevant and available stakeholders, as approved by the Mission, in an attempt to identify needs or gaps in their research protocol. To ensure ownership of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations, the Contractor shall present their draft evaluation report to an approved list of stakeholders as guided by the Mission. However, consideration of inclusion of comments from stakeholders into the evaluation draft report will be at the discretion of the COR, based on advice from the Mission’s responsible technical team.

**b) Sources of Information:**

The Contractor shall review background material, including but not limited to the following documents. The Mission will provide these documents electronically by the first day of the period of performance.

- Original grant agreement and subsequent amendment
- Quarterly progress reports
- M&E reports
- Certificate Training Program Curriculum
- Participant Surveys
- Alumni report

While in country the Contractor shall meet with the following stakeholders (list not exhaustive):

- IEC – South Africa, Botswana
- USAID technical staff,
- Professors, project mentors from UNISA

- Participants in MDEA: provincial, and district level
  - Supervisors for MDEA participants
- MDEA technical staff
- Donors working in this sector
- African Union representatives

**[END OF SECTION C]**

# ANNEX II: FINAL EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

## TECHNICAL METHODOLOGY

This performance evaluation utilized the mixed-method evaluation approach that is advocated by the USAID evaluation policy. A mixed-method evaluation systematically integrates two or more evaluation methods, potentially at every stage of the evaluation process, usually drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data. Given the complex nature of development activities and MDEA in particular, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to yield valuable findings. In the MDEA performance evaluation, six data collection methods were employed:

1. Document and Data Review
2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
3. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
4. Site Visits/ Training Observations
5. Surveys
6. Case Study

## DOCUMENT AND DATA REVIEW

The team reviewed a comprehensive list of existing data and relevant project documents/reports. This review provides key background and contextual information and identified data gaps. Additional primary and secondary documents provided a more in-depth perspective of the training program and its current achievements and challenges. An analysis of the success of MDEA required a comparison of the goals of the project to actual outcomes. This called for a comprehensive review of the curriculum to determine the effectiveness of the program in addressing present EMB challenges and making targeted recommendations for improvement. Existing alumni reports helped to examine the sustainability of the training program and identify concrete changes in the practices of the alumni in their respective EMBs. MM&E reports were useful in identifying EMB challenges and electoral processes changed by the certificate-training course.

Documents Received and Reviewed	Documents Not Received
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed Grant between USAID and UNISA</li> <li>• Evaluation Forms from Certificate Training Program</li> <li>• Alumni Concept Note</li> <li>• Curriculum of Certificate Training Program</li> <li>• Trainee Grades</li> <li>• Participant Database with Contact Details</li> <li>• Facilitator Contact Details</li> <li>• Mentor Database and Contact Details</li> <li>• Post-Training Reports</li> <li>• Alumni Report</li> <li>• Research Journal Materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant Amendment (due to be signed in 2016)</li> <li>• MDEA Admin Staff costs paid for by USAID</li> <li>• MDEA 2012 conference report</li> <li>• Request for In-Country Training – Botswana 2015</li> </ul>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original Proposal</li> <li>• MOU between UNISA and IEC</li> <li>• End of course Performance assessments</li> <li>• Requests for In-Country Trainings             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· 1 from Botswana (email)</li> <li>· 1 from Zambia (letter)</li> <li>· 1 from Lesotho (email)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• MM&amp;E Reports (9 out of 18 recorded visits)</li> <li>• Post In-Country Training Reports</li> <li>• Quarterly Performance Reports for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· June-October 2011</li> <li>· November 2011-January 2012</li> <li>· February-June 2012</li> <li>· July-September 2012</li> <li>· October-December 2012</li> <li>· January-March 2013</li> <li>· April-June 2013</li> <li>· July-September 2013</li> <li>· October-December 2013</li> <li>· January-March 2014</li> <li>· April-June 2014</li> <li>· July-September 2014</li> <li>· October-December 2014</li> <li>· January-March 2015</li> <li>· April-June 2015</li> <li>· July-September 2015</li> <li>· October-December 2015</li> </ul> </li> <li>• News Items and Publications</li> </ul> |  |
|--|--|

Figure 1: Documents Reviewed

### KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIS)

In-depth and lengthy KIIs with numerous respondents can be laborious, time consuming, and ineffective for large-scale evaluations. Therefore, to efficiently collect data from the many key informants that are relevant to this evaluation, the evaluation team had planned to include a checklist with every interview to “quantify” KII feedback on key indicators related to the effectiveness of MDEA. However, this was not possible as many of the KII interviewees had not participated in MDEA hence we emphasized the five key evaluations questions and probed on the strengths and weaknesses of MDEA’s Certificate Training Program, its relevance and ability to improve the capacity of EMBs throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, and its effectiveness in causing operational changes and improvements in EMB procedures and practices. The questions and data collection were customized for the different levels of interviewees.

In-depth face-to-face and Skype interviews were conducted with the EMB officials in 14 of the 28 countries, and 15 course facilitators. The KIIs targeted a wide range of key individuals:

- Trainee participants in MDEA -provincial and district level in Zimbabwe/Alumni
- EMB Commissioners
- EMB Secretariats’ senior managers
- USAID technical staff
- UNISA-IARS staff

- MDEA course facilitators (some of these are also curriculum reviewers)
- SADC-ECF
- African Union representatives

Some of these were iterative interviews i.e. respondents were interviewed several times to follow up on a particular issue, clarify concepts or check the reliability of data. Purposive sampling was applied with individuals selected due to their availability to participate in the evaluation and also on their participation with the MDEA Program.

Some in-person KIIs took place in Botswana during the pre-inception visit, and others later took place in South Africa and Zimbabwe, in addition to phone interviews. The evaluation team selected 5 countries in which in-depth KIIs were especially focused in preparation for case studies. These five countries are fairly representative of the spectrum of electoral and political regimes in the region, as illustrated in Figure 2 further in this annex.

The tools created for the KIIs can be found in Annex C.

## **PARTICIPANT SURVEY**

An electronic participant survey was designed to collect information on the successes and challenges of MDEA's Certificate Training Program and its effectiveness in improving capacity of EMBs and enacting operational changes and improvements in procedures and practices. This electronic participant survey was also designed to collect information on the successes and challenges of MDEA's Certificate Training Program and its effectiveness in improving capacity of EMBs and enacting operational changes and improvements in procedures and practices.

The survey instrument was designed for the Certificate Trainees (electoral policy implementers). To increase the response rate, we distributed printed versions of this survey to four facilitators of MDEA before the actual discussions begin. The questions and data collection were customized for the different participant roles. These data was used to compare program progress against planned goals. Using this information, the evaluation team identified areas of program success, challenges, and concrete changes in election management practices arising from the Certificate Training Program.

All participants of MDEA's Certificate Training Program<sup>1</sup> were contacted via e-mail to complete the survey. With USAID and UNISA's permission, we notified and invited EMB certificate trained officials to complete the survey through the MDEA trained officials contacts provided by UNISA and through Khulisa's e-mail account. Due to the fact that officials in different positions are sent for training, the Khulisa team managed to maintain a broad representation of participants from different countries.

The survey questions were sent out to the entire group of the 323 trained MDEA officials in the 28 countries and as of this report, and just under half responded (148/323). The data was not stratified and disaggregated by level of seniority in their organizations to look at certain evaluation questions.

To increase the response rate, another survey was sent out to the current 110<sup>2</sup> trainees who were yet to graduate. Some of the questions were customized for this group. In this group, 40 responses were received.

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<sup>1</sup> Excepting those that UNISA had incorrect email addresses for

<sup>2</sup> As in the first survey, there were issues with incorrect email addresses. 110 represents the number of email addresses the survey was sent to, though there were a higher number of trainees.

The tools created for the Participant Survey can be found in Annex C.

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS)**

FGDs were held with participants in MDEA (two groups in Botswana during the field visit for training observations, one with the USAID technical staff, and one with the professors and project mentors from UNISA and two with EMB officials). The use of FGDs enabled the evaluation team to garner a range of perspectives and nuanced insight into the program and the extent to which these differ across these stakeholder groups. This analysis measures the effectiveness and relevance of the MDEA program as well as identifies changes in the capacity of the EMBs.

The evaluation team developed a semi-structured discussion guide to frame the discussions. The guide was designed to elicit stakeholders' perspectives on the effectiveness and sustainability of the MDEA Certificate Training Program, the obstacles the program has faced, and specific changes that occurred as a result of the program. The FGDs investigated these perspectives and the reasoning behind them.

Figure 2 illustrates the different groups that we held FGDs with to better assess the views and opinions of the MDEA training program.

Targeted Group	Date
Trainees from Botswana in-Country Training Program	February 2016
Zimbabwean Election Officials	May 2016
UNISA MDEA Staff	May 2016
EMB Officials (DRC and Zimbabwe)	July 2016
Trainees at UNISA July Course	July 2016

Figure 2: FGDs

The tools created for the FGDs can be found in Annex C.

### **SITE VISITS AND TRAINING OBSERVATIONS**

In addition to the pre-inception site visit to Botswana, site visits to EMB head offices took place in South Africa and Zimbabwe. These site visits were focused around the capital areas. The Khulisa team interviewed election management officials in their work environment. These interviews could not take place with the alumni in all three countries visited as most of the trained officials were in outlying districts. The EMBs senior management decided who would participate in the interviews. Some EMB officials who have not taken part in the Training Program, but supervise trained staff were also interviewed. The evaluation team observed a portion of the Certificate Training Program during the course that took place between June 5<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 in South Africa. This allowed the team to speak with current participants, program directors, and course facilitators. Lastly, there will be a final site visit in August to observe a portion of the Commissioners' training (taking place August 22 – 26, 2016 in South Africa).

The site visits to EMBs allow the team to collect data on operational changes/ improvements in electoral procedures and practices and the capacity of EMBs in Sub-Saharan Africa in general. These site visits were the source for more in-depth analyses of the program's progress and sustainability as well as providing targeted and evidence-based recommendations for program improvements. The pre-inception site visit to Botswana during the in-country training program (in February, 2016) helped immensely in sharpening the methodology and designing data collection instruments.

Figure 3 describes the classes observed in Botswana and South Africa.

Botswana In-Country Training	South Africa (UNISA Campus)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening CSO as a Vehicle for Meeting the Objectives of the ACDEG</li> <li>• ICT and Election Management</li> <li>• Human Rights Commission – Gender and Elections</li> <li>• Electoral Democracy in Africa: Beyond the Ballot Box</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the MDEA Course and a Discussion of the Assessment Plan</li> <li>• Elections Model in an African Context</li> <li>• Ethics and Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Observer Mission Reports: Electoral Challenges in the Great Lakes Region</li> <li>• Case Studies</li> </ul>

Figure 3: Classes Observed

The tools created for the Training Observations can be found in C.

### CASE STUDIES

Case studies concentrate on individual contexts and provide a rich and detailed account of what is working and what is not.

The evaluation team, with USAID’s approval, selected five countries where in-depth KIIs were conducted for the case studies. These 5 countries are fairly representative of the spectrum of electoral and political regimes in the region. These case studies of EMBs serve to link the UNISA Certificate Training Program to operational changes/improvements in EMB procedures and practices as well as identify the extent that the Program has improved the capacity of EMBs throughout the targeted communities. The case studies were informed by not only the data collected in the KIIs, FGDs, and surveys, but also through more in-depth interviews and site visits with 3 of the selected EMBs (Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe). These case the can be found in Annex I but the information garnered from them is present throughout this report. The case studies were informed by not only the data collected in the KIIs, FGDs, and surveys, but also through more in-depth interviews during the site visits in Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe which were chosen in collaboration and agreement with USAID.

## The Democratic Management of elections EMB Case Studies

South Africa proportional representation	Botswana first past the post	Lesotho mixed member party lists	Kenya first past the post	Zimbabwe first past the post
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of autonomy</li> <li>• General consensus on legal &amp; institutional framework</li> <li>• Sophisticated web based process</li> <li>• Extensive use of ICT &amp; social media platforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A history of peaceful elections</li> <li>• Some political interference in IEC</li> <li>• No stand-alone electoral law</li> <li>• Inadequate ICT systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political interference in IEC</li> <li>• Legal &amp; institutional framework constraints</li> <li>• History of Coups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducive legal &amp; institutional framework</li> <li>• High levels of press freedom</li> <li>• Strong use of social media</li> <li>• Low levels of trust in IEC</li> <li>• History of electoral violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate legal &amp; institutional framework (2013)</li> <li>• High political interference in IEC</li> <li>• Restricted political space</li> <li>• History of electoral violence</li> <li>• Use of social media temporarily banned</li> </ul>

Figure 4: Case Study Countries

# **ANNEX III: EVALUATION TOOLS**

# TRAINEE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

## UNISA Managing Democratic Elections in Africa (MDEA) Program

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please take 10 minutes of your time to give us your view of the UNISA MDEA Certificate Training Program. Your feedback is important and will contribute to improving the program going forward. We value your insight about what worked well and what could be improved. All your answers and personal details will be held in the **strictest confidentiality**.

This satisfaction survey is being administered by Khulisa Management Services, the evaluator for the MDEA Certificate Training Program. We welcome your frank and honest comments as they will help us to continue to improve the program.

### BASIC INFORMATION

1. **Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Country of Origin:** *(drop down list of: Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, DRC, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe)*
3. **Country of Residence:** *(drop down list of: Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, DRC, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe)*
4. **Age:** *(drop down list with age ranges; 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, over 61)*
5. **Gender:** *(drop down list with: Male, Female, Other/Prefer not to answer)*
6. **Highest level of education:** *(drop down list: high school; certificate /diploma; bachelor's degree; master's degree; PHD)*
7. **Year started working for the EMB:** *(drop down list of years 1950-2016)*
8. **Current Work Station in EMB:** *(drop down list: Head Office, Provincial Office, District Office)*
9. **In your EMB, at what level are you positioned?:** *(drop down list: senior level, middle level, junior level)*
10. **Please state your current work title:** \_\_\_\_\_

### TRAINING

11. **When did you complete the MDEA training?** *(drop down list: 2011 (South Africa), 2012 (Botswana), 2012 (South Africa), June 2013 (South Africa), July 2013 (South Africa), June 2014 (South Africa), July 2014 (South Africa), August 2014 (South Africa), March 2015 (South Africa), June 2015 (South Africa), July 2015 (South Africa), August 2015 (South Africa), February 2016 (Botswana))*
12. **Where did you attend the MDEA Certificate Training Program?** *(dropdown list: South Africa, Botswana)*

**13. Did you complete the program and receive your certificate?**

- Yes
- No

### **Incomplete**

*(Skip pattern: only taken to this page if answered "No" to question 13)*

**14. Please tell us why you did not complete your training:**

\_\_\_\_\_

## **PROFESSIONAL STATUS**

**15. What is your current professional status? (Select one)**

- Employed full time with same EMB
- No longer with EMB, changed to another job
- Student
- Unemployed
- Employed part time
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Election Involvement**

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if answered "No longer with EMB" or "Other")*

**16. Are you still involved in elections?**

- Yes
- No

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

**17. Does your country have selection criteria for the MDEA Certificate Training Course?**

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

### **"Yes", Selection Criteria**

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if answered "Yes" to Question 17)*

**18. Which selection criteria does your country use? (Select all that apply)**

- Education level
- Professional level
- Job performance
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **"No", Selection Criteria**

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if answered "No" to Question 17)*

**19. How were you chosen to participate in the course?**

- My EMB Senior Management nominated me
- Someone other than my employer
- I applied directly through UNISA
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## SATISFACTION

### 20. Were you satisfied with the MDEA Certificate Course?

Very unsatisfied	Somewhat unsatisfied	Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### 21. Which part of the training were you most satisfied with?

- Theory (In-Class)
- Fieldwork during the Training/ Visits to IEC South Africa

### 22. All programs experience challenges. Did you experience any of these? (Rank the top 3 most severe challenges)

- Invitation to attend was done at short notice
- Training program and resource documents were not shared in advance
- Travelling to the training was not well planned and supported
- Course content and delivery was in a language I am not familiar with
- Curriculum was packed and allocated inadequate time
- Accommodation and training facilities unsatisfactory
- Facilitation and training techniques were not satisfactory
- Resource documents and materials were not adequate
- Other

23. Please elaborate if you chose "Other" above: \_\_\_\_\_

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

### 24. Did you submit all of the assignments for this course?

- Yes
- No

### Late Assignments

(Skip pattern: only taken to this page if answered "Yes" above)

### 25. What was the reason for failing to submit the assignment(s)? (select all that apply)

- Insufficient time to complete the assignment
- Limited or no internet access
- Difficulties with securing books/resource documents
- Forgot about the assignment
- Competing work deadlines/priorities
- The assignment was too long
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ specify

### 26. Please rate your understanding of Election Management BEFORE attending the MDEA Certificate Training Program

I did not understand Election Management	I had some understanding of Election Management	I had a good understanding of Election Management	I had an excellent understanding of Election Management
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**27. Please rate your understanding of Election Management AFTER attending the MDEA Certificate Training Program**

I do not understand Election Management	I have some understanding of Election Management	I have a good understanding of Election Management	I have an excellent understanding of Election Management
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**28. Did you learn anything new that is relevant to your work?**

- Yes
- No

**New Topics Learned**

*(Skip pattern: only taken to this page if answered "Yes" above)*

**29. Please rank the top 3 topics that you learned that are relevant to your work.**

Democratic elections in an African context	<input type="radio"/>
Election management models in Africa	<input type="radio"/>
Normative and legal frameworks of democratic elections	<input type="radio"/>
International norms and standards for management of elections	<input type="radio"/>
Managing electoral democracy education (civic and voter education)	<input type="radio"/>
Ethics and code of conduct for elections	<input type="radio"/>
Managing voter registration and voter education	<input type="radio"/>
Legislative framework for funding of political parties	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding population census and demarcation of electoral constituencies	<input type="radio"/>
Managing the role of media during the electoral process in an African context	<input type="radio"/>
Managing key polling processes (election logistics, campaign, polling and vote counting)	<input type="radio"/>
Research and knowledge management in elections	<input type="radio"/>
Election management and security	<input type="radio"/>

ICT and election management	<input type="radio"/>
Strengthening civic society as a vehicle for the African Charter on Elections, Democracy and Governance	<input type="radio"/>
Election Management and Gender	<input type="radio"/>
Electoral democracy in Africa-Beyond the ballot box	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>

30. Please specify if you selected "Other" above: \_\_\_\_\_

31. Did the curriculum address the practical/operation challenges you face in your EMB?

- Yes
- No

### Addressed Challenges

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if answered "Yes" to #31)*

32. Which challenges did it address? \_\_\_\_\_

### Not Addressed Challenges

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if answered "No" to #31)*

33. What challenges should have it addressed?

## COURSE SATISFACTION

34. How did the MDEA Certificate Training Program compare to your expectations?

Fell below expectations	Generally met expectations	Exceeded expectations	Far exceeded expectations
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

35. The UNISA MDEA Training Course has helped me to...(Please rank the top 3)

Increase my career interest in election management	<input type="radio"/>
Be more effective in doing my current work by using skills and knowledge I acquired.	<input type="radio"/>
Be more qualified to take on greater job responsibilities in the future.	<input type="radio"/>
Be more respected by my senior managers and colleagues.	<input type="radio"/>
Move up the ranks in my EMB	<input type="radio"/>

Increase my employment prospects in the future.	<input type="radio"/>
Increase my chances of influencing change in my EMB	<input type="radio"/>
Identify or find new opportunities to change my career.	<input type="radio"/>

**36. Now that you have completed the MDEA Certificate Training Program, are you actively seeking employment and/or assignments in Election Management? (Select one)**

- I am already adequately employed in election administration and won't be changing careers soon
- I am actively looking for a position that is more rewarding in other election organizations
- I might look for opportunities to work in election management with regional or international organizations like the African Union, Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC)
- I am using my election management skills to enhance my performance in my current job
- I am not interested in working in election management anymore
- I am not sure yet

## POST-COURSE

**37. To what extent has attending the MDEA Training Program expanded your professional network?**

Not at all	To a limited extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**38. Did the capacity of your EMB improve in any of the following electoral processes? (select all that apply)**

- Gender and election management
- Voter registration
- Polling Day Administration
- Civic and Voter Education

**39. How did your MDEA training contribute to improvements in your EMB's operations, procedures, and practices? (select all that apply)**

- Effective voter education delivery
- Strengthened ability to engage electoral stakeholders
- Increased efficiency in poll administration
- Created team spirit within EMB workers
- Resulted in no changes at all
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**40. Are you a member of the MDEA Alumni?**

- Yes
- No
- I have never heard about it

## MDEA Alumni

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if answered "Yes" above)*

**41. Which of the following MDEA Alumni Activities did you participate in? (select all that apply)**

- Alumni conference
- MDEA Alumni LinkedIn group
- UNISA online platform?
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**42. Did communication links between yourself and former students in other EMBs continue beyond the MDEA training?**

- Yes
- No

## Communication

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if selected "No" on question above)*

**43. Please tell us why communication did not continue beyond the training:** \_\_\_\_\_

## EXPERIENCE

**44. To what extent did interacting with your fellow trainees and MDEA Alumni impact or improve your learning experience?**

Not at all	To a limited extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**45. Will you recommend the MDEA Certificate Training Course to others?**

- Yes
- No

## Not Recommending

*(Skip pattern, if answered NO above)*

**46. If no, why not?**

## CONTINUATION

**47. If it wasn't a sponsored program would you have paid on your own to attend the MDEA Certificate Course?**

- Yes
- No

**48. Do you think more people from your EMB would attend if: (select all that apply)**

- The course is offered online?
- EMBs sponsor their own staff at in-country training programs?

- EMBs use the certificate course as a basis for promotion?
- The course is offered as a diploma
- Other

**49. Do you think the group of people that attended the Certificate training has the ability to influence change in your EMB?**

- Yes
- Not yet, but I believe it will
- No

**50. Please explain what types of changes:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **ATTENDEES**

**51. How many of your staff members should attend the course and at which levels in order to result in changes?**

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## **CHANGES**

**52. Has this course caused you to make changes in the way you work in your EMB?**

- Yes
- No, there are other constraints *(Skip pattern, if answered YES above)*

## **Constraints**

*(Skip pattern: Only taken to this page if answered "No" above)*

**53. What are these constraints?**

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## **COMMENTS**

**54. Please provide any other comments to help us improve the MDEA program and suggestions for future communication with alumni:**

**You have successfully completed this survey on the UNISA MDEA Certificate Training Program.  
Thank you for your participation and feedback!**

# MDEA Focus Group Discussion Guide

## PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTION

- Thank participants for attending the meeting
- Specify that the discussion should only take approximately 45 minutes
- Briefly describe the purpose of the evaluation
- Remind the participants that their responses will remain confidential
- Ask for permission to record the discussion, explaining that participants will remain anonymous

## FGD PURPOSE & FOCUS

The purpose of this discussion is to enable the evaluation team to gather a range of perspectives and insight into the program and how they differ across these stakeholder groups.

The focus of the discussion is to measure the effectiveness and relevance of the MDEA program as well as identify changes in the capacity of the EMBs. Please answers to the following research questions based on your experiences.

\*A checklist validating the main survey instrument will be distributed prior to the FGD.

## PRIMARY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- What have been the main successes and challenges during the implementation of the activity?
- To what extent does the UNISA Certificate Training Program address the election management challenges present in your country?
- To what extent has the UNISA Certificate Training Program translated into improved capacity of EMBs throughout sub-Saharan Africa to manage elections more effectively?
- What evidence exists linking the UNISA Certificate Training Program to operational changes/improvements in EMB procedures and practices?
- Is there evidence that project interventions will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime?

## Probing questions

Satisfaction	How satisfied are you with the overall training- the course content, delivery methods, and outcomes? Does the course address the main challenges in the work that you do in the EMB?
Learning/ Knowledge gained	What do you think are the key elements of the curriculum that are a priority for your EMB? How do you give feedback back to the management after training?
Behavior Change	How do you implement what you would have learnt into your work in the EMB? How does the alumni support you in your work?
Organizational Performance	How have your EMBs electoral processes, procedures and policies changed since you were trained? How does your EMB share information on good/best practices acquired during the trainings?
Sustainability	How do you see the training program growing in the region? How can it reach all of sub-Saharan Africa in a cost effective way?

# MDEA Certificate Training Observation Instrument

Date:	
Topic:	
No. of Participants:	
Primary Facilitator:	
Observer:	
Learning Objectives:  What are the participants supposed to learn?	

## Part I:

- How was the exercise set-up by the facilitator?
- Did participants have questions about the exercise instructions? What were participants' responses to the exercise instructions?
- Assess the interaction between facilitator and trainees.
- What questions were asked & how were questions answered?
- Did participants appear engaged in the exercise?
- How well did the facilitator monitor the exercise?
- Was there a clear learning objective reached during the exercise?
- Did participants seem to learn or improve on an important skill?

**PART II: IMPRESSIONS FORMED DURING OBSERVATION**

Observations Notes

Interpretations/Questions/Comments

Observations Notes	Interpretations/Questions/Comments

## PART II: SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The exercise <b>learning objectives</b> were met.				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
The answers the facilitator gave to participants' questions were <b>clear</b> .				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
The facilitator provided illustrative <b>examples</b> .				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
The exercise was <b>well facilitated</b> .				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
The exercise allowed participants to practice <b>practical skills</b> related to important concepts.				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
The exercise was an effective way for individuals to learn important <b>information</b> .				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
Participants were <b>actively engaged</b> in the exercise.				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
The exercise <b>overall</b> was effective.				
1	2	3	4	5
Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly

How did the facilitator(s) **contribute** to participant learning during this exercise?

If the facilitator(s) **failed to contribute adequately** to participant learning during this exercise: what could he or she have done to contribute—or contribute more—to their learning?

How did the exercise contribute to helping participants practice **skills** related to course concepts and their work?

# MDEA KII Guide

## INTRODUCTION

Khulisa is interested in gaining insights and hearing your opinion about how to improve the program. Your responses will remain confidential. Thank you for taking the time to participate.

### FOCUS

The key informant interviews aim to capture perceptions on the strengths and weaknesses of MDEA's Certificate Training Program and its effectiveness in causing operational changes in EMBs across sub-Saharan Africa. Please answer the following research questions based on your experience.

### PRIMARY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- What have been the main successes and challenges during the implementation of the activity?
- To what extent does the UNISA Certificate Training Program address the election management challenges present in sub-Saharan Africa?
- To what extent has the UNISA Certificate Training Program translated into improved capacity of EMBs throughout sub-Saharan Africa to manage elections more effectively?
- What evidence exists linking the UNISA Certificate Training Program to operational changes/improvements in EMB procedures and practices?
- Is there evidence that project interventions will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime?

### Probing questions

Satisfaction	What would you identify as the successes of the Certificate training program? How satisfied are you with the overall training- the course content, delivery methods, and outcomes? Does the course address the challenges in your EMB?
Learning/ Knowledge gained	What are the key elements of election management (priorities for your EMB) that trainees acquired from the MDEA Certificate training program? How is this knowledge shared in the EMB?
Behavior Change	What changes in performance/conduct have you noticed amongst the trained staff members within their roles in the EMB? Has the alumni triggered country peer to peer support in EMB management? How has the Alumni influenced performance in your EMB?
Organizational Performance	How have the EMBs electoral processes, procedures and policies changed since some staff members were trained? Are EMBs exchanging information on good/best practices acquired during the trainings?
Sustainability	How do you see the training program growing in the region? How can it reach all of sub-Saharan Africa in a cost effective way?

**ANNEX IV: FINAL EVALUATION  
SCHEDULE**





# ANNEX IX: CASE STUDIES

## CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ENHANCING ELECTION MANAGEMENT – THE CASE OF BOTSWANA

### INTRODUCTION

This is a brief report on Botswana's Election Management Board (EMB), the Independent Electoral Commission's (IEC), capacity building for managing electoral processes experiences under the Managing Democratic Elections in Africa (MDEA) project that is implemented by the University of South Africa (UNISA) and supported by USAID/Southern Africa. The information presented in this case study was collected during a site visit to a MDEA Certificate course in Gaborone (20-23 February 2016) by the Khulisa team.<sup>1</sup> Two focus group discussions were conducted: one with the 23 Botswana trainees; Klls with former Commissioners and EMB officials and the team observed 3 different themes of the training which shed more insights into the learning environment and the quality of interactions between students and facilitators. A desk study was also done to contextualize the overall EMB developments and challenges in election management in Botswana.

Botswana is a signatory to various regional election management protocols such as: the Southern African Development Community's (SADCs) Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections; and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum's Norms and Standards for Elections in the region but it has not signed the African Union's Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007) and has stayed out of the Africa Peer Review Mechanism which has a major section on the conduct of elections in reviewed countries. Complying with these standards, protocols, and norms requires the IEC to strengthen its capacity in managing electoral processes.

### Brief Historical Context – Evolution of the Electoral Management Framework

The evolution of Botswana's EMB is related to other significant local socio-political developments such as: a continuous history of the rule of law; the increasing capacity of the populace to demand accountability and a tolerant civic culture that is partly connected to the country's traditional governance value system. Though high levels of voter apathy are recorded during most of the elections (See [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)), the interventions of civic organizations on voting and electoral processes in the 1980s triggered a change in Botswana voting behavior. Increased access to education also helped overtime to shift the public's previously ambivalent attitudes to elections. Since the increase in participation, the ruling party's vote, Botswana Democratic Party's (BDP), has steadily declined from 55% in 1994 to 47% in 2014.<sup>2</sup> The party had its highest support in 1965 when the ruling party garnered 80% of the popular vote.

The first constitution of Botswana,<sup>3</sup> provided for a multi-party democracy, based on the basic democratic tenets of regular free and fair elections, equality of all citizens, freedom of association and

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<sup>1</sup> The report will be updated after the rest of the targeted individuals in the country would have been interviewed.

<sup>2</sup> David Sebudubudu, *Leaders, Elites and Coalitions in the Development of Botswana*, The Developmental Leadership Program (DLP), Birmingham, 2009

<sup>3</sup> A result of the 1963 constitutional talks.

assembly, and the rule of law.<sup>4</sup> The electoral system and constitution borrowed heavily from the British model of first-past-the-post. Before the creation of the IEC in 1997, election management was under the office of the Permanent Secretary to the President. Botswana has held 10 post-independence elections between 1969 and 2014 and the first six of these post-independence elections were managed from the Office of the President. Responsibility for election management only shifted to the IEC in 1997,<sup>5</sup> three decades after the first general elections in 1965. The 26 October 1987 referendum led to the creating of the Office of the Supervisor of Elections who was appointed by the President and managed elections between 1987 and 1997. Opposition political parties remained dissatisfied with this change as they wanted a more autonomous institution. Another national referendum on 4 October 1997, characterized by extremely low voter turn-out (6%), resulted in the establishment of the IEC, the diaspora vote and lowering of the voting age to 18.

This shift was a response to increasing demands for democracy and transparency and the institutionalization of competitive elections as a key element of liberal democracy. The IEC managed its inaugural elections in 1999 and has since managed four rounds of elections. By the time the 1999 elections were held, civil society organizations' demands for greater transparency and accountability had become part of the country's democratic culture. Despite the many multi-party elections, Botswana's political landscape has remained characterized by a single dominant party, the BDP, and an array of constantly shifting and unimpressive opposition parties. There hasn't been any political party power alternation in the country since 1965.

#### **Legal and Institutional Framework Governing Elections**

The key legal instruments that govern the conduct and administration of elections in Botswana are the 1966 Constitution and 1968 Electoral Act (1968; as amended<sup>6</sup>). Section 65A (12) of the Constitution of Botswana provides for the responsibilities of the IEC as follows:

1. The conduct and supervision of elections of the Elected Members of the National Assembly and members of a local authority, and conduct of a referendum;
2. Giving instructions and directions to the Secretary of the Commission appointed under section 66 in regard to the exercise of his or her functions under the electoral law prescribed by an Act of Parliament;
3. Ensuring that elections are conducted efficiently, properly, freely and fairly; and
4. Performing such other functions as may be prescribed by an Act of Parliament.

The country is criticized for lacking a solid electoral law as it relies on rudimentary statutes to govern the operations of the IEC. See the structure of the IEC below and the complexity of the relationships it has to manage. This has a direct indication on the requisite capacity to run credible elections.

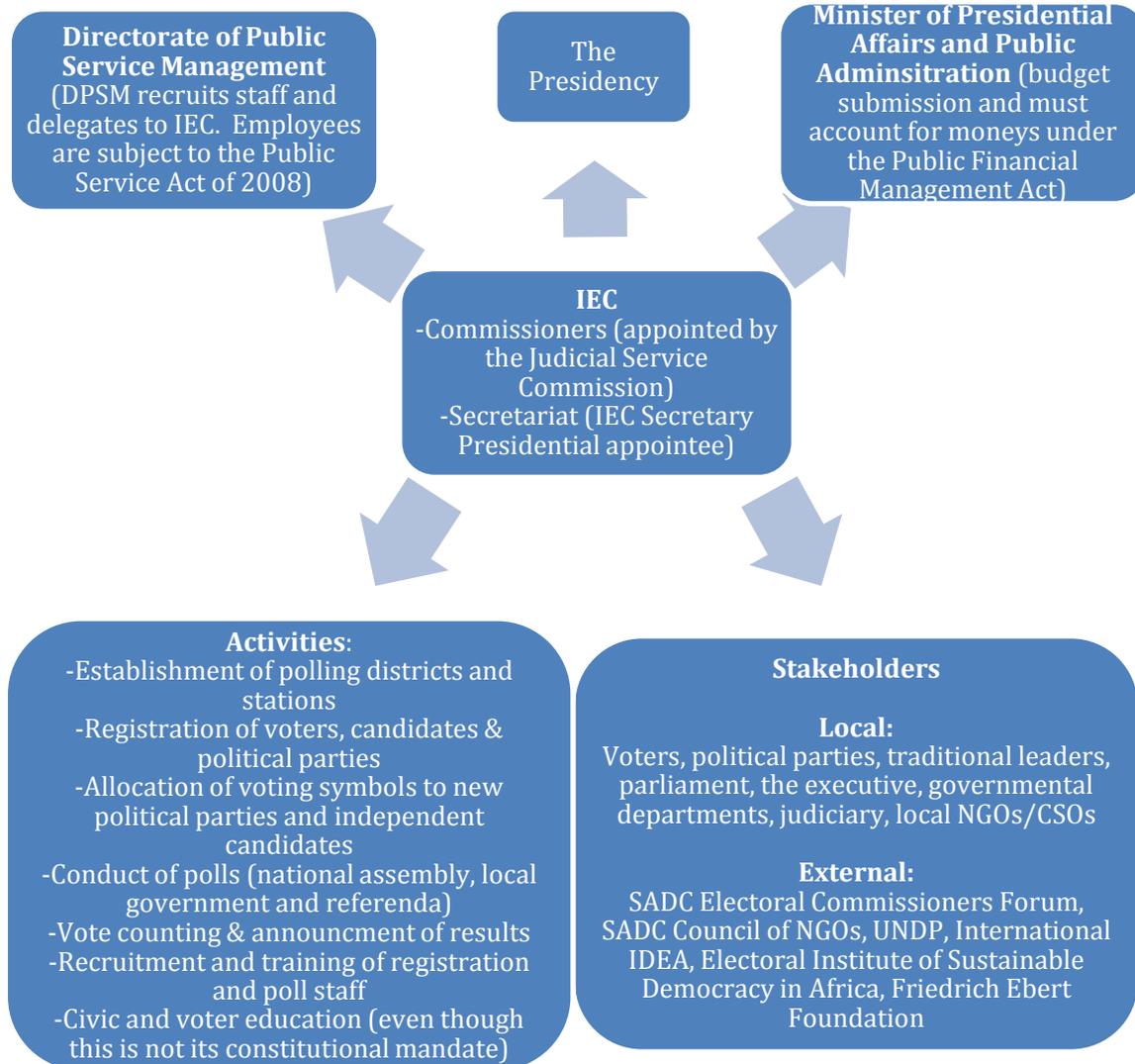
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<sup>4</sup> David Sebudubudu, *Leaders, Elites and Coalitions in the Development of Botswana*, The Developmental Leadership Program (DLP), Birmingham, 2009. The constitution came into effect with the formal transfer of power at midnight September 30<sup>th</sup> of 1966.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The IEC was established by Section 65A of the Constitution of Botswana in 1997.

<sup>6</sup> Last amended in 2012 in respect of section 13 to provide for the alphabetical listing of voters' names in the roll.

## The EMB Structure and Key Stakeholder Relationships



## EMB's Electoral Challenges

Throughout all the post-independence elections, opposition parties in the country continue to express discontent with almost all elements of the electoral cycle. Some of the key issues that dent the integrity and credibility of elections are:

- Questions on the integrity of the IEC's independence when its Executive Secretary is appointed by the president and reports to a Minister in the office of the President instead of directly to parliament;
- The delimitation of electoral constituencies and wards is accused of being biased towards the ruling party, BDP, and is believed to perpetuate its monopoly of majority votes;
- Political party financing makes the electoral field uneven and unfair because the BDP receives massive financial support from established big businesses;
- The ruling party uses state resources during campaigns (from media coverage to transport) that other contesting parties do not have access to;
- Opposition parties allege that ballot boxes are tampered with before reaching the central

counting point-this has prompted calls for the counting of the ballots to be done at the polling stations;

- Voter apathy and low levels of political participation-different studies continue to reveal that voter apathy is a problem in Botswana.<sup>7</sup> Although the IEC has intensified voter education and other out-reach programs, the youth remain apathetic.
- The government is accused of deliberate sluggishness in implementing electoral reforms.
- Opposition parties continue to demand: changes in the electoral system to proportional representation, declaring voting day a public holiday, counting of ballots at polling stations and direct election of the President.<sup>8</sup>

## EXPERIENCE WITH MDEA – FINDINGS

### Designing a Model for Success

Botswana is clearly in the lead in the sub-Saharan African region with regard to capacity building for managing democratic elections. The country has set a target to train all its EMB staff, (165), in response to the recognition that elections have become highly specialized and require special skills to comply with the legal domestic and regional institutional frameworks and practices. The EMB has thus designed a phased approach in which it advocated for an **In-Country** training program and in the space of 4 years has trained: most of the Senior Election Officers, 54 were trained by 2015 December), and a large group of Assistant Election Officers (32<sup>9</sup> trained in February 2016, are yet to complete the course). The goal is to train or EMB staff irrespective of their role in the EMB. Botswana's experience in massive and rapid capacity building has spurred other countries in the region to request in-country training sessions.

### The In-Country Training model

As happens with all other EMBs, the IEC was given a fixed number of officers to send to the MDEA course at UNISA and in the space of five years (2011-2015) managed to send 15 officials<sup>10</sup> only. The plans to train the entire EMB staff compelled the country to design its own package around the UNISA curriculum, which included payments for: flying in the trainers; training fees; accommodation/training venue etc. UNISA then conducted the first In-Country course in 2012 with 32 trainees. Having learnt the value of sharing experiences with other countries from previous attachment programs, two DRC officials were funded by Botswana to attend this course. The cost of training this first group of 30 Principal Election Officers was around 400,000 pulas (about 40,000 USD then). The February 2016 trainee group included 5 senior managers drawn from other EMB offices across the region to maintain the cross fertilization of ideas. The total cost for training the February had trebled to 1 200 000 pulas (105 000 USD) which is still value for money. The EMB has a training budget which is approved by the Minister of Finance and funds are always provided for the IEC's needs. The Public Service Commission gives 10% of the total tuition fee to augment the training costs. The county has managed to fill its capacity needs through these cost cutting In-Country courses.

## KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED DURING THE COURSES

### The MDEA Certificate

The Certificate course has strengthened electoral processes management skills for election workers in

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<sup>7</sup> See Afrobarometer data on [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)

<sup>8</sup> David Sebudubudu, 2004; BOPA, "BPP will not honour All Party Conference", *Daily News*, 27 July 2012, available at <http://www.olddailynews.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20040727>, accessed 31 August 2015.

<sup>9</sup> These figures were provided by the IEC Secretariat in Botswana and need to be verified against the UNISA figures as there seems to be a difference in the numbers of trained officials.

<sup>10</sup> This figure was provided by the IEC Secretariat in Botswana and need to be verified against the UNISA figures as there seems to be a difference in the numbers of those who attended the UNISA based trainings.

Botswana. Senior managers reported a difference in the improved quality of reports submitted by MDEA trained election officers and increased stakeholder engagement on governance issues. They also reported a marked shift towards the overall adoption of participatory approaches in electoral processes. In the 2014 elections, the IEC's outreach to stakeholders did not only serve the purpose of voter education, but also turned out to be a useful strategy for building stakeholder confidence in the electoral process as a whole.

From the management's observations, the course has created a unifying knowledge base for all the staff and has helped individuals to attain the institution's goals. Trained staff now reportedly demonstrates courage in pointing out mistakes by their colleagues in election administration. The Botswana EMB now regards the Certificate course as a must-do induction course for all new staff.

Electoral knowledge appreciated most by the current trainees were the ability to: distinguish between voter education (which should be an ongoing activity) and election education and designing relevant strategies for effective voter education; differentiate between the population and use of the census data in delimiting constituencies; determine the merits and demerits of the different electoral systems and the importance of gender in elections.

### **The Commissioners Executive Course**

In Botswana, as in most other countries, Commissioners lack proper induction following their appointment and most of them rarely have prior knowledge of electoral processes. As new commissioners, this complicates their EMB policy role vis-a-vis the more experienced IEC secretariat.<sup>11</sup> Commissioners interviewed reported being previously exposed to short, uncoordinated and erratic training workshops on different themes by civic groups such as the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa, the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and the National Democratic Institute. The MDEA Commissioners' course serves a much needed induction process for incoming Commissioners. The November 2015 course created opportunities for regional Commissioners to share new experiences such as observing the recent Namibia e-voting election. Such fast paced changes in electoral processes make it essential for Commissioners to attend yearly refresher courses to enable them to catch up with new developments.<sup>12</sup>

### **PEER TO PEER LEARNING**

The 2016 trainees' field trip to Mafikeng in South Africa gave the trainees a chance to see on-going election logistical preparation by their peers for the Tokwe by-election. Trainees were clearly surprised and impressed that all polling planning was done at a decentralized level and that the local level staff handled all logistical preparations for their jurisdictional area. The Tlokwe EMB station in Mafikeng was organized in a permanent state of preparedness for any election and this reflected the sophisticated levels of election management in South Africa. Trainees observed that election officials are thoroughly trained and must pass an exam with an 80% mark. Again the use of biometric registration for election officials in SA and its links to the payroll-integrated system, impressed the trainees who deemed it an effective and efficient way for EMBs to manage the extra staff hired during elections. All trainees concurred that this permanent state of readiness for an election was something they could initiate in their district stations.

### **Influencing Change**

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<sup>11</sup> Former IEC Commissioner Botswana

<sup>12</sup> Interview

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*“There isn’t much we can do cause the PEO needs to clear everything we want to change- and it is essentially an EMB decision to open up that space for changes and application of what we learn- we work in a very sensitive environment”*

*-Botswana FGD.*

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There is no consensus in Botswana between the current group of trainees and those in senior management on the ability of trained junior officials to change the way the EMB manages elections. But on a more positive note, senior EMB management attributed the overall management of the 2014 elections to MDEA. The training raised awareness of the need to communicate with voters. The biggest improvement was in EMB public relations activities.<sup>13</sup> EMB officials communicated constantly with the media. The public was informed of developments throughout the actual polling process. Engagement with the youth increased significantly as the EMB went all over the country encouraging youth participation in elections- this led to a rise in the youth vote.<sup>14</sup> Behavioral changes were noted too with officials demonstrating neutrality and impartiality in relation to dealing with political parties and individual politicians. Trainees in the FGD group posed a question that speaks to the importance of M&E for the MDEA; “How do you monitor implementation of what we would have learnt here- how does UNISA track that?”

For the junior staff, they see it as imperative to train the Executive officers in the EMBs in order for any change to take place. The main obstacle is that for their level, there is no mechanism in place to share knowledge or transform things through application of new skills since all actions have to be signed off by a senior manager. There was consensus from all 23 Botswana trainees that:

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*“Though the Principal Election Officers have been trained, not a single thing we have learnt in this course has been implemented - None- They have not even shared the knowledge or information otherwise we would have known some of the things we encountered about election management in this course”.*

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This has implications on changing the Electoral Act for the EMB to transform in line with the training. For instance, the Constitution does not allow the EMB to conduct Civic education yet the course emphasizes that aspect.

#### **Demand for Training due to Attrition in the EMB**

Capacity building demand will always be there in the Botswana EMB because the employees are hired by the central government and controlled by the Public Service Commission. The officers are therefore highly mobile and transitory, resulting in high turnover at the EMB and this attrition of trained staff continuously weakens the IEC. IEC staff could be disadvantaged in terms of career progression because some staff hit a dead-end and cannot progress unless they are timeously transferred to a different government agency. This problem exacerbates the longstanding staffing shortages even though the EMB has devolved its functions to the periphery through the creation of outstations. The EMB has a very

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<sup>13</sup> This is confirmed by Zibani Maundeni, 2015 in his article on ‘Voter education and some electoral issues in Botswana: 2004 and 2014 compared’, University of Botswana.

<sup>14</sup> Figures to be confirmed by comparing with the last 3 elections.

lean structure and hires staff when needed. At most, each outlying station has four permanent employees.

## **MDEA COURSE CHALLENGES**

### **Autonomy of the IEC – Constitutional and Legal Framework**

Many of the challenges encountered in Botswana's improvements in election management have to do with the lack of autonomy of the IEC and they go beyond this paper. This section looks at challenges related to operations of the MDEA courses in Botswana.

### **Duration of Courses**

The times scheduled for both the Certificate and Executive classroom courses (3 weeks and one week respectively) is considered to be inadequate for the curriculum by all students who are in the on-going course. For instance, in the certificate course, most of the 23 in-country February 2016 EMB trainees in Botswana did not have prior knowledge of election management and were simply thrown into the deep end and had had to start working. They therefore needed more time to familiarize themselves with the program and to know what was expected of them especially where they had to make presentations based on their practical work experiences.

### **Curriculum Content**

The course content is deemed essential for providing the necessary election management theory-but to respond adequately to the EMB's needs, all respondents in Botswana mentioned the need for more practitioner-oriented courses. Currently, MDEA focuses on electoral processes but trainees and management felt that the course doesn't address the practical aspect of election management and this is a component that practitioners can add value to. Trainees demanded more technical content that was easily applicable e.g. the tallying process (results management systems), election security, and financial management of electoral programs. Gender was also a key theme that merited more time allocation during the course and trainees emphasized the need for more female facilitators, "More female facilitators important, the lesson on Gender was critical".

### **Course Logistics**

The EMB management pointed out that "UNISA's logistical arrangements are not generally friendly to the EMB's work cycles and availability". The EMB prefers a more flexible approach so that it can arrange courses when there is no urgent EMB activity such as by-elections. Communicating with UNISA also poses a big challenge to the EMB, which finds the planning process time consuming due to delayed responses.

### **Sustainability**

Botswana's plan to stick to the In-Country model is gaining traction with other countries<sup>15</sup> as it is cost effective. However, its broad success depends on funding availability at the country level. Botswana can sustain the current capacity building model as it always has a training budget for the EMB. Furthermore, the country signaled that it is now in a position to utilize other trained practitioners as trainers in both the country and in supporting UNISA in delivering courses.

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<sup>15</sup> Both the Lesotho and Kenyan officials attending the Feb 2016 course confirmed they were planning to host the next In-Country training courses.

Since electoral practices change with technological advancements, interviewed Commissioners expressed that offering some **Online courses**, especially refresher courses for already trained staff, would be both cost and time efficient and such a system can be designed to work through ICT managers in the EMB.

## CONCLUSION

Botswana subscribes to the requirements of a democratic electoral system and this study concurs with Holm's<sup>16</sup> observations that:

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*Botswana shows definite movement toward fulfilling these conditions of a liberal democracy ...in contrast to other African countries, Botswana has had much more success with elections in that it is (building capacity essential for<sup>17</sup>) institutionalising a broad range of democratic practices in a context of stability'.<sup>18</sup>*

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A competitive democratic electoral process (with flaws) thus exists in Botswana and if compared with other regimes in the region, Botswana's electoral system, and its management of elections, certainly lies more to the left of the ideal democratic regime continuum and less to the right of the continuum of authoritarian regimes. The shift to the extreme ideal position requires technical capacity for democratic election management.

## Recommendations

- Whilst courses should adhere to the UNISA curriculum, they should be adjusted for In-country courses so as to increase their relevance for the trainees. Trainees pointed out that the course "lacked country contextualization due to the dominance of South African facilitators during the course". FGD feedback.
- Trainees should receive all relevant information and course materials before arrival at the training venue.
- Broadening the pool of expert trainers would contribute important practitioner's insights. Experienced Commissioners and Practitioners can enrich the theory through lived experiences. The use of local resource persons will help diversify the current pool of facilitators and increase ownership of the capacity building exercise.
- UNISA can utilize Executive trained experienced Commissioners and others in identifying the content that is relevant to the EMB's work needs so that an adequate course is defined for the Executive level.

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<sup>16</sup> According to the Hoeffler framework, the freeness and fairness of Botswana election is ranked at 0.855 (or 86%) which is consistent with assessments by external assessors, like; the Commonwealth, African Union and (ECF-SADC).

<sup>17</sup> Emphasis added

<sup>18</sup> John Holm, 1987, p. 143.

# IMPROVING ELECTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN A RELUCTANT AUTHORITARIAN STATE – THE CASE OF ZIMBABWE

## INTRODUCTION

This brief case study is a part of the MDEA evaluation. Zimbabwe's EMB was the focus of the evaluation where MDEA beneficiaries gave an account of their experiences with the program. The information presented in this case study was collected during in-depth face-to-face interviews with all thirteen former MDEA participants as well as seven members of the EMB's Executive Management Committee. The interviews were carried out at the Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) head office in Harare (4) and the other 9 from stations outside the capital. A focus group discussion was also held with seven senior EMB managers and a desk study was undertaken to contextualize the overall EMB developments and challenges in election management in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe is a country whose credibility ratings in terms of election management have continuously been in the negative due to an enduring authoritarian state where principles of electoral fairness and freeness are routinely disregarded. Almost every national election in Zimbabwe has been contested and violence routinely used to silence dissenters.<sup>19</sup> The country is a signatory to all the various regional election management protocols in the region such as: the Southern African Development Community's (SADCs) Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections; and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum's Norms and Standards for Elections, the African Union's Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (2007). The country never signed up for the African Peer Review Mechanism, which has a major section on the conduct of elections in reviewed countries. Complying with these standards, protocols, and norms requires the ZEC to strengthen its capacity in managing electoral processes. The electoral system used is the first-past-the-post.

Ironically, as the state entrenches its hegemony on electoral administration by closing off democratic space, the electoral management body is seemingly harnessing modern electoral best practices, for instance, the recent adoption of the biometric voter registration system, which is primarily indicative of their willingness to enhance the integrity of electoral administration in the country (ZESN reports). This demonstrates the inherent desire for change within the EMB, but the excesses of the incumbent government curtail the attainment of such desired improvements to election management

### **The evolution of electoral administration**

In the immediate post-Independence - 1980-2004<sup>20</sup> period, the new government of Zimbabwe introduced a democratic, non-racist electoral system based upon universal adult suffrage. A new electoral management structure was established consisting of the Delimitation Commission, which was solely responsible for the delimitation of electoral districts, and the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC), charged with supervising the conduct of elections. The Registrar-General of Elections, under the supervision of the ESC, managed the elections during this period: registered voters and compiled voter registers, conducted the voting process and the counting and collation of votes, and announced the results of the election. The Election Directorate provided logistical support to the Registrar-General in the management of the electoral process. This structure was criticized because of its perceived

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<sup>19</sup> Political violence reached its peak in the 2008 elections where the opposition party, MDC disputed the election results after the EMB failed to announce the election results for three weeks.

<sup>20</sup> Based on information provided on the ZEC website [www.zec.gov.zw](http://www.zec.gov.zw)

partisanship (Mustache 2005, p33-36)<sup>21</sup>.

### **A new EMB structure<sup>22</sup>**

An enabling Electoral Act (chapter 2.13) was promulgated in 2004 with legislation providing for conditions under which elections were to be held as well as the electoral system to be used. In 2004 the electoral management system was re-structured basing on recommendations from political parties and civil society organizations. These reforms took account of the Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections adopted by the SADC Heads of State and Governments in Mauritius in 2004. A year later, Constitutional Amendment No. 17 then abolished the Electoral Supervisory Commission.<sup>23</sup> The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) was then established as an independent body to manage the elections.

ZEC then became the body responsible for running elections. To align with the new system, the title of the Registrar-General of Elections was changed to that of the Registrar-General of Voters-under the supervision of ZEC. Leaving the voters roll in the Registrar General's hands remained problematic as almost all election related fraud was related to the voters' roll. ZEC was responsible for compiling voters' rolls and providing copies of these rolls to those requesting them. A constitutional amendment (Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No 18) Act 2007) abolished the Delimitation Commission and transferred its functions to the ZEC.

### **The Present ZEC**

The evolution of the current EMB has been mired in controversy due to continuous political manipulation. In 2012, the contents of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Act were transferred to a new Electoral Act and the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Act itself was repealed. The new Constitution of Zimbabwe adopted in 2013, re-established the ZEC on a new basis (Sections 232-241).

ZEC currently has nine Commissioners who hold office for a term of six years. There is a Chairperson (who must be a judge or former judge of the Supreme Court or the High Court, or a person qualified for appointment as such) and a Deputy-Chairperson, both of whom are appointed on a full time basis. Four of the eight Commissioners other than the Chairperson must be women. The President appoints all the Commissioners, with the eight members appointed from a list of not fewer than twelve nominees submitted by the Parliamentary Committee on Standing Rules and Orders. The Chairperson is appointed after consultation with the Judicial Service Commission and the Parliamentary Committee on Standing Rules and Orders.

### **Legal Framework Governing Elections in Zimbabwe**

The current legislative framework for elections in Zimbabwe is derived from the new Constitution of Zimbabwe, promulgated in May 2013 following an extensive constitutional overhaul that was marked by a referendum in March 2013.

### **ZEC Electoral Capacity Challenges**

Due to the evolving nature of electoral administration in Zimbabwe, the electoral management body, ZEC had been forced to undergo rapid adjustments in order to match with international best practices

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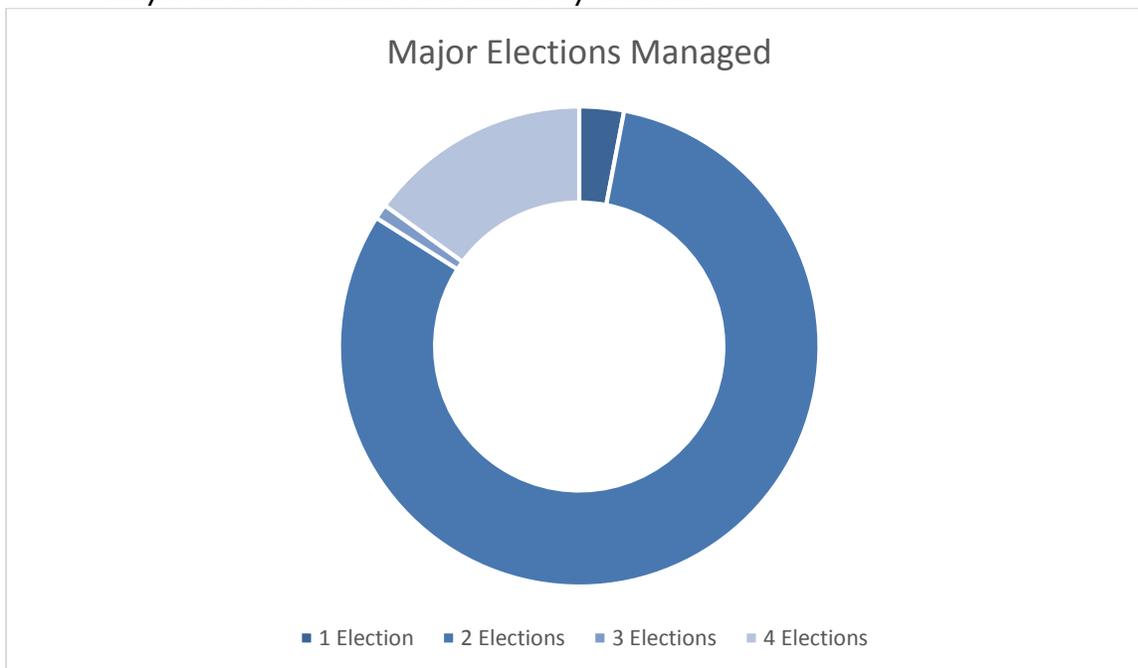
21 Musanhu B. (2007) Case Study: Zimbabwe: A New Era in Election Management, International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden

22 [www.zec.gov.zw](http://www.zec.gov.zw)

23 BOOYSEN, S & TOULOU, K 2009 "Chapter 15: Zimbabwe" IN Denis Kadima and Susan Booysen (eds) Compendium of Elections in Southern Africa 1989-2009: 20 Years of Multiparty Democracy, EISA, Johannesburg.

of election management. In 2014, the ZEC, with support from the Danish Embassy, conducted a comprehensive “Identification of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Needs Gaps-The Road to 2018” which culminated in a detailed report<sup>24</sup>. Using both quantitative and qualitative assessment methodology, the exercise highlighted key EMB capacity requirements as summarized below;

- **ZEC Staff Profile-** A competency profile was compiled by examining the entire top staffing structure of ZEC including the head office, provincial offices, and district office management. A sample of 102 staff members was used in the analysis, which showed the gender profile is still heavily skewed toward male staff members (71%) as opposed to female staff members (29%).
- **Age Profile-** In a country that openly defers to age, the Needs Assessment Report showed that the average age of ZEC top management is 50 years old, with the bulk falling between 45 and 59 years old. This represents an aging staff complement at the top of the institution, which will most likely represent succession challenges beyond the 2018 elections.
- **Competency Profile-**The ZEC Top Management was analyzed with regards to their most senior qualification. A large proportion of the staff was shown to be *–university educated* (85%) with 38% of them possessing masters ‘degrees and 47% of them with undergraduate degrees. ZEC staff has an average of 7 years working experience, with Senior Management averaging 10, 7 years; representing the most experience within ZEC at present. Provincial heads and their deputies follow with 8.5 years of EMB experience. When looking at the number of elections managed (See Chart 2), 15% of the ZEC top management staff has conducted 4 major elections, 1% conducted 3 major elections, and 81% have been engaged in two major elections. This analysis does not include referenda or by-elections.



*Number of Major Elections Managed*

- **Enduring EMB Capacity Needs-**The combination of age profile, academic qualifications, and EMB election management experience demonstrates that there is considerable elections-related expertise amongst the top management staff of the EMB. What potentially is lacking is the

<sup>24</sup>Report on Identification of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Needs Gaps-The Road to 2018, October 2014

democratizing of this competence and extending it to cover the voter-registration mandate entrusted to ZEC. With regards to areas where capacity building could be improved, the following areas that MDEA training covers were been identified: civic education, electoral rights, stakeholder engagement, training and development (polling, training & logistics), voter registration, conflict management, voter education and election results management<sup>25</sup>

### **EXPERIENCE WITH MDEA-FINDINGS**

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has trained 15 of its election personnel and under MDEA. Eight district electoral officers, two senior managers, and 3 commissioners have attended the different MDEA classes since 2011. There is a general consensus that about 50% of EMB permanent personnel must undergo training to realize the anticipated change in practice and knowledge of election management.

Zimbabwe is one of those countries that are on the USAID's embargo list for financial support. UNISA has at times used its funds generated from the in-country courses to sponsor such countries. On some occasions, ZEC paid for its officials to attend the training.

### **Knowledge Acquired During the MDEA Course**

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*"We have used knowledge gained as part of recommendations to parliament from ZEC on electoral reforms to match our election administration with international best practices."*

*-ZEC senior manager.*

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Remarkable knowledge gains and associated improvement of skills and performance amongst MDEA trained officials was attested to by the EMBs top management who participated in the focus group discussion. Individuals who attended and completed the certificate course reported significant improvement in their performance and confidence. Some respondents noted improvements in terms of the quality of their reports, a change that was also confirmed by senior management.

Senior managers revealed that ZEC has been undergoing constant administrative and regulatory changes, the certificate course has significantly equipped senior management with information for their on-going organizational development. The ZEC senior managers<sup>26</sup> who were part of the MDEA pioneer group in 2011, used the knowledge acquired to design the organizational structure, develop job descriptions, and identify appropriate work streams for election management.

In fulfilment of their constitutional duty, the participants who attended the MDEA program used the knowledge acquired in making recommendations for electoral reform to the legislature and responsible ministries. The recommendations were anchored on tested experience gathered through comparative analysis of best practices in other EMBs across Africa.

### **Commissioners Executive Course**

For the three Commissioners who attended the Commissioners Executive Course, they concurred that

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<sup>25</sup> ZEC Needs Assessment report, October 2014

<sup>26</sup> The ZEC Director of Human Resources and Chief Inspector were the first MDEA participants from Zimbabwe

the course was relevant and fueled “that inner fire power” to do election work. Two of the trained Commissioners lacked exposure to electoral policy and administration when they were appointed.

### **Post-MDEA Skills Transfer**

Following their training, the majority of participants became localized pools of advanced electoral knowledge within their own work streams or work stations through individual perfection of their own performance as well as sharing their acquired knowledge during routine meetings, workshops, and individual advice to workmates.

### **MDEA Course Challenges**

- The executive management of ZEC felt that MDEA only gives an opportunity for capacity enhancement to fewer people, which limits uniform adoption of best practices across the EMB. This training model prolongs the capacity building efforts since only a few individuals’ are trained resulting in EMBs taking longer to address their capacity needs.
- Participants appreciated the relevance of the course content, however they concurred that it was delivered in a relatively short space of time, which made the program tightly packed.
- Senior managers revealed that it was a challenge to balance MDEA Course assignments with their work expectations for the distance component of the course
- Participants agreed that, while the course enhanced their individual skills and appreciation of elections, “its model of targeting electoral personnel only while excluding policy makers or politicians is likely to weaken the potential influence for change that MDEA trainees might recommend”. In competitive authoritarian states like Zimbabwe, it is the politicians who determine the manner in which elections are to be held, hence excluding them from training might defeat the noble purpose of the program.

### **Sustainability**

EMB staff in Zimbabwe expressed that a more sustainable and cost-effective model must be adopted. Some suggested that the course must be upgraded to a degree level where the modules can be shared with other universities in participating countries who would then deliver the same under UNISA’s supervision. A ZEC senior official pointed out that “We also utilize the MDEA training curriculum for our internal EMB training programs targeted at election personnel”. This approach allows for a broad sharing of MDEA experiences at a much lower cost.

Others suggestions were that UNISA must consider fashioning the MDEA Course into a Train the Trainer model where those attending training at UNISA in South Africa will be tasked with cascading the same through in-country training in individual countries. Though the course content is deemed adequate, ZEC requested if the program could also include the topics: gender, strategic planning, risk assessment, and risk management in election administration.

### **MDEA Alumni**

In Zimbabwe, about half of the interviewed participants confirmed their awareness of the MDEA Alumni facility. Two of the participants attended the Alumni conference in Nigeria. Some of the participants were asked to contribute to the publication “Election Watch”, but their efforts were derailed by internal EMB procedures, which require them to submit their written articles to management for approval before they are shared with UNISA. Other MDEA participants confirmed having joined the MDEA Alumni Facebook page. MDEA beneficiaries in Zimbabwe expressed that the Alumni facility needs a significant improvement to make it a reliable facility for regular skills sharing amongst electoral personnel.

## **CONCLUSION**

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*“.....the reality is that ZEC attracts negative attitude and low levels of confidence within the electorate, not because of the EMBs` administrative failures, rather it emanates from the negative attitude targeted at the President of Zimbabwe.”*

*-Anonymous interviewee*

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ZEC is one EMB that has consistently sent trainees to the certificate course despite the on-going financial crisis in the country that preceded the course (2008). Whilst the EMB management is clearly motivated to raise their standards to comply with the regional norms and protocols, is constrained by the political system. An interviewee observed “MDEA fails to address policymakers, resulting in a situation where you have adequately skilled EMB personnel who are directed or coordinated by less knowledgeable politicians or commissioners.” This implies the need to broaden MDEA’s reach to all stakeholders. For in ZEC’s views, “Pan-Africanism of democracy must also be entrenched in the MDEA program, it has to be a blueprint to African democracy”.

The conduct of credible elections in Zimbabwe remains elusive for many reasons. The dominant one party system and persistent intolerance of opposition politics is one such factor and after the August 2013 election outcome, it is imperative that stakeholders working on electoral processes review their strategies and orient them to the current political dispensation. ZESN’s ‘Report on the 31 July 2013 Harmonized Elections’ identified some electoral processes meriting significant improvement and change altogether. That essential legislation, which would have gone a long way in improving the integrity and credibility of elections, was not passed prior to the elections indicates that there already is a need to step up advocacy work to change the institutional and legislative framework and build more capacity in the management of electoral processes before 2018. For the first time since independence, the military did not participate in elections in 2013 and only the police secured the election. A code of conduct was introduced for political parties and vote counting was done at each polling station. These transparent developments could partly explain the EMB’s enthusiastic participation in MDEA as it shows its technical competence in managing elections in a highly constricted political space.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations for MDEA included:

- Localize the MDEA course and expand it to target people in management, policy makers and politicians
- ZEC suggested that UNISA should convince member countries, possibly through SADC-ECF to support in-country training for all EMB personnel in interested countries. This means decentralizing MDEA to member countries, with UNISA Professors doing the quality control and co-facilitating with local election professionals and MDEA Alumni.
- For the program to be more sustainable, it must be upgraded to a degree level, and in such a way that the modules are shared with other universities in participating countries.
- The MDEA program should orient itself to being part of the orientation for EMB Commissioners across Africa. Most Commissioners have inadequate knowledge of election administration, which limits their performance in those positions.
- UNISA should consider offering the training course online or through distance learning and open it to all interested election professionals.
- MDEA should closely work with SADC-ECF in designing courses that respond to emerging EMB practical capacity requirements.

ZEC officials clearly value the program, but “request a balance between theory and practice”.



# CAPACITY BUILDING FOR AFRICAN EMBS- THE CASE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S ELECTORAL COMMISSION (IEC)

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*"We have to continue to support with teaching on the programme and other EMBS have to be on board."*

*-Chief Election Officer of the IEC.*

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## **Introduction**

The IEC has participated in MDEA as facilitators, experiential learning supporters, and trainees. Eight senior managers have all facilitated the practical components of the certificate course from 2011 until February 2016. This case study addresses all the facets of the IEC's involvement and emphasizes its facilitation role in course sessions and experiential learning. The information presented in this case study is based on interviews with 6 Senior IEC officials of the IEC, including the Chief Electoral Officer and the extensive literature available on South African elections. Several site visits were made to the IEC as all interviews were conducted either on a one on one basis or, at most 2, with two officials. All the senior managers at the IEC have been with the body for an average of 12 years. This continuity has stabilized the electoral management systems as institutional memory is retained and learning continually takes place due to the high value placed on a rigorous research and knowledge management system. Despite their being key actors in MDEA, none of the interviewed officials knew about the Alumni and its activities.

South Africa is a signatory to all regional election management protocols such as: the Southern African Development Community's Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections; the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum's Norms and Standards for Managing Elections and the African Union's Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (2007). The country was amongst the first to be peer reviewed by the African Peer Review Mechanism. The IEC has consistently worked to raise its standards in order to complying with these norms standards and protocols.

## **Historical background**

South Africa has overall managed to contain the diversity of the society as reflected in the Constitution. The country remains marred by high economic inequalities and is highly polarized. This is exacerbated by cleavages like race and a highly youthful population which all require transparent and democratic institutions that can manage this diversity. Managing South Africa's negotiated transition to democracy clearly required an inclusive electoral legal and institutional framework. The country's uses the Party List Proportional Representation (PR)<sup>27</sup> electoral system at the national and provincial levels. This was essential to achieve a representative electoral system that would ensure free and fair elections.<sup>28</sup> In this closed-list PR system, voters elect parties by voting for the entire list presented by each political party and parties then get allocated a proportion of seats in the National Assembly and provincial legislatures

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<sup>27</sup> Herzenburg-Schulz explains that the low threshold (of 0.25 percent) produces near perfect proportionality and ensures a highly representative outcome that can appease minority interests in the context of majority rule.

<sup>28</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa: Section 46 (1) (d).

according to the percentage of votes won during the elections. Use of the PR system is credited for South Africa's stable multi-party democracy where a dominant party is kept in line by a significant minority. Opposition parties contest elections freely and as in Botswana, the electoral dominance of the governing African National Congress (ANC) has been dropping. It initially increased in national elections from 62.7% in 1994 to 69.7% by 2004, and dropped to 65.9% in the 2009 elections, and 62.2% in 2014.<sup>29</sup>

### **Establishment of the IEC**

The IEC was initially set up with the mandate to manage the 1994 elections. It immediately evolved into an anchor of the new democratic state's political processes and has to date, managed the administration and management of five national and provincial elections and three municipal elections. The IEC is viewed as a role model by EMBs in the region and it is because of its electoral management successes that it entered into a MoU with UNISA to support capacity building for other EMBs that were requesting its support.

The IEC is autonomous and 'fairly insulated from undue influences by powerful political actors and, as such, has jealously guarded its independence....'.<sup>30</sup> Section 181 of the Constitution guarantees this independence. The Electoral Commission Act, 51 of 1996, stipulated the establishment of a permanent Electoral Commission, of whom one must be a judge and none of the Commissioners should have a high political profile. They have two term limits.<sup>31</sup> Appointment of the chairperson by the President is on the recommendation of a majority resolution by the National Assembly. A panel consisting of the Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court and representatives of the other Chapter 9 institutions nominates and interviews the Commissioners. The IEC controls its own funding, staff and technology.<sup>32</sup> All of South Africa's elections have received free and fair verdicts from observers. This is despite sporadic incidences of violence mostly in Kwa-Zulu Natal. However, the 2016 local government elections have seen a high increase in election related murders by potential candidates for the mayoral and council seats. The IEC, a 'Chapter 9' institution, ensures the accountability of government, and contributes to the formation of a society 'based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights'.<sup>33</sup> Recent court rulings on the IEC's on the need for a new voters' roll for the Tlokwe by-elections (May 2016), demonstrated the responsiveness of the institution as it complied with the ruling.

The IEC's autonomy has generally inspired the public to participate in elections. This is evidenced by the increase in youth voters. In the 1999 election, for example, only an estimated 43% of South Africans under the age of 35 voted. Thereafter, in 2004, this number increased to only 44.5. Leading up to the 2009 election, candidates took notice of the influential youth vote and created programs through social media outlets and web campaigns to bring their message to a broader audience and target the young voters. An example of this relates to the victorious ANC, which ran an efficient and energetic campaign that capitalized on the post-apartheid Born Free generation's vote. The ANC's Youth League, which was created in the 1940s and is dedicated to youth issues, utilized social media outlets to successfully communicate its message to young South Africans. To further encourage youth participation, the IEC created a number of progressive programs. For example, it established the National Youth Dialogue on Electoral Democracy, which provided South Africa's youth with a forum to voice their concerns and

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<sup>29</sup> See <http://www.idea.int/vt/countryview.cfm?id=246>

<sup>30</sup> Claude Kabemba, "Electoral Administration: Achievements and Continuing Challenges", Jessica Piombo and Lia Nijzink (eds.), *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 90.

<sup>31</sup> Electoral Commission Act, 51 of 1996, A7.

<sup>32</sup> Winrich Kuhne, *The Role of Elections in Emerging Democracies and Post-Conflict Countries: Key issues, Lessons Learned and Dilemmas*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Berlin: August 2010. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/07416.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Chapter 9, Constitution.

opinions to independent officials. This initiative resulted in the IEC adopting communication methods that appeal to young people on civic and voting engagements.

### Constitutional and legal framework

Schedule 2 in the 1993 Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 20 of 1993, outlines the general guidelines and principles of the electoral system. The Independent Electoral Commission Act, 150 of 1993 and the Electoral Act, 202 of 1993, regulated the management and administration of elections. The new 1996 Constitution for South Africa established the permanent Electoral Commission of South Africa in 1997.

From 1999, all elections that followed -2004, 2009 and 2014 were held under the 1996 Constitution and subsequent legislation.<sup>34</sup> As with Zimbabwe, electoral legislation developed in an incremental manner as demanded by the political environment. In January 1994, *Electoral Act, 202 of 1993* established the rules for national and provincial elections. The Act was subsequently amended six times to align with political developments and administrative needs starting with the Electoral Commission Act, 51 of 1996. The Electoral Act 73 of 1998 replaced this and expanded inclusivity in elections. The court order for residential address on the voters' roll that came in 2016 over the Tlokwe by-election had never been an issue before. The country has a Public Funding of Represented Political Parties Act, 103 of 1997, which ensures fairness in funding political parties but it has failed to implement legislation for the disclosure of party financing. In 2013 the Diaspora vote was allowed for the first time.

### The IEC's role

The IEC oversees all the national, provincial, and municipal elections in accordance with national legislation.

The tasks of the IEC are outlined in the Constitution (s. 190), are:

1. Manage elections of national, provincial, and municipal legislative bodies in accordance with national legislation. This includes all aspects related to elections: registration of voters; the voters' roll; the proclamation of election dates; election timetables; preparation for or postponement of elections; delineation of voting districts, voting stations and forms of voting material; special votes; the voting process; counting procedures and prohibited conduct; the appointment of voting and counting officers; the accreditation of observers; and the determination and declaration of final results
2. Ensure that those elections are free and fair; and
3. Declare the results of those elections within a period that must be prescribed by national legislation and that is as short as reasonably possible.

Aided by ICT, the IEC's operations are made easier as all electoral processes are web-based.<sup>35</sup> For instance, from 2008, the IEC has used hand-held programmable barcode scanners, 'Zip-Zips', for capturing voter registration information. This quickens the identification of registered voters on the roll during the voting day. The data becomes readily available for analyzing voter patterns after elections. This ICT usage extends to a web based Voting station finder and an election Results website. The IEC keeps abreast of all social media innovations to support its electoral processes.

South Africa' security sector stands out in the region for its non-interference and non-involvement in the conduct of elections. Election security and integrity in South Africa is preserved by the IEC's collaboration with the security agencies during elections as the latter simply ensure a peaceful and safe

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34 Lodge, "How the South African Electoral System was Negotiated", p. 72.

35Interview (telephonic/email) Mr Mlungisi Kelemebe and Melanie du Plessis, IEC, 29 October 2015.

polling environment. This is done through the Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure (JOINTS) where all related departments (including the Electoral Commission) are represented. The IEC is regularly updated on the country's security status and concerns through this system. All parties are mandated to sign a binding Code of Conduct under the Electoral Act of 1998 (Schedule 2), which aims to promote conditions conducive to free and fair elections. An Electoral Court, established by the Electoral Commission Act, No 51 of 1996 (ss. 18-20) is the 'final jurisdiction in respect of all electoral disputes and complaints about infringements of the Code of Conduct and its decisions are not subject to appeal or review

### **Stakeholder engagement**

The IEC has a streamlined organizational structure with three big divisions that are linked for effective election management. The outreach department in particular is constantly engaged with the voters and other stakeholders and this requires utilization of effective technology to cover the entire country. The IEC has built its capacity over the years partly due to its expansive networks in international bodies that support capacity building in election management and reliance on research to inform electoral processes. Some of the organizations it is affiliated to are:

- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) –South African government is a member country
- Commonwealth Electoral Network
- Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC (SADC-ECF),
- Association of African Election Authorities
- Association of European Electoral Officials
- Association of World Election Management Bodies (A-WEB)

In addition, the IEC engages with voters through its dedicated outreach programmer and the Party Liaison Committees that are represented at national, provincial, and municipal levels of government.

### **IEC'S CHALLENGES**

The IEC faces challenges that are rather different from most of the EMBs in Africa.

- The IEC is mandate with distributing public funds to political parties that have representation in provincial legislatures or the national legislature and it has faced criticisms over the unfairness of its allocation system from opposition parties. The IEC use an allocation system where 90% is allocated on the basis of the proportion of seats a party acquires in the legislatures and 10% is spread across all political parties.<sup>36</sup>
- Political parties' funding is not regulated in South Africa and the role of money in politics is increasingly becoming an issue.<sup>37</sup>
- The IEC is struggling to contain escalating costs by different service providers for their goods and services like ballot papers, ballot boxes, electronic equipment, and other stationery. This has begun to affect the costs of running elections.
- Dwindling trust- The IEC had always had high levels of trust in public opinion surveys but there is a steady decline in public confidence, due to scandals such as the Tlokwe municipality scandal

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<sup>36</sup> Public Funding of Represented Political Parties Act, 103 of 1997.

<sup>37</sup> Sokomani Andile, 2005. Money in Southern African Politics, African Security Review 14(4)

- and the leasing scandal of the IEC.<sup>38</sup>
- The increasing demands for the introduction of a mixed electoral system that includes elements of both constituency-based and proportional representation electoral systems.<sup>39</sup>

Despite these challenges, the IEC values MDEA:

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*“There is great appreciation of MDEA project. In South Africa, election management wasn’t well entrenched....there has been an evolution of the EMB since it was previously run by several departments in the country. There is overall improvement of management practices after attending the course. After this, (2016 local government elections) IEC will be sending a high level for this training in the same format as Botswana”.*

*-CEO of the IEC.*

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The Certificate course has, in the words of the CEO “made people come together to understand the context of their work or managing elections”. However, all the senior managers interviewed openly stated that it is ‘difficult to measure capacity changes in stuff who have been trained but there is better knowledge management in the Library at the IEC.’

### **THE IEC IN MDEA**

The IEC’s roles in MDEA are shared between the head office in Midrand and the outlying offices that are selected for the experiential exercise. These field visits are determined by electoral events of interest that coincide with the classes-e.g., an on-going by-election or logistical preparation for an election. The Provincial or District EMB officials almost always host these field visits after a short briefing to the class at the IEC’s head office. This hosting of trainees arrangement involves all levels of the IEC in peer learning exercises. Trainees from other EMBs applaud these visits and they refer to them as “the most beneficial component of the course” as reported by participants in an FGD in Botswana during the in-country training. The chance to directly observe a live outreach activity or a warehouse prepared for election material distribution proved to be very useful practical experience for the trainees. An IEC facilitator pointed out the value of these trips; “MDEA opens windows for the trainees and expands their views openly on South African experiences.”

To date, the IEC has trained 54 officials and most of these are from the provincial and district EMB offices. The IEC has massive infrastructure that is spread out across all the 9 provinces in the country. The body has continuous in-house capacity building as per task requirements. In the June 2016 class, there was only one official from South Africa and none in the July class, most likely due to the pressing 2016 August 3 local government elections.

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<sup>38</sup> The HSRC found that trust declined from 72% in 2009 to 63% in 2015. The Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) public opinion post election surveys shows a decline in positive trust ratings from 58% in 2004, to 53% in 2015 Benjamin Roberts, Jare Struwig, Steven Gordon, Yul Derek Davids, Jenna Lee Marco, 2014, *IEC Voter participation survey 2013/14: Key Findings*. Report prepared for the Electoral Commission of South Africa. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

<sup>39</sup> South African Catholic Bishops Conference, 2012, Electoral reform in South Africa, Briefing paper 285, [http://www.hss.de/fileadmin/suedafrika/downloads/BP\\_285\\_Electoral\\_Reform\\_in\\_South\\_Africa.pdf](http://www.hss.de/fileadmin/suedafrika/downloads/BP_285_Electoral_Reform_in_South_Africa.pdf)

## MDEA related challenges

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*“Far too much is expected in too little time- MDEA needs time to grow. Major changes yet to come.”*  
*-CEO of the IEC*

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As facilitators, IEC officials raised concerns that pointed to overall MDEA program management challenges. All IEC facilitators reported that “We face country election demands and we get too short notice to facilitate.” Some of the interviewees pointed out that they got “Very short notice to go to Botswana- and then there are always sudden changes to facilitation scheduling”. One reported, “I was only told 2 days before that I had to go to Lesotho and the course was to be divided between me and another facilitator (not a practitioner) it is difficult to work that way”. Another senior manager stated that the “Facilitators are the heart of the system. There is need for on-going encouragement and interaction of some sort as facilitators, there is a need for ample warning before a course”.

Communication challenges came to the fore and were raised by all interviewees with one stating “I only learnt for the first time in Nov 2015, since 2011 that there are course modules. Poor administration explains this lapse. We never saw the facilitators’ assessments by the students after UNISA markings so program management is weak, we need to know what the trainees think. We asked for feedback from UNISA in 2011 and only got it in 2015. The course content is just a heading –I have never seen the module”. The interviewees expressed that the ideal situation would be to “to connect what we all facilitating. There is a need to sit in other lectures, we don’t know how input of academics connects with our work - we never see the MME reports” (2 IEC facilitators). In support of these sentiments, an IEC official raised the question, “If the focus is on academic component, it is difficult for the practitioners as they tend to focus on the academic qualifications- but will this strengthen capacity in the region or generate an academic course?”

An area of interest for the IEC was the inclusion of a theme on EMB Infrastructure as a sub-topic within the logistics. This is an important area as it shows what is possible with the resources at the other EMBs’ disposal.

Despite all these problems, the IEC is clearly committed to being part of the regional capacity building efforts in MDEA. The CEO summed this up “The only problem is when we have elections, it poses a logistical challenge, but we are ready to back up this initiative.”

## CONCLUSION

South Africa’s experiences point to the need for an enabling legal and institutional framework for the other EMBs in the region. This is very pronounced for the IEC especially since the body’s autonomy is guaranteed by the Constitution, it has very good infrastructure, and moves in tandem with ICT developments. This supporting environment and the clear allocation of tasks in the EMB are features many EMBs can learn from. Still, the political landscape shifts all the time and the public continue to keep the IEC on its toes in being accountable. Though there are challenges, South Africa remains on the path towards the consolidation of democracy as it has professionally and impartially institutionalized some democratic practices such as elections.

## Recommendations

- Establish systematic communication channels with UNISA and pursue a partnership that is

mutually beneficial to both academics and EMB needs. The two should update the curriculum so that it is driven by EMBs and identify aptly election management qualified facilitators.

- MDEA should involve the experienced IEC facilitators in all aspects of the course- including the role of external examiners for the assignments and curriculum review. This could help in making the assignments more practical oriented.
- The IEC should discuss with UNISA on how to document the many African EMB experiences as seen through the eyes of the trainees. The IEC produces a lot of resources- research based material, and UNISA can learn from these practitioners, especially on preparing voter education materials.
- Decentralize the course to reach the rest of Africa quickly through distance learning.

# LESOTHO IEC'S CHALLENGES OF MANAGING ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN A CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

## INTRODUCTION

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*“Lesotho does not have adequate political and constitutional infrastructure to support a stable democracy needed to advance the welfare of its people and attain its long-term goals. The existing political architecture lacks the requisite legal instruments, practices and conventions required to deliver peaceful political transitions expected in any thriving democracy.”<sup>40</sup>*

*-Moeketsi Majoro 2016*

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This brief case study of Lesotho’s EMB is a part of the MDEA performance evaluation. Lesotho has consistently sent its officials to the MDEA courses and recently arranged an in-country training session. A desk study was undertaken to contextualize the overall EMB developments and challenges in election management in the country. The information presented in this case study was collected during in-depth telephonic interviews with senior EMB managers.

### **Brief Historical Context – Evolution of the Electoral Management Framework**

Plagued by a weak democracy-building culture since 1966, Lesotho has consistently experienced post-election conflicts most of the time, and experienced long episodes of one-party dominance and intermittent coups. These challenges have all contributed to the incessant fragility of electoral democracy in the country and political instability. The 8 June 2012 parliamentary elections yielded a Tripartite Coalition Government, which instilled hope of a stable democratic country that would end the era of one-party dominance. The country is one of those that have experienced the pendulum swings from authoritarianism to democracy that most African countries have endured. Lesotho has a long-standing history of post-election violence, with the exception of the 2002 and 2012 national elections.

#### **Democratic Experiences since Independence:**

1966-1970 Shift towards more Democracy  
1970-1986 Authoritarian -Restricted Democratic Practice  
1986-1993 Military Regime  
1993-1998 Democracy  
1998-2002 Emerging Democracy-single party dominance  
2002-2016 Troubled and contested Multiparty Democracy

Lesotho has made some attempts to improve the representativeness of its electoral system and adopted a mixed-member proportional (MMP) system in 1998. These reforms are clearly inadequate for the country, as they have been heavily contested since the 2007 elections. These problems point to the

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<sup>40</sup> Moeketsi Majoro, <http://lestimes.com>, How should Lesotho approach political and constitutional reforms, 24 March 2016

need for more inclusive electoral reforms for Lesotho. The main causes of the kingdom's tensions are attributed to its complex governance structures. The coalition government that emerged in May 2012, made up of the three dominant parties (the Basotho National Party (BNP), Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) and All Basotho Convention (ABC)), never became stable.

## Electoral System

As with all former British colonies, Lesotho inherited the British electoral system: the first-past-the-post system (FPTP), in 1960. The flaws in this system were exposed when the governing Lesotho Congress of Democracy (LCD) won 78 of the 79 contested seats but only 60% of the valid votes cast. In contrast, opposition parties, who had earned 40% of the vote, won only one seat (1.25%). The post-election violence after this resulted in the death of 75 people.

Following discussions amongst national stakeholders, Lesotho's constitution and electoral laws were thus amended to introduce a MMP system with 120 legislative seats (adding 40 more seats). Eighty of those seats are filled using FPTP and are tied to specific constituencies; the other 40 are filled using proportional representation (PR) in order to ensure that each party's number of legislative seats reflect its proportion of the national vote (as indicated by the PR ballot). These noble attempts to be more inclusive of the over or underrepresented political groups continue to face resistance.

An unforeseen problem with the Mixed Member Party system in the 2002 elections was the mushrooming of confusing party coalitions by the political parties. In the absence of a legal and constitutional framework to guide the system, politicians all sought to acquire many PR seats in order to dominate government. These coalitions caused a lot of angst before the 2007 elections triggering questions on the legality of these constantly shifting coalitions.

An example of this is shown in the box below.

### Coalition Chaos in Lesotho

- In late 2006, floor crossing in the national assembly reduced the LCD majority from 79 to 61 (of 120) seats. This low majority proved difficult to manage and led to the calling of elections in February 2007. Some people even represented two different parties in different aspects of the election. The four competing parties used different symbols and registered separately for the elections despite being in coalitions. The larger parties were angling for compensatory seats through the "back door" provided by the smaller parties, and the smaller parties were attempting to "piggyback" on the strength of the larger parties to gain access to the legislature for at least some of their candidates
- 26 May 2012 elections-no single political party emerged as an outright winner therefore both intra-party and inter-party conflict conspired to undermine peace and stability once again
- There was a massive defection or floor-crossing – the largest event was when more than 40 MPs from the then ruling Basotho Congress Party (BCP) joined the newly-formed Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD)
- PR seats prevented the ABC in 2012 and LDC in 2015 from attaining a ruling majority without coalitions with numerous small parties

## Legal and Institutional Framework Governing Elections

The electoral legal and institutional framework of Lesotho has its origins in the country's history of coups. As pointed out earlier on, the 1998 elections resulted in conflict and an army mutiny that

required regional intervention that was undertaken by Botswana and South Africa. SADC's recommendations led to the Interim Political Authority Act (IPA) of 1998 that established an authority to facilitate and promote a framework for free and fair elections. This IPA worked in conjunction with the country's legislative and executive structures. The ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) had major disagreements which were only resolved through external interventions. For instance, the Commonwealth negotiated an agreement that included changes to the voter registration and the electoral model; and on voter registration, the adoption of the use of indelible ink on fingerprints. Since the reforms, Lesotho has held three additional elections 2002, 2007 and 2012. In 2005, local government elections were held for the first time and they used the FPTP electoral system. The second local government elections were held in 2011.

The Legal framework for the elections in Lesotho is provided for in the Constitution of Lesotho, and the National Assembly Electoral Act 2011. The Constitution of Lesotho sets out the basic principles for the protection of citizens' freedom of movement, expression, assembly, and association. Section 20 specifically provides for citizens' rights to vote and/or to stand for periodic elections through a system of universal and equal suffrage. The primary legal instrument is the National Assembly Electoral Act (2011), which replaced the previous electoral act of 1992. The act, among other provisions, upholds the right of citizens to vote and stand for elections during periodic elections under a mixed member proportional system and allows the IEC to register political parties.

Prior to 1997 the Chief Electoral Officer, a government position within the Ministry of Law, administered elections in Lesotho. The IEC was then established in 1997 in accordance with amendment of the Constitution in 1993 and the National Assembly Elections Order of 1992. IEC has delivered four elections since its establishment in 1997: 1998, 2002, 2007 and 2012 and two local government elections in 2005 and 2011.

### **Evolution of the IEC**

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) is a constitutionally established institution where commissioners serve five-year terms on the advice of the Council of State. Section 66(1) of the constitution (amended 1997) provides for the establishment of an IEC. The IEC consists of three members appointed by the King on advice by the State Council. The Council of State requests all registered political parties to propose a list of not less than five names for consideration as commissioners. The IEC's purpose is to manage the overall conduct of elections freely and fairly. The IEC organizes the National Assembly Elections, Local Government Elections, and Referenda; delimits constituency boundaries; registers voters; and conducts voter education. The current IEC Chairperson is a former Chief Justice of Lesotho. A Director of Elections who oversees the implementation of the elections operation heads the Secretariat. The Secretariat has permanent staff distributed across all the country's ten districts. The IEC managed the first election in 2000.

The autonomy of the IEC is disputed amongst opposition parties. Although section 66c of the constitution states that the IEC shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority, the Constitution does not specifically address the independence of the IEC. The Minister of Law and Constitutional Affairs regulates any legislation that pertains to the IEC. The IEC is funded by and accountable to Parliament. The IEC has power to employ its staff on terms and conditions determined after consultation with the Public Service Commission. In addition, the IEC is empowered to take officers on secondment from the public service and has no power of control over such officers.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> SADC-ECF, <http://www.ecfsadc.org/index.php/iec-lesotho>

## EMB ELECTORAL CHALLENGES

The political system in Lesotho is characterized by the endless shifting of political alliances and the splitting up of political parties only to merge with other coalitions. These problems extend beyond the EMB's capacity and are rooted in the political system and the distribution of power. Blurry laws on how the coalition government is to work and the challenges inherent in floor crossing by elected politicians keep the terrain unstable. This goes against the consensus the MMP system was initially designed to promote. Some citizens therefore continue to challenge the legitimacy of the election results. The way the electoral system works in the country has triggered questions in the eyes of all groups of observers.

Key challenges for the EMB are as follows:<sup>42</sup>

### Key Challenges

- Splitting and splintering of political parties; violence both before and after polls; trust is low and consensus is non-existent on electoral system and IEC- even among coalition partners
- Constant maneuvering for position trumps governing for the good of the country.
- The IEC's current allocation of seats looks is unacceptable to some who view it as more of a parallel electoral system
- The many coalitions are not officially registered and at times the parties listed on the Constituency ballots are not the same as those on the party ballots
- The absence of a legal status of alliances and coalitions, particularly when it comes to the calculation of quotas.
- Concerns on the new legal status of the IEC concerning its institutional independence, financial autonomy, and clarity of roles and responsibilities of the Commissioners
- The IEC is not directly accountable to parliament, which creates an imbalance between independence and over-sight.
- IEC suffers from weak organizational capacity in administration, operational planning, and information technology, which apparently compromised IEC ability to deliver 'technically perfect elections'.

### Voter Engagement

With voter turnout as low as 50% for the 2007 elections, the IEC embarked on a drive to increase voter participation through civic education. In the last election in 2015, the IEC engaged five NGOs through a tendering process to complement the activities by its Voter Educators. The following five NGOs were part of the voter education process: the Federation of Women's Lawyers (FIDA)/ Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Lesotho National Federation of the Disabled (LNFOD), Transformation Resources Centre (TRC), and Campaign for Education Forum (CEF). Despite this effort, citizens remained unconvinced with the electoral system and these problems are connected to the constitution itself.

### Media Engagement

In preparation for the 2015 elections, the IEC made attempts to communicate extensively with all the stakeholders on scheduling the Elections' Timetable and all connected events. This was done mostly

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<sup>42</sup> <http://aceproject.org/today/feature-articles/the-mmp-electoral-system-faces-political-challenges-in-lesotho>

through the electronic and print media, radio, and television and newspaper advertisements, Short Message Systems. Interactive programs were also aired on radio and television as a way of disseminating information to the voters.

## **Election Security**

Again prior to the 2015 elections, a National Joint Operations Centre (NATJOC) to secure the integrity of the election was launched in Maseru in December 2014.<sup>43</sup> Its main purpose was to escort and guard the voting materials at the voting stations.<sup>44</sup> The Lesotho Defense Force (LDF), the National Security Services (NSS), and the Lesotho Mounted Police Services (LMPS) were all part of the joint command. It is not clear what role this joint command played since SADC deployed 475 police officers to provide election security.

## **EXPERIENCE WITH MDEA - FINDINGS**

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*“We were working in silos in EMBs, now we have the whole picture. MDEA has been very beneficial for us. The program has tremendously improved our EMB. It has instilled confidence in our officers-we see this in improved writing skills and greater participation. MDEA involves networking, that learning from each other we learn a lot”.*

*-Director of the IEC (Interview with Senior Management)*

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Lesotho has received support from different actors for its electoral reform initiatives. The UNDP's Lesotho Consensus and Electoral Reform Program, which started in 2012, complemented MDEA's capacity building efforts. Despite the many interventions, the IEC clearly comments MDEA for its staff's confidence building experience and application of new knowledge acquired through MDEA. With 350 permanent officials, the country currently has 49 trained officials with 13 of these being females.

## **Improvements in EMB**

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*“Administration has improved a lot and in meetings we have both support and operational staff involved.”*

*-Director of the IEC*

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A big advantage for the IEC is that MDEA is inclusive of the entire EMB staff component that has led to the breaking of barriers between operational and support staff. Since all officials qualify to attend the courses, Lesotho has found this very important for the development of a common understanding on election management in the IEC. Previously, finance staff did not attend operational planning meetings

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<sup>43</sup> Government of Lesotho

<sup>44</sup> Government of Lesotho, Report on the 2015 General Election, IEC Lesotho, <http://www.iec.org.ls/2016%20reports/REPORT%201.pdf>

but the Director reported that they are now always actively engaged and provide guidance on resource allocation for the elections. A noticeable improvement was in the financial staff, who are now more knowledgeable of the complexities of party financing. In the Director's words, "Due to this connective knowledge, finance is now able to link political parties electoral expenses to the party funding issues. They have particularly been able to argue against independent candidates advocating for party funding yet they are not organizations and cannot account for the money in the same way as parties". This has resulted in the IEC designing alternative-funding mechanisms for independents through e.g., advertisements in the radio and television slots during campaign.

A commissioner from the IEC acknowledged that:

- This course has continuously improved, hence it provides better value and increased benefits for the EMBs. The sub-Saharan Africa is experience relative political stability and improved transparency in electoral matters because of the intervention of these courses
- Most of the training needs objectives that we had identified as an EMB were achieved as a result of our staff participating in these courses. Participants from these courses show high commitment about their learning which they implement on their return to their work.
- This course has produced a significant number of graduates in my EMB who address our needs efficiently
- Our EMB had to re-design our operational procedures such as logistical distribution of voting material. This was due to the influence of those who had pad participated in this course
- The IEC's challenge is that due to inadequate funds and other resources, participants are unable to implement their action plans accordingly

### **A Shift to the In-Country Training Model**

In May 2016, Lesotho arranged a MDEA in-country training course where 28 of its officials were trained. To maintain the peer-learning element, four other trainees came from Botswana and another two from Kenya. Local facilitators were included in the training, which was fully paid for by the IEC of Lesotho. The senior management pointed out that this was clearly a preferred option as they can train many officers within a short time. However, the in-country course lacked the experiential component due to financial constraints.

With plans to enhance capacity rapidly, senior management sees this as the only option to have at least one third of the officials trained quickly. Though the team appreciates the UNISA-based courses, the pace of capacity building is rather slow for their needs as they have managed to get an average of 4 officials only trained each year since 2011. Successes of the first in-country training have encouraged the management to plan for another in-country session to be funded in the 2017 budget allocation.

### **MDEA Course Challenges**

Lesotho expresses the highest levels of satisfaction with MDEA in this evaluation. The main concerns for them are with the lack of criteria on who should attend the training course. The IEC has staff with very different qualifications. This, for them, means that it is important to train staff of the same level in different groups. Two issues are important for them: the standardization of MDEA trainees by either length of experience in the EMB or academic qualifications.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

Senior managers in the IEC are in favor of a sustainable model that focuses on training the trainers, though this is still to be implemented.

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*“There is no clear evidence of sustainability beyond this project because there are no participants who are given a Training of Trainers Course (ToT) so that this could be sustained beyond project time line”.*

*-IEC Commissioner*

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## **CONCLUSION**

Lesotho is clearly one of those countries struggling to manage its democratic transitions. The IEC capacity building work is important for building faith in the electoral process. There is a real need to reduce the many post electoral conflicts and to clearly define the roles of the security sector constitutionally and this is beyond the IEC's capacity.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

With a citizenry that questions most of the electoral processes and techniques, it is important to scale up civic education in the country with voter education as a component of it.

The IEC needs to initiate research in order to understand the needs and build consensus on electoral processes.

MDEA needs to define criteria so that essential and the right officials are sent for the training.

# MANAGING ELECTIONS IN A CONFLICT SENSITIVE MANNER- THE CASE OF KENYA'S INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

## INTRODUCTION

This is a brief case study on Kenya, which has been participating in the MDEA program. The information presented in this case study was collected through a desk study on election management in Kenya. The evaluation team could not secure an appointment to speak to the senior management. The Director indicated that he was still very new in the job and could not comment on MDEA, as he did not have enough information on the course. Efforts to get other officials to respond were fruitless. Kenya's EMB has been in turmoil since January 2016 when opposition to the perceived Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) impartiality grew stronger; "We cannot afford to go to the next elections with an electoral commission that is already being used by one political alliance or the other as an excuse to reject the outcome more than a year in advance".<sup>45</sup>

This case study does not have recommendations as the evaluation team did not get information from the IEBC on the MDEA experiences.

## Historical Background

Since May 2016, Kenyan opposition parties have continuously demonstrated against the IEBC. Management and administration was at the core of the disputed 2007 Kenya General elections and constituted the main trigger for the 2008 post-election violence.<sup>46</sup> From the resumption of plural politics in Kenya in 1991, all subsequent EMBs have been the cause of deep-seated mistrust for their perceived lack of political independence.<sup>47</sup> Despite the successful 2013 elections, Kenya remains haunted by the December 2007 elections, when electoral fraud triggered violence that killed about 1,100 people and internally displaced over 600,000 citizens. The 2009 Independent Review Committee (IREC) blamed the electoral crisis on the electoral legal and institutional framework; the structure, composition and management system of the then Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK); and its organization and conduct of the 2007 electoral operations. It pointed out the defects in the voter register, which has been updated from time to time since 1997. It also made extensive and detailed recommendations on correcting practices that were inconsistent with good practices in election organization. The IREC report highlighted a number of measures to address some of these shortcomings, and the ECK was advised to implement these measures to improve future elections. A large part of the problem is that Kenyan political parties have always mobilized private militias. These political warlords caused havoc in every election until the new constitution in 2013.

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<sup>45</sup> Daily Nation, Address root cause of violence or prepare for turmoil in 2017, 9 April 2016, <http://www.nation.co.ke/>

<sup>46</sup> Owuor, Felix Odhiambo (2013); Election Management and Democracy, in a presentation paper at Stanley Hotel, Nairobi

<sup>47</sup> Awya, Francis, Ang'ila (2015); Election management bodies in East Africa-a comparative study of the contribution of electoral commissions to the strengthening of democracy; Open Society Foundations, Johannesburg, South Africa

## Evolution of the IEBC

The Kenyan parliament voted in 2008 to replace the ECK with a new electoral management structure. Amendments to sections 41 and 41A of the former constitution established the Interim Independent Electoral Commission (IIEC) in May 2009. The IIEC consisted of a chairperson and eight commissioners who were nominated through a competitive process by a parliamentary select committee, approved by the National Assembly, and appointed by the president in consultation with the prime minister. The IIEC had a total of 12 months to discharge its mandate.<sup>48</sup> As per the constitutional amendment, the IIEC's tenure came to an end three months after the promulgation of the new constitution, which provided for a permanent electoral body to take on implement the reforms. Its former function of delimiting boundaries was transferred to the Interim Independent Boundaries Review Commission.

The functions of the IIEC were the following;

- reform the electoral processes and the management of elections in order to institutionalize free and fair elections;
- the establishment of an efficient and effective secretariat;
- the promotion of free and fair elections;
- the re-registration of voters and the creation of a new voter register; the efficient conduct and supervision of elections and referenda; the development of a modern system of collection, collation, transmission and tallying of electoral data; the facilitation of the observation, monitoring and evaluation of elections and referenda; the promotion of voter education and the culture of democracy; the settlement of minor electoral disputes during an election, as may be provided by law; and
- improve the performance of other electoral functions prescribed by law.

The IIEC succeeded in designing several electoral reforms; its most notable success was the management and organization of the constitutional referendum of 4 August 2010, which was commended and found to be transparent by all stakeholders.<sup>49</sup> The referendum ushered in a new constitution in 2010 that had an approval rating of 68 per cent of the votes.<sup>50</sup> Article 88 of the new constitution called for the establishment of the IEBC. The IEBC is subject to the constitution as an autonomous body and is not supposed to be under the control of any other person or authority. This institutional independence is also enforced by article 25(2) of the IEBC Act, which stipulates that every individual member and employee of the commission shall perform the functions and exercise the powers provided for in this act independently, and without direction or interference from any state officer, public officer, government organ, political party or candidate, or any other person or organization.

## Legal Framework Governing Elections in Kenya

The legal framework governing elections in the country dates back to 1991. The passage of the new constitution in August 2010 was a resounding landmark for Kenya's political development. It provided a framework for implementing a number of important institutional and legal reforms, many of which were non-existent and therefore were required under the new constitution, or were simply needed to ensure that other laws and acts in the relevant sectors were compliant with the new constitution.

The electoral sector was affected by the promulgation of the country's new constitution. The

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<sup>48</sup> Karume Shumbana (2014); Election management case studies-Kenya, ACE Electoral Practitioners Network

<sup>49</sup> *ibid*

<sup>50</sup> *ibid*

constitutional provisions relating to elections — Chapter 7, articles 81-92 — are considered progressive, and draw on best practices from the organization of democratic elections in other countries. Article 88 of the constitution defines the IEBC's functions and sets out the criteria for membership and the formula for appointing members. The constitution also stipulates the rights of all Kenyans to participate in elections and referenda (article 83) and includes provisions to promote the participation of traditionally excluded groups (e.g. women and people with disabilities) in the electoral process (article 81). The new constitution also defines several guiding principles for introducing regulations and administrative decisions on the electoral system. Article 81 sets out the guiding principles for the electoral system, which paved the way for replacing the FPTP system with a PR system. In 2013 the IEBC used parallel voter tabulation for the first time.

In addition to the constitution, a number of laws have also been enacted to govern elections in Kenya. These acts directly govern different aspects of elections and the electoral process. Stakeholders emphasize that conflicting requirements among the new legislative acts must be reconciled before Election Day. Prior to the new constitution coming into force, many laws governing elections in Kenya were scattered among various acts, which presented a huge challenge to those tasked with implementing these laws. Several laws were revised and consolidated in 2011, including three key pieces of legislation: the IEBC Act, the Political Parties Act, and the Elections Act.

The IEBC Act provides a comprehensive mechanism and framework for the appointment, effective operation, and management of the commission. Part II of the act contains provisions on the administration of the commission, including its internal structures, functions, and the appointment and terms of service of its members and staff. The code of conduct, which applies to elections and referenda, is a new development in the Kenyan electoral environment. It is a fairly comprehensive code that serves to strengthen the professionalism of IEBC employees, as well as create obligations for political parties and referendum committee officials and candidates to adhere to the values and principles of the constitution.

### **IEBC Electoral Capacity Challenges**

In its Strategic Plan covering the period 2015-2020, the IEBC noted amongst its strengths that it has “qualified and experienced staff” while at the same time acknowledging that the EMB has “low capacity in risk management”.<sup>51</sup> The IEBC under section 3.45 on staff capacity admitted that; “there will be need to continuously improve capacities of staff in relevant skill areas. While the commission has a cadre of staff experienced in election administration, there are skill gaps that must be addressed. Some critical are skills in project management, procurement, financial management and risk management...”<sup>52</sup>

According to Alihodzic and Asplund (2012), the IEBC has been strengthening its partnerships with peer organizations that specialize in electoral assistance to build its capacity and skills on emerging electoral practices like biometric voter registration, electoral risk management, and electoral justice.

### **Recent Conflicts over the IEBC**

On 25 April 2016, over 500 opposition supporters marched to the IEBC's offices in Nairobi. They were expressing lack of confidence in the organization after it dismissed complaints of voting irregularities after the 2013 election. The IEBC has been battling low public ratings since the 2013 General Election with polls indicating that confidence had plummeted to 20 per cent as the opposition Coalition for

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<sup>51</sup> Independent Electoral Commission (2015) Strategic Plan 2015-2020, Section 3.29, page 27

<sup>52</sup> Independent Electoral Commission (2015) Strategic Plan 2015-2020, Section 3.45, page 35

Reforms and Democracy (CORD) increased its calls for the overhaul of the entire commission. Kenya's opposition has called for the country's electoral commission to be disbanded before the 2017 presidential vote. Their argument is that the polls will not be free and fair with the current election commission in office and the opposition wants at least half the board to be replaced. The opposition and civil society have teamed up to push for electoral reforms system through a referendum.

#### **Issues Behind Recent Violent Protests Against the IEBC**

- Corruption continues to plague Kenya's public institutions
- A public petition accuses the commissioners of not meeting the standards of Chapter Six of the constitution on Leadership and Integrity.
- The petition argues that the problems of the IEBC in 2013 remain unaddressed and will lead to the bungling of the 2017 elections.
- Many Kenyans have lost faith in the IEBC leadership and do not believe that they can deliver a credible election in 2017.
- The IEBC chairman Isaak Hassan was adversely mentioned in the tender for the printing of ballot papers to Smith & Ouzman. Two British citizens were jailed for giving "chicken" to Kenyan officials while Isaak was chairman of the Interim Independent Electoral Commission.
- A Public Accounts committee Report, found 3 Commissioners of guilty of unlawfully putting pressure on the commission to award a tender to an unsuccessful bidder
- The Chief Executive Officer of the Commission was found guilty of irregularly paying over 256 million shillings to a supplier without a contract.

There is still not enough trust in the IEBC as expressed by a political party member of member Coalition for Reform and Democracy "With IEBC, we see the elections will not be credible. The results will be doctored and all that, yes. They will favor the current government."<sup>53</sup> The Commissioners' being implicated in a major corruption scandal fuels the rising mistrust in the current senior IEBC levels who have refused to resign from their posts. Opposition politicians believe the IEBC favors the incumbent president Uhuru Kenyatta. CORD is demanding that the IEBC be reconstituted and the new commission to have proportional representation of parliamentary political parties. The errors in the administration of advanced voter registration and difficulties surrounding vote tabulation and transmission in the last election continue to haunt the country.

#### **EXPERIENCE WITH MDEA - FINDINGS**

Kenya has trained 30 officials in the MDEA Certificate Course since 2012. Of these, 28 were operational staffers and two were male commissioners. Two Kenyan officials were part of the Botswana in-country training in February 2016. These officials explained how they had room to implement some of the new MDEA knowledge in managing their district offices. Changes such as keeping their election logistics stock ready for an election and conducting research in their respective areas did not require supervisor authorization. They also pointed out that the IEBC had now shifted to a new fair and systematic way of identifying who should attend the training. Through the use of a scheduled calendar, all officials have a chance of attending the course and the calendar rotates around all the IEBC's offices.

The IEBC had also requested UNISA-IARS to conduct an in-country training session in the country but this was not possible due to the schedule clash with the Lesotho request.

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<sup>53</sup> <http://www.voanews.com/>

## **CONCLUSION**

The IEBC challenges in Kenya demonstrate how corruption continues to affect public institutions. The loss of confidence in the IEBC has not been addressed by the new constitution, which was viewed as an essential tool to manage the diversity and cleavages in the country. Still, unchecked greed and inaction on political excesses and abuse of office continue to affect trust and democracy building. This calls for a more comprehensive inculcation of democratic values and ethical behavior within public institutions.

# ANNEX V: RESOURCE DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Documents Received and Reviewed	Documents Not Received
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed Grant between USAID and UNISA</li> <li>• Evaluation Forms from Certificate Training Program</li> <li>• Alumni Concept Note</li> <li>• Curriculum of Certificate Training Program</li> <li>• Trainee Grades</li> <li>• Participant Database with Contact Details</li> <li>• Facilitator Contact Details</li> <li>• Mentor Database and Contact Details</li> <li>• Post-Training Reports</li> <li>• Alumni Report</li> <li>• Research Journal Materials</li> <li>• Original Proposal</li> <li>• MOU between UNISA and IEC</li> <li>• End of course Performance assessments</li> <li>• Requests for In-Country Trainings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· I from Botswana (email)</li> <li>· I from Zambia (letter)</li> <li>· I from Lesotho (email)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• MM&amp;E Reports (9 out of 18 recorded visits)</li> <li>• Post In-Country Training Reports</li> <li>• Quarterly Performance Reports for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· June-October 2011</li> <li>· November 2011-January 2012</li> <li>· February-June 2012</li> <li>· July-September 2012</li> <li>· October-December 2012</li> <li>· January-March 2013</li> <li>· April-June 2013</li> <li>· July-September 2013</li> <li>· October-December 2013</li> <li>· January-March 2014</li> <li>· April-June 2014</li> <li>· July-September 2014</li> <li>· October-December 2014</li> <li>· January-March 2015</li> <li>· April-June 2015</li> <li>· July-September 2015</li> <li>· October-December 2015</li> </ul> </li> <li>• News Items and Publications</li> <li>• Individual Facilitator Presentations for Training Sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant Amendment (due to be signed in 2016)</li> <li>• MDEA Admin Staff costs paid for by USAID</li> <li>• MDEA 2012 conference report</li> <li>• Request for In-Country Training – Botswana 2015</li> </ul>



# ANNEX VI: ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONTACTED

## FACILITATORS INTERVIEWED

Name	Organization	Contact
<b>Ms. Hilda Modisane</b>	SADC-Elections Commission Forum	hmodisane@ecfsadc.org
<b>Mr. Mosotho Moepya</b>	IEC-South Africa (IEC-SA)	MashakeniP@elections.org.za 012 622 5461
<b>Stuart Murphy</b>	IEC-SA	murphys@elections.org.za 012 622 5936
<b>Ms. Ester de Wet</b>	IEC-SA	dewete@elections.org.za 012 622 5574
<b>Ms. Litlhare Rabele</b>	Swedish Embassy	dirabele@yahoo.co.uk 083 881 9095
<b>Prof Maphunye, Kealeboga</b>	Wiphold Brigalia Bam Chair in Electoral Democracy, Department of Political Sciences, UNISA	maphukj@unisa.ac.za 012 429 4933 /083 703 3298
<b>Dr Andreas (Dries) Velthuisen</b>	Institute for Dispute Resolution in Africa (IDRA), College of Law UNISA	velthagl@unisa.ac.za 0834736478/012 484 1103
<b>Dr Zondi (Penelope-PA)</b>	Institute for Global Dialogue (UNISA)	zondi@igd.org.za 012 337 6082 082 431 0407
<b>Prof Ester Kibuka-Sebitotsi</b>	Institute for African Renaissance Studies (IAR-UNISA)	consortiumafrica@yahoo.com 012 320 3180
<b>Mr. Granville Abrahams</b>	IEC-SA	lubbeg@elections.org.za abrahamsg@elections.org.za
<b>Ms. Shameme Manjoo</b>	IEC-SA	manjoos@election.org.za 012 622 5700
<b>Simon Boyle</b>	IEC-SA	Makelenia@elections.org.za 012 622 5978
<b>Dr. David Sebudubudu</b>	Faculty of Social Sciences University of Botswana	sebudubu@mopipi.ub.bw +2673552743
<b>Advocate Mantula / Ipeleng</b>	IDRA, UNISA	mantusg@unisa.ac.za 012 484 1104 / 084 781 5587
<b>Dr Ken Nyaundi</b>	Interim Independent Electoral Commission, Nairobi, Kenya	ken.nyaundi@gmail.com +254 202 465950/5977 / +254722 732160
<b>*UNISA-IAR Staff Focus Group Discussion</b>	IAR, UNISA	

## ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES INTERVIEWED

Country	Title of Body	Contact(s)
<b>Botswana</b>	Independent Electoral Commission	Mrs. Mabathabile, Acting Chief Election Officer +267 3612400 <a href="mailto:mabathabile@gov.bw">mabathabile@gov.bw</a>  Former Commissioner Sayed (former Deputy Secretary IEC-Botswana)  Former Commissioner Advocate Omphemetse Motumise (Former IEC Commissioner Botswana)
<b>Democratic Republic of the Congo</b>	Commission Electorale Nationale Independante (CENI)-CEO	Ronsard Malonda, Chief Election Officer +243 81 445 58 55 <a href="mailto:ronsardmalo@gmail.com">ronsardmalo@gmail.com</a>
<b>Mozambique</b>	Comissão Nacional de Eleições (CNE)	Sergio Duarte, Director +258 21357020 +258 824974940 <a href="mailto:Duartemoz@yahoo.com.br">Duartemoz@yahoo.com.br</a> <a href="mailto:CNE06@yahoo.com.br">CNE06@yahoo.com.br</a>
<b>Namibia</b>	Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) – Director of Elections	Prof Paul J. Isaak, Director +264 811441904 <a href="mailto:pisaak@ecn.na">pisaak@ecn.na</a>
<b>South Africa</b>	Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	Mr. M. Mosotho, Chief Election Officer <a href="mailto:MoepyaM@elections.org.za">MoepyaM@elections.org.za</a>
<b>Zanzibar</b>	Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC)	Mr. Salum Ali, Director +255 777471800 <a href="mailto:smassego@gmail.com">smassego@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:salumassego@gmail.com">salumassego@gmail.com</a>
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission	Mrs. Constance Chigwamba, Chief Elections Officer <a href="mailto:cchigwamba@hotmail.com">cchigwamba@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Mauritius</b>	Electoral Supervisory Commission	Mr. Oograh, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer Mr. Beegoo, Electoral Officer Mrs. Seewoo, Electoral Officer <a href="mailto:elec@govmu.org">elec@govmu.org</a>
<b>Ethiopia</b>	National Election Board of Ethiopia	Merga Bekana, Director <a href="mailto:Merga.bekana@yahoo.com">Merga.bekana@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Malawi</b>	Electoral Commission	Samuel Sitolo, Logistics Officer <a href="mailto:samsitolo@gmail.com">samsitolo@gmail.com</a>

<b>Gambia</b>	Independent Electoral Commission	Alieu Momarr Njai, IEC Chairman Samboujang Njie, Chief Election Officer <a href="mailto:admin@iec.gm">admin@iec.gm</a>
<b>Angola</b>	Chief of the Office of the President of the National Electoral Commission	Feliciano Ndala Northenho Chief of Office of the President of the CNE
<b>Lesotho</b>	Independent Election Commission	Mphasa Mokhochane, Director, Independent Election Commission, <a href="mailto:mokhochane@iec.org.ls">mokhochane@iec.org.ls</a> Dr. Letholetseng Ntsike, IEC Commissioner, <a href="mailto:ntsike@iec.org.ls">ntsike@iec.org.ls</a>

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# ANNEX VIII: DATA COLLECTION LIMITATIONS

## AVAILABILITY AND POOR USE OF ROUTINE DATA

The MDEA program is lacking strong administrative systems (as described later in this report) thus challenging the Evaluation Team's ability to access routine data. Data are not kept in consistent places resulting in inconsistent and sometimes contradictory data. For example, ascertaining the actual numbers of those who signed up as voluntary members has been difficult since UNISA considers all trained officials as Alumni. The online platform for the Alumni does not provide information on membership size. Numbers of participants and past trainees (and their corresponding information, e.g. gender, country, etc.) were difficult to ascertain.<sup>1</sup> For example, when observing certain trainings, the evaluation team counted a different number of participants than documented later.

Though raw data exists, UNISA has never assembled nor analyzed students' end-of-course performance marks or their course facilitation evaluations. Additionally, no feedback is given to attendees on their marks. We could therefore only make limited use of the data. The evaluation team itself assembled and analyzed the course facilitation evaluations, and insights into the trainees' performance and facilitators' assessments were acquired through observation of the classes and a review of randomly selected assignments provided by UNISA (2 portfolios and 3 assignments from October 2012, 3 portfolios and 2 assignments from October 2013, and 3 portfolios and 3 assignments from October 2015).

There were limitations in gathering feedback from the broad representation of the participants trained in the MDEA program; 25 of the 327 Certificate trainees could not be accessed due to non-functional email addresses. This was also probably due to the officials' current work constraints and poor communication across the represented countries (i.e., 28 African countries). Many of the Commissioners (55 attended the executive course) serve 5-6 year terms, which had ended by the time fieldwork started. With the facilitators', a sometimes very fluid group due to their availability, 14 of the 25 listed were interviewed. Some of them were not pursued as they had only conducted one course session since 2011. Additionally, due to both financial and time constraints, the team was unable to interview a large group of community members of electoral bases in both South Africa and Botswana which would have provided a broader perspective of the work of the EMBs.

## COMMUNICATION

Accessing the EMBs was made difficult by the fact that UNISA had not made them aware of the evaluation and they therefore needed time to prepare for the interviews. Still, for some (Gambia, Ethiopia, and Zanzibar), connectivity either by telephone or skype was a challenge and this resulted in a few anomalies: Zanzibar resorted to responding to the questionnaire in writing after many cut offs during conversation; Ethiopia decided that it was best to respond in writing as they faced voice

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<sup>1</sup> Verifying the figures of trainees was quite difficult as inconsistencies were detected in reporting. For instance, the UNISA trainee information sheet of July 2015 showed that they had trained 260 EMB officials. The Alumni report presented in May 2014 showed that they had trained 224 (a number that had gone down 36).

communication challenges.

A major stumbling block was the problem in organizing trainee focus group discussions at UNISA after the field trip in SA (April 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> and the second week of May, 2016). The timeframe simply did not allow for time to meet with the trainees prior to their departure.

## **SELF- CENSORSHIP**

It was very clear that EMB officials exercised self-censorship during the KII interviews and this is not surprising. Many of the EMBs are heavily monitored and controlled by the Executive in different countries.

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*"I cannot speak on my country but can answer questions on MDEA only."*  
-EMB Director

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Many more officials also indicated during an FGD that they could not say everything as there were 'eyes and ears everywhere' and they feared being victimized for expressing themselves freely. This is also a reflection of the fact that many EMBs operate in this culture of fear.

Due to censorship practices in most EMBs, respondents were hesitant to speak honestly about their EMBs, we relied mostly on triangulation to validate the data.

## **PERCEPTIONS**

One limitation to this evaluation is that it measured perceptions and behaviors of participants, which are inherently difficult to quantify. To address this, the team designed survey questions using a Likert scale (with responses based on specific statements and answers according to agreement or disagreement with the statements) and posed interview questions that elicited honest and insightful reflection of the participants. Three facilitators and the coordinator of the MDEA implementing team reviewed these survey questions and gave feedback.

Due to the lack of strong baseline data, we utilized specific retrospective questions to assess knowledge and skills learned in the training since its implementation in 2011. In retrospective analysis, we asked participants to "reflect" or "think back" on their state of knowledge of elections both before and after the training.

## **THE KIRKPATRICK MODEL**

The evaluation team used the Kirkpatrick Model (four levels of evaluating training programs) to evaluate the MDEA program. However, some evaluators criticize the model as it does not take into account "cognizance of primary intervening variables such as – motivation to learn; trainability; job attitudes." (Holton EF).

# ANNEX X: SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

Understanding Sustainability, adapted from <https://sustaintool.org>

The Sustainability Framework identifies a small set of organizational and contextual domains that can help build the capacity for maintaining a program. Capacity for sustainability is defined as the ability to maintain programming and its benefits over time.

The eight key domains that can influence a program's capacity for sustainability are described below:



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT

**We define Environmental Support as:**

having a supportive internal and external climate for your program.

**Why does Environmental Support matter?**

No matter the level at which your program operates, the overall economic and political climate will affect your ability to get things done. State-level programs are significantly influenced by the governor, appointed agency leaders, the structure and traditions of public agencies, and the legislature.

Community-level programs are more influenced by local councils and boards. Programs are also influenced by internal organizational politics and leadership.

You can't necessarily handpick who is in the Director's chair or in political office, but they can have a big impact on your program. Whether they support your cause or support your opposition, decision makers deserve your attention. Work to get people of influence on your side, both within and outside of your organization. Often these decision makers control the money, and if you want some for your program, you will need them to know and like your program. In addition, champions can get policies passed that benefit your target population and help achieve your program goals.



## FUNDING STABILITY

**We define Funding Stability as:**

Establishing a consistent financial base for your program.

**Why does Funding Stability matter?**

Planning for the sustainability of funding should be a strategic process that addresses the long-term needs of your program and adjusts to changing trends in economic and political cycles. Having a defined plan with an adaptive timeframe that maintains critical infrastructure is essential.

Funding highs and lows put stress on programs and make it difficult to provide consistent quality services. Valuable staff may leave or have to be laid off if funding shortfalls are anticipated. Meanwhile, programs that rely on a single funding source are more vulnerable to funding cuts. For all these reasons, cultivating a stable and diverse funding base is essential for ongoing sustainability.



## PARTNERSHIPS

**We define Partnerships as:**

Cultivating connections between your program and its stakeholders.

**Why do Partnerships matter?**

Partners play an important role in sustainability in several ways:

partners can be connectors to greater resources or expertise;

partners can take over providing services if your program has to cut back; or

partners can advocate on behalf of your cause.

Partners can also help rally the community around your program and its goals. They can range from business leaders and media representatives to organizations addressing similar issues and community members. When your program is threatened either politically or financially, your partners can be some of your greatest champions. Building awareness and capacity for sustainability requires a strategic approach and partnerships across sectors, including alliances between private and public organizations.



## **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY**

**We define Organizational Capacity as:**

Having the internal support and resources needed to effectively manage your program.

**Why does Organizational Capacity matter?**

Organizational capacity encompasses a wide range of capabilities, knowledge, and resources. For example, having enough staff and strong leadership can make a big difference in accomplishing your program goals. Cultivating and strengthening your program's internal support can also increase your program's likelihood of long-term success.



## **CAPACITY BUILDING**

**We define Capacity Building as:**

Having intentional actions and initiatives that support people in improving their knowledge, behaviors, skills, and techniques.

**Why does Organizational Capacity matter?**

It is through building capacity of the program organization staff that the organizational capacity will increase. This increases the program's likelihood of long-term success.



## **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

**We define Program Evaluation as:**

Assessing your program to inform planning and document results.

**Why does Program Evaluation matter?**

Evaluating your program on an ongoing basis builds sustainability capacity in two key ways.

First, evaluation helps keep your program on track with its goals and outcomes. If evaluation data shows that an activity or strategy isn't working, you can correct your program's course to become more effective. Your evaluation or performance improvement measures can also influence strategic planning.

Second, collecting data about your program's successes and impact is a powerful tool for gaining support and funding. If your evaluation data shows that your program is making an important (or irreplaceable) impact, you can make a strong case for why your program needs to continue. Even in times of decreased funding, evaluation and monitoring data are key for the pursuit of new funding sources.



## **PROGRAM ADAPTATION**

**We define Program Adaptation as:**

Taking actions that adapt your program to ensure its ongoing effectiveness.

**Why does Program Adaptation matter?**

Circumstances change and sometimes your program needs to also. The goal is not necessarily to sustain all of a program's components over time, but rather to sustain the most effective components and their benefits to your target group. This requires flexibility, adaptation to changing conditions, and

mechanisms for quality improvement within your program. By using your evaluation data and the most current evidence-base, you can ensure that your program effectively uses resources and continues having an impact. As you adapt your program, make sure to keep up-to-date on best practices.



## COMMUNICATIONS

**We define Communications as:**

Strategic communication with stakeholders and the public about your program.

**Why do Communications matter?**

People need to know what your program does and why it's important. Communicating externally about your program's effectiveness helps the program gain greater visibility and builds support from stakeholders. Internally, evidence that a program works builds staff buy-in and support from organizational leaders. The more people know and care about your program and mission, the more likely they are to support your efforts to continue providing services in the long term.



## STRATEGIC PLANNING

**We define Strategic Planning as:**

Using processes that guide your program's directions, goals, and strategies.

**Why does Strategic Planning matter?**

Strategic planning is the glue that holds sustainability efforts together. Without a strategic direction and long-term goals, programs find themselves only reacting to day-to-day demands. Strategic planning combines elements of all of the sustainability domains into an outcome-oriented plan. Planning also ensures that the program is well aligned with the larger external and organizational environment.



## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

**We define Environmental Support as:**

Using processes that ensure that program objectives are met.

**Why does Environmental Support matter?**

Program management is important because it can support the achievement of the program and organizational goals, as well as give greater assurance to stakeholders that resources are managed effectively.

# **ANNEX XI: FINAL EVALUATION PRESENTATION**



## PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Evaluation Purpose and Key Questions
- Methodology
- Overview of MDEA Program
- Evaluation Findings
- MDEA Sustainability

# — EVALUATION PURPOSE AND KEY QUESTIONS



The **Purpose** of this Performance Evaluation was to:

- ascertain the **effectiveness** of the MDEA Certificate Training Program in addressing present electoral management challenges in the region
- identify areas where the program **met its stated goals** and where it faced **challenges**

## KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What have been the main **successes and challenges** during the implementation of the activity?
2. To what extent does the UNISA Certificate Training Program address the **election management challenges** present in the Sub-Saharan Africa region?
3. To what extent has the UNISA Certificate Training Program translated into **improved capacity** of Electoral Management Boards (EMBs) throughout Sub-Saharan Africa to manage elections more effectively?
4. What evidence exists linking the UNISA Certificate Training Program to **operational changes/ improvements** in EMB procedures and practices?
5. Is there evidence that project interventions will be **sustainable** beyond the project lifetime?

# METHODOLOGY



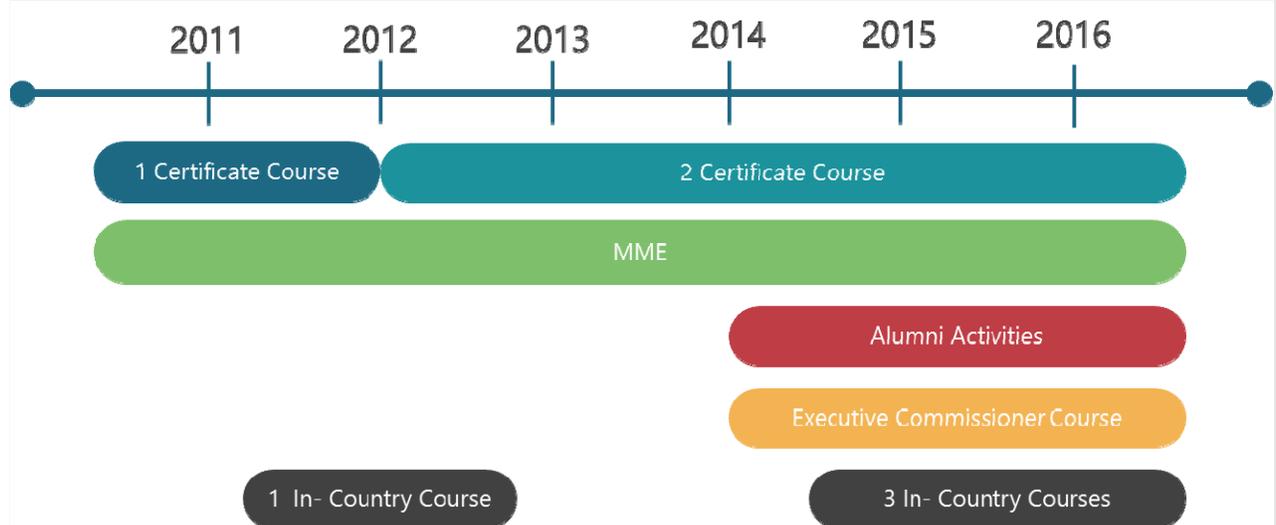
## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

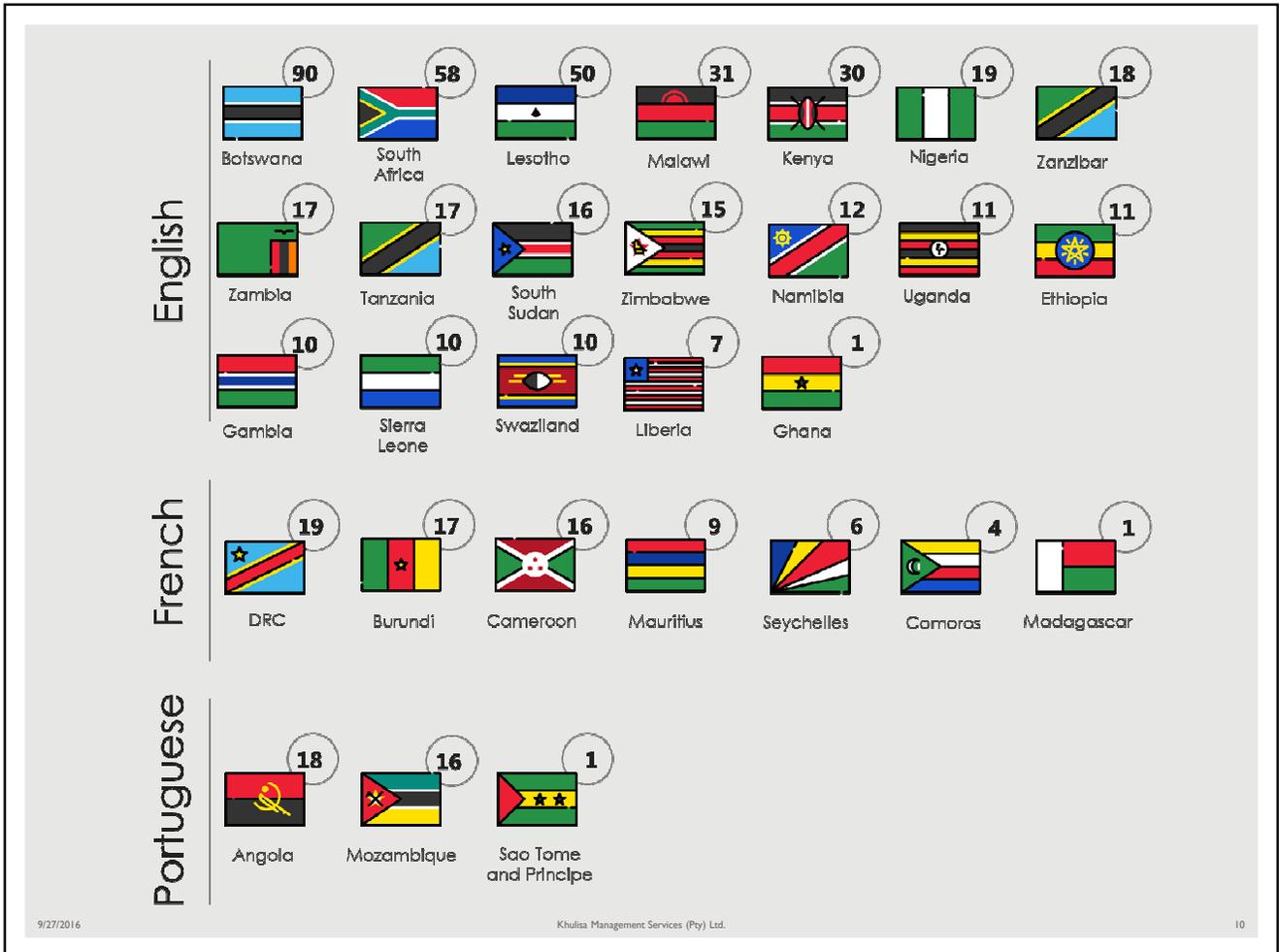
- **Document and Data Review**
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**
  - Botswana In-country Trainees
  - UNISA-IARS Staff
  - EMBs (DRC, Malawi, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe)
  - UNISA July Trainees
- **Site Visits/ Training Observations**
  - Botswana
  - South Africa
  - Zimbabwe
- **Surveys**
  - Past Participants (148/323)
  - Current Participants (40/110)
- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**
  - Trained participants (in Zimbabwe/Alumni)
  - EMB Commissioners and EMB Secretariats' Senior Managers
  - USAID Technical Staff
  - UNISA-IARS Staff
  - MDEA Course Facilitators
  - SADC-ECF
- **Case Studies**
  - South Africa
  - Botswana
  - Lesotho
  - Kenya
  - Zimbabwe

# — OVERVIEW OF MDEA PROGRAM



## MDEA Activity Timeline





9/27/2016

Khulisa Management Services (Pty) Ltd.

10

— EVALUATION FINDINGS:

What have been the main successes and challenges during the implementation of the activity?



## PROGRAM SUCCESSES



Comprehensive Curriculum



537 Trained Officials



87% Trainee Satisfaction



Extensive Peer Learning and Networking



Managed Diversity (Region, Language, Gender)

## PERFORMANCE AGAINST USAID TARGETS

Certificate Training Course

Year	Yearly Total	Yearly Target	Performance (Total/Target)
2011	24	24	100%
2012	67	35	191%
2013	70	70	100%
2014	67	70	96%
2015	99	70	191%
2016	155	90	172%
<b>Total</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>134%</b>

Commissioner Course

Year	Yearly Total	Yearly Target	Performance (Total/Target)
2011	0	9	0%
2012	0	15	0%
2013	0	15	0%
2014	28	15	187%
2015	27	15	180%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>80%</b>

## PROGRAM CHALLENGES



Weak Overall Program Management



Imbalance between Theoretical and Practical Components



Lack of Curriculum Updates



Inadequate Preparation



Lack of Participant Feedback Loop



Escalating Training Costs



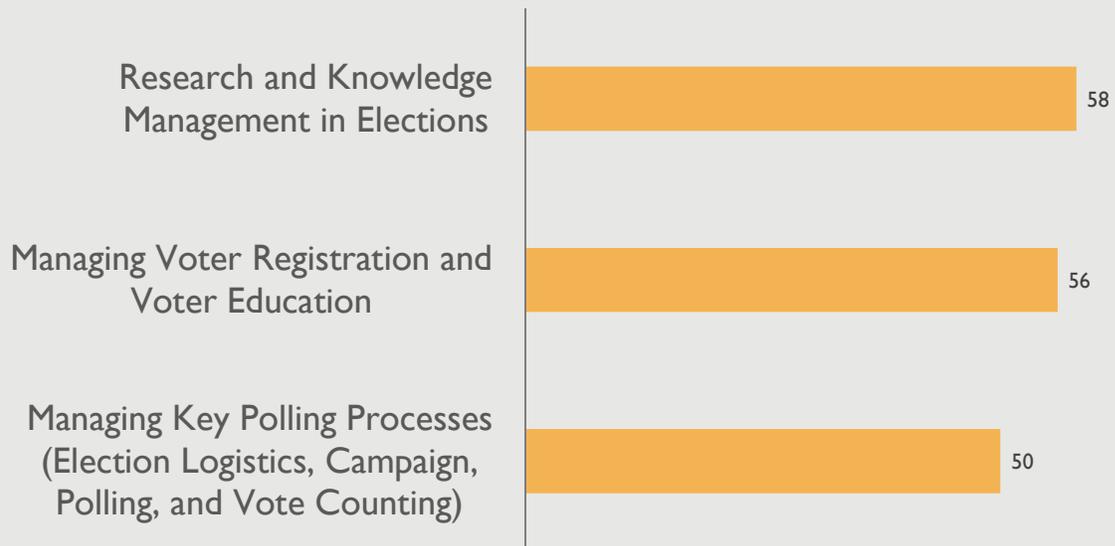
Difficulty Managing Expansion (Alumni)

— EVALUATION FINDINGS:

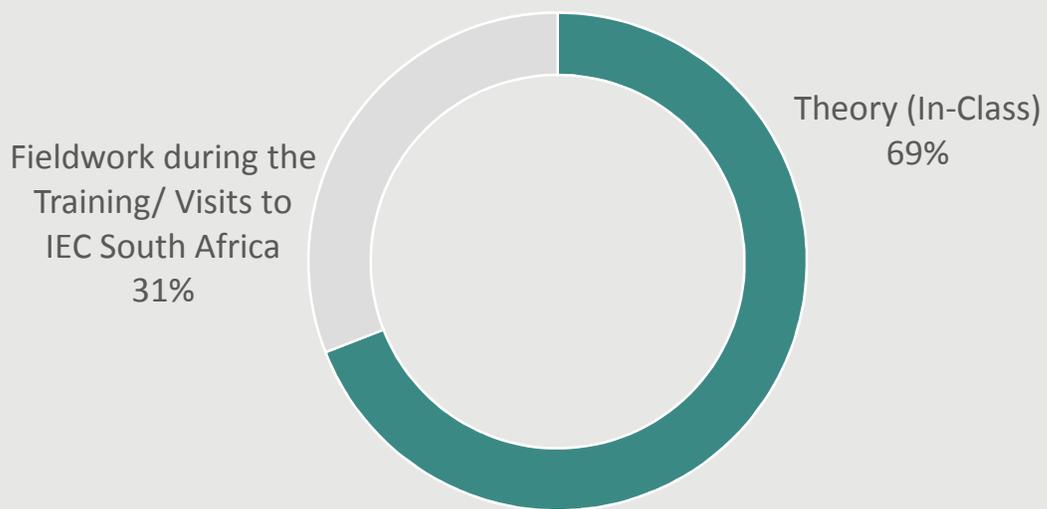
To what extent does the UNISA certificate training program address the election management challenges present in the Sub-Saharan Africa region?



## TOP THREE TOPICS LEARNED RELEVANT TO WORK (MULTIPLE RESPONSES)



## TRAINING COMPONENTS SATISFACTION

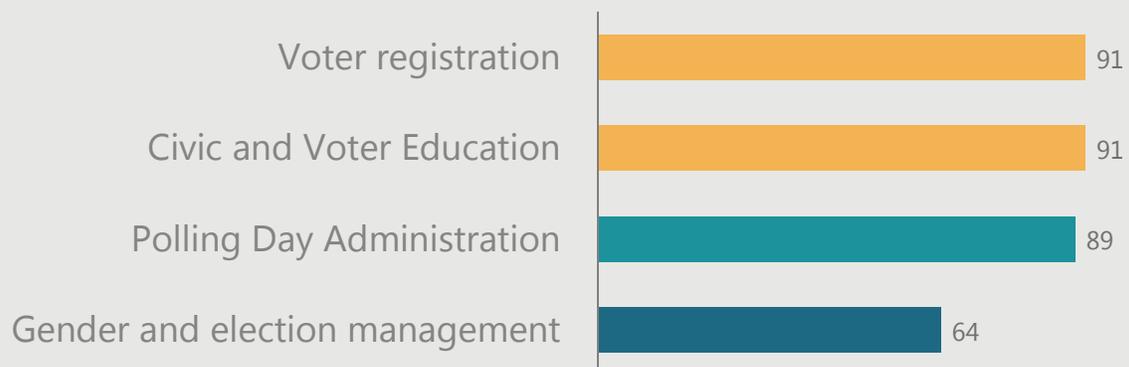


— EVALUATION FINDINGS:

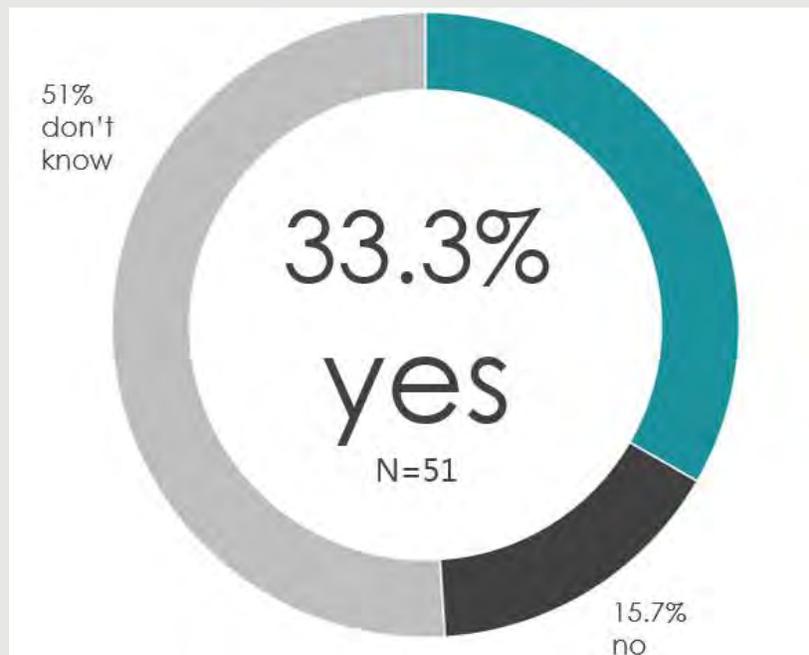
To what extent has the UNISA certificate training program translated into improved capacity of EMBs throughout Sub-Saharan Africa to manage elections more effectively?



Did the capacity of your EMB improve in any of the following electoral processes?  
(N=127)

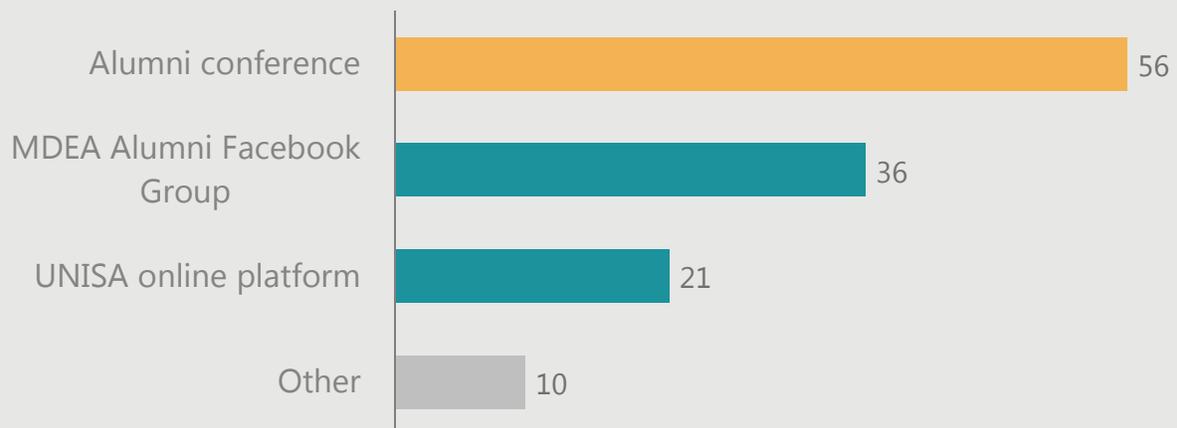


## TRAINEE KNOWLEDGE OF SELECTION CRITERIA (within their own EMB)

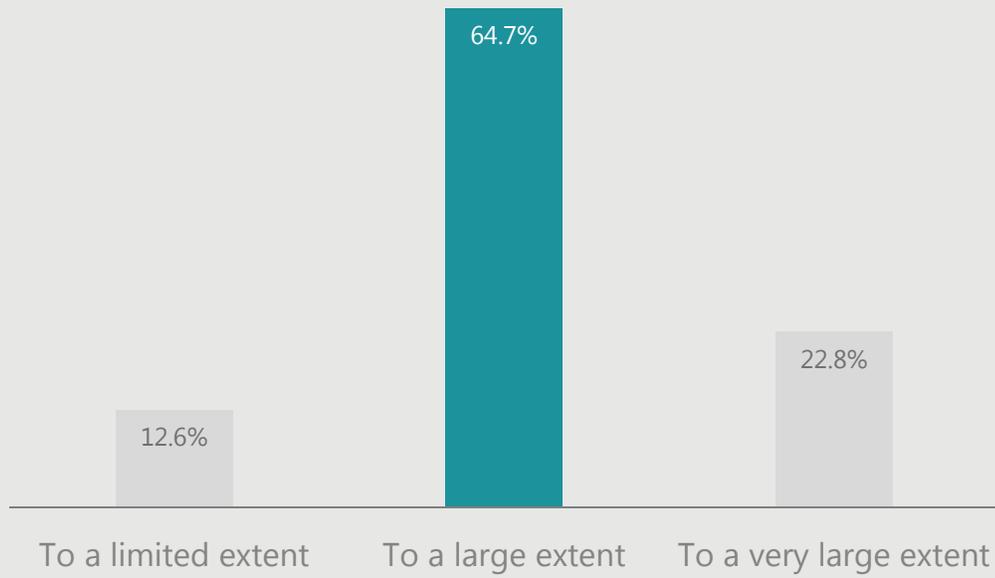


## ALUMNI MEMBERSHIP

Which of the following Alumni activities have you participated in? (N=94)



To what extent has attending the MDEA  
Training Program  
Expanded your Professional Network? (N=167)



— EVALUATION FINDINGS:

What evidence exists linking the UNISA certificate training program to operational changes/ improvements in EMB procedures and practices?

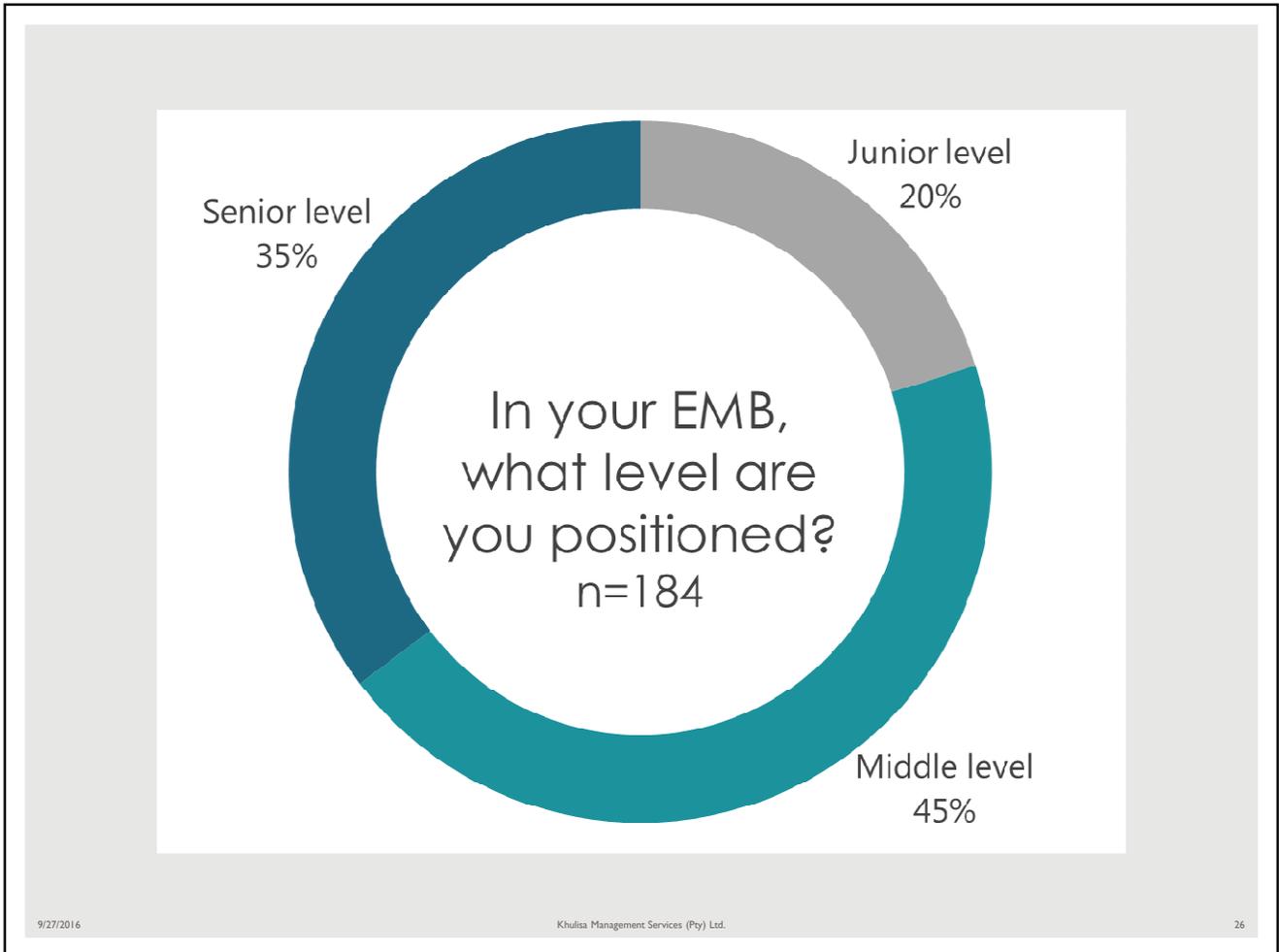


## OPERATIONAL CHANGES/IMPROVEMENTS IN EMB PROCEDURES ATTRIBUTABLE TO MDEA

- **Botswana:** Experienced first positive media engagement in 2014 elections; Communication between EMB and stakeholders significantly improved
- **Mozambique:** Administrative official responsible for media now demonstrates more confidence and initiative; 2014 elections, no objections from the political parties; Increased transparency; Reduced conflicts
- **Kenya:** 2013 Constitutional Reforms on election management and electoral laws influenced by MDEA course
- **Zimbabwe:** Adopted electoral management system and ZEC initiated electoral reforms

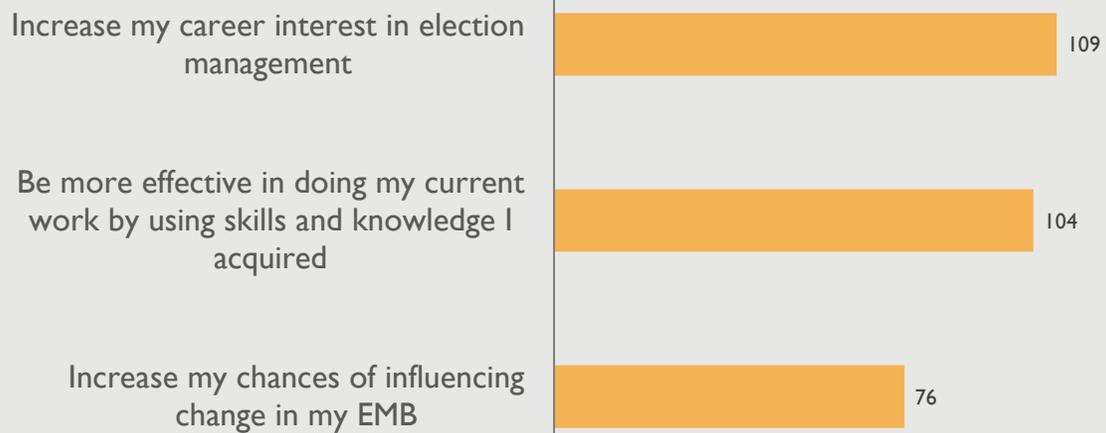
## OPERATIONAL CHANGES/IMPROVEMENTS IN EMB PROCEDURES ATTRIBUTABLE TO MDEA

- **Malawi:** Changed boundary demarcations and merged country from 800+ to 462 constituencies (improving representation and resource allocation); MDEA trained officials promoted; Seconded to support other countries
- **Ethiopia:** Ability to analyze the latest election results; Showed clear voting patterns and an increased awareness of political processes by voters
- **South Africa IEC:** Developed clearer understanding of party funding intricacies and influence on elections; Currently planning reforms; Better knowledge management in IEC Library
- **Lesotho:** A trainee took initiative to invite political parties to start dialogue before a 2013 by-election

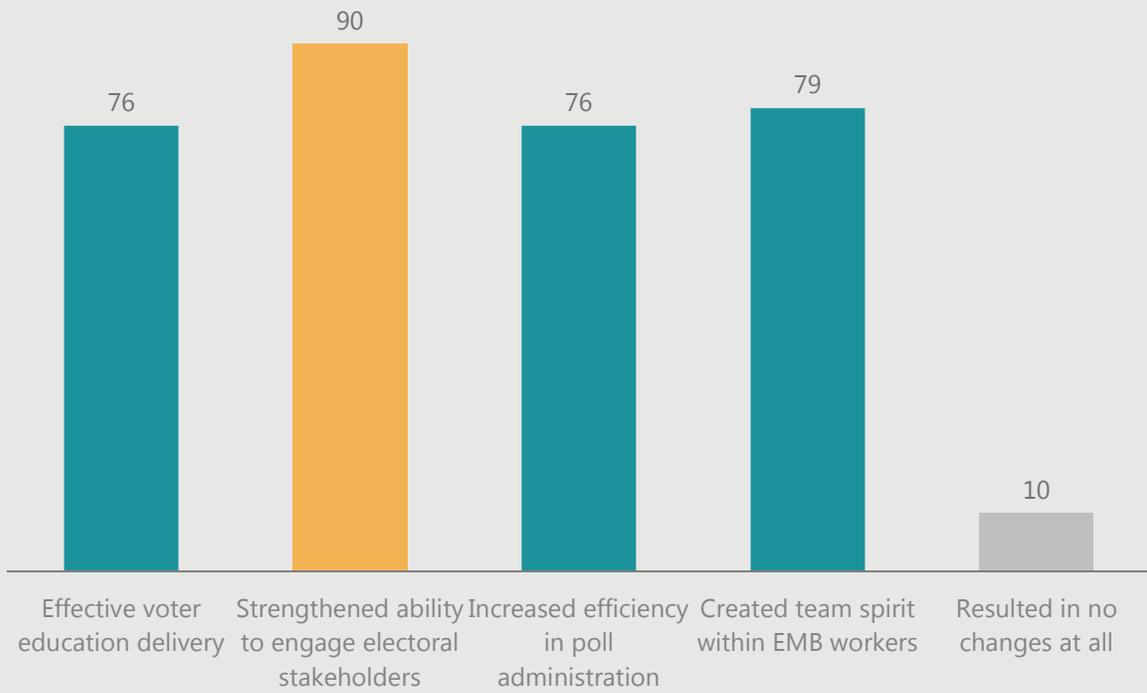


## MDEA VALUE-ADD AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

The UNISA MDEA Training Course has Helped me to...  
(N=166)



"How did your MDEA training contribute to improvements in your EMBs operations, procedures, and practices?" (N=130)



Understanding of Election Management  
**Before** and **After** Attending the MDEA Certificate Program  
 n= 142

	Did not understand Election Management	Had some understanding of Election Management	Had a good understanding of Election Management	Had an amazing understanding of Election Management
<b>Before</b> Attending MDEA Certificate Program	2.8% 4 Attendees	46.5% 66 Attendees	45.1% 64 Attendees	5.6% 8 Attendees
<b>After</b> Attending MDEA Certificate Program	0% 0 Attendees	1% 1 Attendee	38% 54 Attendees	61% 87 Attendees
	Do not understand Election Management	Have some understanding of Election Management	Have a good understanding of Election Management	Have an amazing understanding of Election Management

## POTENTIAL FOR CAPACITY RETENTION

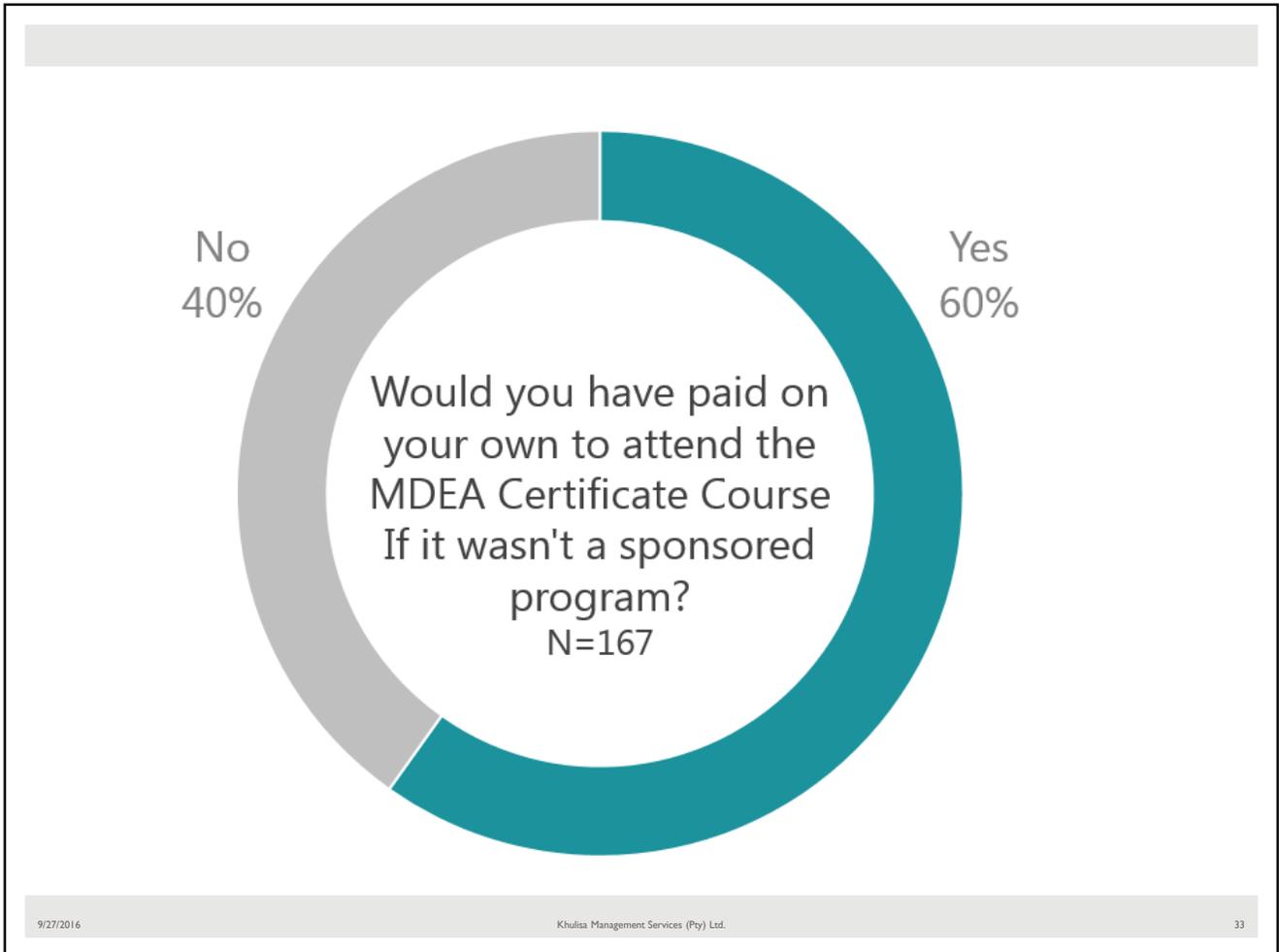
**91%** of 147 survey respondents are  
still employed full time with same **EMB**

— EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Is there evidence that project interventions will be sustainable beyond the project lifetime?







## SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

- Environmental Support
- Funding Stability
- Partnerships
- Organizational Capacity
- Capacity Building
- Program Evaluation
- Program Adaptation
- Communications
- Strategic Planning
- Program Management

— CONCLUSION:  
Recommendations



## RECOMMENDATIONS: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- Strengthen program management with expert personnel
- Improve training preparation
- Upgrade communication
- Implement data-driven decision making processes
- Separate financial management from overall program management
- Establish a comprehensive M&E system
- Put in place systems such as timesheets, usage logs...
- Establish a stakeholder/ liaison system

## RECOMMENDATIONS: REVISIONS OF CURRICULUM

- Broaden voter education to include civic education
- Make content country relevant; Indigenize issues during in-country training
- Include practical sessions on designing models for fair political parties' financing
- Revise the curriculum regularly

## RECOMMENDATIONS: FACILITATORS

- UNISA-IARS should compile a roster of experts composed of both academics and practitioners
- Strike a balance between theory and practice amongst course facilitators

## RECOMMENDATIONS: MM&E

- De-link the Mentorship component from M&E
- Design and implement an M&E system for the program
- Establish a steering group for the Alumni (possibly mainstreamed into UNISA alumnus)

## RECOMMENDATIONS: Research and Knowledge Generation

- Utilize trainees to generate information on practical experiences on EMBs in the region
- Support upgrading of trainee portfolios into publishable articles
- Conduct a longitudinal study to assess how the trainees have been doing as part of the Mentorship program

## RECOMMENDATIONS: SUSTAINABILITY

- Consider which of the models (described in the next slide) would be most appropriate to continue and potentially expand the MDEA course.
- Review MDEA status on each element of the Sustainability Framework biannually.

## ALTERNATIVE MODELS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MDEA

**Model 1:** Continuing Course As-Is

**Model 2:** Creating a Diploma Course

**Model 3:** Combined Online and In-Person  
Course

**Model 4:** Decentralized Training

**Model 5:** Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)



# **ANNEX XII: COMMENTS MATRICES**

This annex contains information on the comments received from USAID and UNISA to the evaluation team and various stages of the report writing process as well as details on Khulisa's response and related action.

## USAID COMMENTS RECEIVED 25 AUGUST 2016

#	Page	Segment from Report	Comment/feedback	Response
1	18	"The challenges currently outweigh those successes."	I think this should be re-worded. Based on the overall report, the course is seen as being extremely valuable, so much so that countries are paying for it themselves in some instances.	Agreed, we have reworded this section.
2	19	"...There is a missed opportunity in terms of stakeholder communication and the relationship between UNISA and IEC-SA has not been adequately coordinated"	What are some of the missed opportunities alluded to?	We have added a paragraph under the following section, "Liaison and Stakeholder Communication" that specifically answers this question.
3	19	"Additionally, the course lacks translation services for the French and Portuguese speaking participants"	Good point to raise, but I'm not sure if it's a fair criticism if they weren't expected to translate the materials.	UNISA decided to be inclusive of the whole region and have consistently mentioned in their responses to MM&E visit questions and in facilitator assessments that they plan to translate MDEA class instructions and materials into French and Portuguese, thus we've kept this point in for now.
4	19	"Since 2011, the campus based Certificate Training costs (per trainee) have risen by 35% which threatens the planning for the continuation of the program as costs will continue to escalate in the face of dwindling resources."	What led to the increase?	We have added a footnote explaining cost increases in the sustainability section where we talk about funding stability.
5	19	"Kenya and Zambia also requested facilitation for in-country based courses but UNISA could not manage the timeframe to conduct the trainings."	This is interesting. Was this due to shortage of staff?	UNISA could not conduct these trainings because the Kenya request was overlapping with the Lesotho training. According to UNISA interview, Zambia did not follow up on the plans for in-country training after submitting their request. We have left the section as-is as and will also address it in the SBU.
6	20	"The program management challenges are evidenced by the absence of M&E frameworks for each of the activities other than the Certificate Training..."	Given that this is a grant, this level of detail may not have been officially required.	Agreed, we have removed this section.

#	Page	Segment from Report	Comment/feedback	Response
7	24	“SADC-ECF also pointed that they have lots of experienced and highly qualified practitioners who would be able to fill the practical element gaps in the course. However, the MDEA program currently is not utilizing these resources. Rather, the facilitators are drawn mainly from UNISA and South Africa”	Is it due to financial reasons why MDEA has not utilized instructors from other countries?	It is mainly due to the absence of a system for identifying experts – we have added a sentence stating this. However, we will address in the SBU the fact that SADC-ECF has made the recommendation several times without action taken.
8	24-25	“EMBs have responded positively to this program, but UNISA struggles to keep track of EMBs’ developments around MDEA trainees, as it does not communicate directly with all the EMBs.	Why don't they have relationships? Seems there is a mis-communication in terms of understanding how involved SADC wants to or needs to be.	UNISA has largely left the task of EMB relationship management to SADC-ECF. SADC-ECF was given the mandate by SADC to build capacity for EMBs and have been doing so through staff exchange programs. It was thus politically correct to not sideline SADC-ECF in the MDEA initiative. UNISA has not gone beyond the ECF connection to establish direct relationships with EMBs that are key for both implementing and tracking impact of the program and fostering alumni activities. These liaisons could have been developed through the trained officials.
9	29	“Importantly, UNISA has missed out on using the MM&E reports to update the curriculum and document EMB challenges in the region. For instance, between February and June 2012, ten MM&E visits were conducted to different countries, and this could have been used as a learning opportunity to collect information on the challenges these EMBs experienced.”	Why were they not considered?	UNISA is yet to update the curriculum since 2011. The MM&E country trips are very short and spent mostly with management and trained staff to check on progress. This initiative could have been exploited to conduct research and collect data on the EMBs. A footnote has been added explaining this, and we will further discuss it in the SBU.
10	30	“Additionally, one area where the course needs to improve is in respect to the language barrier. The lack of translation services for the French and Portuguese speaking participants...”	Is it laid out that from the beginning participants must be English speakers. There may not have been explicit directions to have a multi-lingual requirement.	This is addressed in #3 above. Therefore, we have kept this section in for now.

#	Page	Segment from Report	Comment/feedback	Response
11	34	“Recommendation: Establish a steering group for Alumni that will be tasked with ongoing peer learning and capacity building to train regarding election management.”	This likely requires additional resources and may not be sustainable as written. What would be a more long-term solution to the Alumni that would not require additional outside donors?	UNISA has a longstanding vibrant Alumnus. The MDEA Alumni could be infusing into the mainstream UNISA alumnus that has become well developed over the years. The UNISA Alumni is well developed with different chapters and has a sustainability mechanism through membership fees. A MDEA chapter could be one of the options. The benefits to Alumni members are explained and the MDEA emphasis can be added as one strand of the career options advice. We have added a sentence in the Recommendations section explaining why this is sustainable.
12	35	“Did the capacity of your EMB improve in any of the following electoral processes?”	What were the improvements?	A sentence has been added to address this question.
13	36	“This clearly shows that not all EMBs may be aware of the course content leading to them possibly not sending the most relevant officials...”	There may also be political motivations at play.	We agree. Political expediency and patronage also play a role in the selection process. This will be addressed in the SBU.
14	37	“In the February 2012 Quarterly report, UNISA noted that EMBs were requesting to be informed on the selection criteria for identifying candidates to be sent for the MDEA program, however it appears that the program never acted on this”	Do we know why?	UNISA felt that the EMBs should decide who gets trained.
15	47	“Funding Stability: Establishing a consistent financial base for the program”	Different countries have shown their willingness to pay for this training, clearly, others beyond USAID are willing to support it.	We mentioned all the countries that have expressed an interest in funding- Zambia, Kenya, Lesotho and Botswana. All others said they could not afford to host the in-country course. Khulisa is not aware of any other donors beyond USAID who are willing to support the program.
16	49	“Planning for the increasing MDEA activities is threatened by the rising costs year on year. From 2011, campus-based Certificate Training costs (per trainee) have risen by 35%...”	Why is there an increase in cost?	This is addressed in Comment #4 above.

#	Page	Segment from Report	Comment/feedback	Response
17	51	“Over half the respondents in the survey said that they would pay for the course even if it wasn’t sponsored.”	This shows that this is an overall success and contradicts with the statement that the failures over shadow successes. There does appear to be management issues, but this is very much needed program that has value to those who participate in it. It just hasn’t reached its full potential.	Yes, as addressed in Comment #1, we have re-worded and removed the contradiction.
18	53	“Model 4: Entirely online course”	Consider deleting this model because it contradicts with the participants’ opinion that better experiential learning is needed.	We have deleted this model.
19	53	“Model 5: Decentralized training”	Are there concerns that standards may not be maintained across the continent?	We think this model could be controlled and supervised by UNISA and have included that in this section.
20	54	“Model 6: Mass Open Online Course (MOOC)”	This may be considered an initial intro level course.	Added a sentence about this possibility.
21	55	“International Federation of Electoral Systems (IFES)”	It should be International Foundation for Electoral Systems.	Corrected.

## USAID COMMENTS RECEIVED 14 SEPTEMBER 2016

#	Page	Segment from Report	Comment/feedback	Response
1	29	“Funding for paid during campaign and their party agents even all processing in election”	This particular quote is not clear. Could you please adjust it in the document?	We have chosen an alternate quote from the survey to illustrate the point, as you are correct, this quote is not clear. See Figure 19.
2	44	Organizational capacity – program costs lumped together	The comment about program costs being “lumped together” is not clear. What exactly is the concern as I don’t understand how it complicates forecasting and planning.	We have revised this sentence to make it more clear. It now reads. “The MDEA Administrator indicated that the accounting system ‘lumps together’ program costs (e.g. travel, insurance, accommodation, airport transfers, MM&E costs) as one line item. This complicates financial forecasting and planning since it is difficult to separate costs and thus plan or adjust accordingly. Itemized budgets would make planning more efficient.”

## UNISA-IARS COMMENTS RECEIVED 20 SEPTEMBER 2016 (REVISED 26 SEPTEMBER 2016)

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
1	N/A	N/A	The first comment is a caveat – reached between MDEA Officials and the African Union Political Affairs Office – headed by Commissioner Dr Aisha Abdullahi and her Director, Dr Khabele Matlosa. In this closed discussion – not be liberally cited – it was clear that, since the signing of the African Charter on Democracy, Governance and Democracy (ACDEG) in 2007, dwindling numbers of Member-States have moved towards adopting the guiding framework of this protocol. The point is therefore that, working with African States on Democratization still remains, not only, very much work-in-progress but in practice – regressing without accompanying international pressure to conform. This has been evident in Mali, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Burkina Faso, and Gabon to name but a few.	None	Discussed and understood this is the background context.
2	N/A	N/A	The partnership with Africa Union Commission which was concluded and signed on 31 May 2016 and which started operating in June 2016 is not recorded	Done	Added to the report “A notable recent success in linking to stakeholders is the partnership forged with the African Union and signed on 31 May 2016.”
3	N/A	N/A	Given this contested context any intervention from a University based organization such as IARS – implementing a jointly owned program such as MDEA places the same in a clearly invidious position where any progress is based on the lowest common denominator that is less threatening to centrally strong Member-States. <i>This reality is not acknowledged nor captured in the text.</i>	Done	Khulisa has added a sentence in the executive summary (page vii) that addresses this issue along with Comment #5

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
4	N/A	N/A	MDEA was conceived and is presented as a Pan-African initiative and not as one confined the SADC or Sub-Saharan Africa regions only.	None	The footnotes in the report addressing “Southern Africa” vs. “Sub-Saharan Africa” are present because Khulisa’s Terms of Reference and subsequent contract with USAID used the term “Southern Africa” and it was agreed with USAID to change to “Sub-Saharan Africa” during the Inception Period.
5	N/A	N/A	<p>The report also appears oblivious of where and how EMBs have emerged and are still ‘controlled’ making trite the comment and recommendation of IARS lacking the mechanism to follow through and evaluate the impact of its training. To this end, - first – EMBs are post-cold war-and after Year 2000 institutions: reacting to external pressure to conform – these fall into two categories: a) those supported and controlled by the Presidency and b) those operating from some distance and supported by Parliament. There is therefore a major difference on how each of these conducts themselves and manages national elections. In a word – most have continued to beholden to the One-Party-State tendencies and structures.</p> <p><i>(The recent events in Gabon – August-September 2016 are illustrative). (See p. 10 – Harmonizing Electoral Processes/Practices)</i></p>	Done	Directly quoted form this comment into report on page 3.

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
6a	ix	Question 2 & 3 Challenges - the curriculum/modules have not been refined since their development in 2011, thus missing key developments across the continent”	<p>- In making this criticism, we must also take into consideration of how standard Curriculum changes within any University. The intention for any new courses offered is to allow this to take root and become established and consolidated before any changes are introduced. Notwithstanding the desire to consolidate norms and practices</p> <p>- In addition material content over the past 5 years have evolved to keep abreast with regional and global best practices. MDEA guides and assessments are readily available on-line as part of the UNISA e-ODL policy. This could have been provided had it been requested.</p>	Done	<p>While the curriculum has been revised from 9 modules to 3 modules, multiple respondents said that the curriculum has not been updated. However, we have noted that Facilitators are instructed to update the modules through their presentations and teaching discussions.</p> <p>We provide two of the numerous examples:</p> <p>“Content does not adequately address changing needs. It is not adequate, there is a need to adjust the material.” Facilitator/Professor</p> <p>“Current curriculum is one size fits all, this generic approach is not going to be successful. It needs to be adjusted to fit country contexts.” IEC official</p> <p>The Khulisa team leader often teaches at Universities and the common practice is to review and update the course outline and substance annually. This is particularly important as there have been extensive technological and political developments.</p>
			<p>The statement on the refinement of curriculum/modules in not accurate, as the original 9 modules have been reviewed and re-structured to the current 3 modules Programme.</p>	None	<p>The report reflects the fact that the Khulisa team was only ever shown the 3 modules, rather than the 9 outlined here.</p>
			<p>However this process of updating the study guides was initiated and we had the first meeting with senior members of IEC South Africa on the 11th and 12th November 2015. Funding to review the study guides/ learning material is included in the approved 2016/2017 financial year.</p>	None	<p>We received the report on the meeting held on 11th and 12th November 2015 to review the curriculum on September 23 2016.</p>

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
			<p>The second observation is around the Recommendation “IARS needs to extend and quicken the pace” in order to influence changes, p. 10.</p> <p>Comment: this is a contradiction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Given the comments on p. 8 sentence 6 where it is acknowledged that MDEA is operating in highly politicized environment-requiring to conduct itself with caution and circumspection if it is to continue to be allowed to interact with government officials by sitting regimes</li> </ul>	None	Per our discussion, these two sections are addressing two different things. Khulisa is stating that UNISA should extend its reach at a quicker pace <b>by utilizing a distance education model</b> , and this comment is not related to that of the politicized environment.
6b	x	<p>LIAISING THROUGH SADC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Logistical plans for MDEA trainees are done through SADC-ECF, which communicates with the EMBs. Since country EMBs are all affiliated to the SADC-ECF</li> </ul>	<p>SADC–ECF is only responsible for SADC countries. Invitation is sent to the SADC-ECF with the specifications and they communicate the information to its member states only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNISA communicates and invites other countries directly as they are not members of the SADC - ECF</li> </ul>	Done	This distinction has been made in a footnote – that SADC-ECF does the logistics for SADC countries.
7	x	<p>Question 4 Challenges -</p> <p>MDEA has not instituted a mechanism for tracking the improvements in electoral management processes in the participating countries.</p>	<p>Given the focus on efficient delivery -- and the limited manpower available and the sensitivity within member states to work outside government with political parties – such an early approach before the initial mandate and focus has become an accepted feature would be suicidal for the program. The Ethiopian case study is illustrative – where the ruling party purports that there are no opposing political parties in that country. Until the 2016 innovation that sought to broaden the catchment area to include Civil Society groups – candidates trained had all come from serving public servants – allowed to take time off by sitting governments. To then seek to challenge that at an early stage appears self-defeating.</p>	None	Per the discussion, this is a monitoring and evaluation/ research opportunity, there is a rich source of data available from current and former participants which is not tracked.

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
8	x	QUESTION 5 CHALLENGES - MDEA is yet to engage with most of the regional institutions ...	The report appears to have been convinced that MDEA's influence is limited to Southern Africa and working through the SADC Election Commission Forum (ECF). Nothing could be further from the reality. Work already done has witnessed positive responses from the African Union, Political Affairs Office – including that dealing with Elections; ECOWAS; IGAD-EAC and some countries in Central Africa or EACCAS. For example, IARS has conducted extensive and in-depth training of senior and middle management officials in South Sudan – whose conduct – simply faced with elections and succession within the ruling party – SPLA/M led to the collapse and recent insecurity from December 2013. Comment: Exactly why the AU, EAC, and even ECOWAS growing relationships that are designed to open doors into the Maghreb in North Africa have been left out is a question that must be answered by the researchers. A written MoU reached between the AU and events in which participants from the RECS have taken part have been recorded and then ignored is something that must be corrected. (See pages 14 & 18)	Done	This sentence is not implying that MDEA's influence is limited to Southern Africa, rather giving the suggestion that MDEA could pursue relationships with other regional institutions (such as ECOWAS, EAC, etc.) as it does with SADC-ECF. The report acknowledges MDEA's continental reach in many places.  We received the AU workplan, we have added the following:  “A notable recent success in linking to stakeholders is the partnership forged with the African Union and signed on 31 May 2016.” (page 23)
9	1	USAID/Southern Africa issued the \$5 million grant to University of South Africa (UNISA)	USAID issued \$4.1 million grant to UNISA	Done	Changed
10	4	Figure 2: MDEA Activity Timeline	- Alumni Activities started in 2014, not 2013.	Done	Figure 2 has been updated to reflect this.
			- Omitted one In-Country Course in 2012	Done	Figure 2 has been updated to reflect this.
11	5	Figure 3: Trainee Totals 2011-2016	- As per our earlier records and the information supplied to the Khulisa and noting the shared email on 28 July 2016, we trained 35 officials in July 2014 and not 34 as reported.	Done	The participant training file supplied on 20 September 2016 by IARS shows 34 participants.
			- We also trained 32 officials in Botswana and not 28 as reported.	Done	Yes, updated to 32. The 28 referred in the document to the Botswana participants only, excluding the 4 from other EMBs.

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
12	8	212 females and 270 males	As per the records provided we have 216 females and 266 males. Refer to the email send to Khulisa on 28 July email.	Done	Corrected.
13	10	Footnote 11 – Cost Sharing	- UNISA is providing an in-kind cost share and this has been noted by the KPMG Auditors since 2012 audit findings	Done	Khulisa has revised this section and deleted the recommendation based on Page 10 of the KPMG audit, entitled “3 Summary of Results” which was provided to Khulisa on September 23, 2016.
			- Much as it is an issue in the report, the auditors had to content with the descriptive cost sharing by both UNISA & IEC. The KPMG report has reference on this matter.		
14	12	Under the ‘Evaluation Methodology & Limitations’	The report does not indicate other methods that were used to obtain data such as – being part of audience of trainees in the classroom environment and interviewing Trainees who are still undergoing training; and how this may have impacted on the findings and outcomes of this report.	Done	Noted in the site visits and further explained in the Methodology Appendix. Khulisa was “part of audience of trainees in the classroom environment” as training observation is a vital part of an evaluation. Interviewing current trainees also is an important part and would not have led to false findings.
			No mention is made of the fact that the Kilpatrick Model of Four Levels of Evaluation Training Programs like most of the dominant models does not take into cognizance primary intervening variables such as – motivation to learn; trainability; job attitudes, etc. (Holton EF: 1996).	Done	Added critique of Kirkpatrick Model to Limitations section (Figure 10)
15	14	Footnote 13	We are having data as reflecting the true status of MDEA programs which have been sent by email to Khulisa. The unfortunate part is that in all preliminary and draft report the data that we send has been inaccurately captured. Find attached our emails on this matter.	None	This section of the report is addressing the “email addresses” not simply the numbers of trainees (which is the data UNISA’s comment is addressing). When we sent our survey, we asked UNISA for help identifying the correct email addresses for those addresses that bounced back, and UNISA was unable to provide correct and current addresses for a number of trainees.
16a	15	Limitations: Availability and Weak Use of Routine Data	The routine data was made available upon request and explained when needed.	None	We received some routine data but not all, and were unable to verify that the data is being routinely analyzed.

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
			End-of-course performance marks are located within the University central record system and available to authorized personnel. We must also note the policies that are applicable to providing such record to the third party.	None	Khulisa was provided access to the portfolios but not the coursework marks. Therefore, we asked a few program graduates during EMB interviews if they received their final marks and none of them had.
			Confidentiality clauses apply and application should be made with authorized body to make this student marks and information available to the third party.	None	This is the first time Khulisa was told of this process, even though we asked repeatedly about accessing the coursework marks. We were provided with access to the portfolios and their marks.
			Assignments are sent back to the students with feedback, the university doesn't keep the assignments but only portfolios assignments which are an equivalent of the Summative assessment.	None	We were informed that there were two elements to marking: 1) Course assignments (not provided) 2) Portfolio assignment (provided)
<b>16b</b>	15	Limitations: Communication Issues	UNISA has notified the EMBs and facilitators by official letters which were sent on the 08 March 2016 by emails. Find attached annexure on notifying EMBs and facilitators.	Partial	The attachments UNISA sent were not letters to every EMB – only to South Africa and to SADC-ECF. Khulisa has clarified as follows: “The implementing partner was asked to notify EMBs in advance of the evaluation, but only sent the notification to the IEC and to SADC ECF. Thus, EMBs were unaware of the evaluation and many interviewees needed time to prepare and address bureaucratic concerns.”
<b>17</b>	18	Footnote 16	- The yearly target has been 70 participants since 2013, giving a percentage of 221% - After consultations with the USAID in March 2016, we agreed to increase the number to 90.	Done	We have updated this figure to reflect the target of 90 for 2016 per USAID confirmation.

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
18a	19	“Weak Overall Program Management”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IARS is constantly communicating and sharing MDEA events with its implementing Partner, IEC-SA and the statement does not reflect the truth of the matter. Communication documentation on MDEA Official openings, Gala Dinners, Facilitators Programme &amp; Time- Table attest to this fact.</li> <li>- We question whether was with the CEO, Chairperson, Senior Manager who are dedicated facilitation in the program.</li> </ul>	None	This reflects the interviews with individuals listed by MDEA as key IEC informants, and included the IEC Chief Election Officer and the six IEC senior managers who facilitated the program. IEC Facilitators raised as a challenge late or non-existent communication from the IARS. In particular, the late reception of the schedules (including when they were expected to facilitate) and not being briefed ahead of time on the participants’ countries and positions.
18b	19	Footnote 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNISA – IARS has not received any formal letter of invitation to do training in Kenya</li> <li>- Zambia could not have in-country training “due to inadequate funds”.</li> <li>- Letter was received from Zambia on the 20 February 2013 and was shared with the Khulisa team on the 23 April 2016 by email.</li> </ul>	Done	This footnote has been changed: “For example, Kenyan EMB respondents reported during the Botswana training session in February 2016 that they had requested in-country facilitation. Zambia also requested facilitation for in-country based courses but were unable to fund the training
19	19	Imbalance between Theoretical and Practical Components	The design of the MDEA Programme is premised and contextualized on the two components of theory and practice as the subject of management of democratic elections dictates. Under the heading ‘Suggested Methods for Learners to study the Subject’, each and every Module of MDEA spells out both the inextricable link between theory. In application, the 4 weeks seminar on MDEA Programme provides one week of Experiential Learning over and above practical facilitation in the classroom provided by 5 Senior Officials from the IEC South Africa. The submission of the Portfolio assignment is further evidence of the fusion of both theory and practice in the day to day activities of the learner within the EMB. The challenge and the description in this report is therefore not an accurate reflection.	None	<p>This reflects the results from the online survey, interviews, and FGDs. It was also a result of the Khulisa analysis of the UNISA course feedback forms.</p> <p>While IARS certainly includes some practical components in its MDEA courses, respondents consistently expressed a request for a stronger focus on the practical components, during the seminar and not just the IEC fieldwork and portfolios. One suggestion that routinely occurred was having practitioners as facilitators in addition to academics.</p>

#	Page	Segment from Report	UNISA Comment	Khulisa Action	Khulisa Action Comments
20	19	Lack of Curriculum Updates	The statement on curriculum updates is not accurate, as the original 9 modules have been reviewed and re-structured to the current 3 modules Programme. In addition material content over the past 5 years have evolved to keep abreast with regional and global best practices. Supplementary reading materials in the form of journal articles, 6 book chapters, and presentations by different facilitators have kept the Programme with current developments.	Done	Please see Khulisa's response to comment 6a.
21	19	Lack of Participant Feedback Loop	The IEC-SA Facilitators in particular have requested on numerous occasions to be provided with the participant's feedback, and provided to them. On the 11 – 12 November 2015, in a Facilitators Workshop held at IARS, a collated summary of feedback on all past years presentation was provided, analyzed, and interpreted.	None	Khulisa requested and never received this analysis or interpretation of feedback on past years. Additionally, this finding is noting the fact that this is not a regular occurrence.
22	20	SADC Electoral Commission – Biggest Problem...	<p>- On 1 March 2012, we went to Gaborone-Botswana (MME report: Botswana-2012) had Discussions with Ms Modisane on Administrative &amp; Logistic processes regarding the coordination and registration of MDEA participants for 2012 with the Country Commissions, the Calendar Activities of the ECF-SADC as well as criteria for selection of participants registering for the MDEA program</p> <p>- The implementation is in-line with the recommendations of the meeting between UNISA and SADC-ECF in 2012.</p>	None	This quote is verbatim from our interview with the SADC CEO of the ECF. Other respondents also commented consistently that logistics and planning needs to be improved. This also matched the Evaluation Team's observations.
23	21	Institutional Capacity	- The structure as presented on the MDEA program management in figure 15 does not reflect the structural and managerial/ administration of the MDEA program. As an internal part of IARS operation, it is unfortunate that Khulisa has been misled on the day to day management of the program.	Done	Deleted figure 15.
			- The following structure below portrays the functional management of the day to day operation of MDEA at IARS (see below)	Done	This will be reflected in the comments Appendix

**In attachment to Comment 23:**

**IARS Head of Department**  
Overall Management

**MDEA Academic Coordinator**  
MDEA - Policy  
MDEA - Management  
MDEA - Leadership

**MDEA Deputy Coordinator**  
Work Plan Planning  
Teaching Programme & scheduling  
Overall day to day Programme Management (Academic  
& Administration)  
Student assessment

**MDEA Administrator**  
Financial administration (*Financial Management  
resides with UNISA finance department*)  
Liaison with donor, Coordinator & deputy coordinator  
Student registration  
Liaison with finance department, travel office

**MDEA Assistant Administrator X2**  
Overall Database Management  
Communication with EMBs and students  
Administration of assignments and portfolios  
Student registration  
Logistics for trainees, Commissioners, MMEs

**MDEA Alumni Administrator**  
Responsible for Alumni related activities  
Alumni database  
Book on Lesotho and Elections  
Liaison with book chapters or Election Watch  
contributors

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