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Guatemala
Section for Development Cooperation - Honduras

HONDURAS POST ELECTORAL ASSESSMENT

FINAL REPORT

OCTOBER 11, 2010

IMPLEMENTED BY



CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL



CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT | SUNY/CID
ROCKEFELLER COLLEGE UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York

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Electoral Education and Integrity Team

In partnership with



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For



United States Agency for International Development

and



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ACRONYMS

CARITAS	Catholic Organization
CEPPS	Consortium for Electoral and Political Process Strengthening
CIARH	Coordination of Rehabilitation Institutions and Associations of Honduras
CIEN	<i>Centro de Investigación y Estudios Nacionales</i> (Center for National Research and Studies)
COP	Chief of Party
Creative	Creative Associates International, Inc.
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DG	Democracy and Governance Office
EU	European Union
EWG	Election Working Group
FENAPAPENSH	<i>Federación Nacional de Padres de Personas con Discapacidad en Honduras</i> (National Federation of Parents of Persons with Special Needs of Honduras)
FENOPDIH	<i>Federación Nacional de Organismos de Personas con Discapacidad de Honduras</i> (National Federation of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities of Honduras)
FOPRIDEH	<i>Federación de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales para el Desarrollo de Honduras</i> (Federation of Organizations for the Development of Honduras)
G-16	Group of 16 - International donor follow-up group to the 1999 Stockholm Declaration currently working in Honduras
GOH	Government of Honduras
HD	<i>Hagamos Democracia</i> (Making Democracy)
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFCC	<i>Instituto de Formación y Capacitación Ciudadana</i> (Institute for Citizenship Education and Training)
IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems
IRI	International Republican Institute
MCD	<i>Movimiento Cívico para la Democracia</i> (Civic Movement for Democracy)
ME	<i>Mirador Electoral</i>
MRE	<i>Mesas Electorales Receptoras</i> (Polling Stations)
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
PL	<i>Partido Liberal</i>
PN	<i>Partido Nacional</i>
RFQ	Request for Quote
RNP	<i>Registro Nacional de las Personas</i> (Civil Registry Office)
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SOW	Scope of Work
SUNY/CID	Center for International Development, Rockefeller College, University of Albany, State University of New York

TREP	<i>Transmisión de Resultados Electorales Preliminares</i> (Rapid Transmission of Preliminary Results)
TSE	<i>Tribunal Supremo Electoral</i> (Supreme Electoral Tribunal)
UMH	<i>Universidad Metropolitana de Honduras</i>
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

FOREWORD

Creative Associates International, Inc. (Creative) in partnership with the Center for International Development (SUNY/CID), Rockefeller College, University of Albany, State University of New York would like to thank the Honduras Mission of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and representatives of the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) for their support during the course of this assessment. Particular thanks are owed to Director David Thompson of USAID/Honduras' Democracy and Governance (DG) Office, whose constant availability and readiness to assist were instrumental in the accomplishment of this evaluation. Thanks are also due to Gabriela Leva and Sonia Zacapa, also from the USAID/Honduras DG team for their support in organizing meetings and providing valuable background documents and information.

We are especially grateful to Elisabeth Bond and the rest of the Creative staff for their invaluable support in program activities, scheduling and coordinating logistics. This evaluation would not have been possible without their dedication. In addition, the team would like to thank Judith Lobos, International Consultant for the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (*Tribunal Supremo Electoral* – TSE) and Ana María Tello, Elections Specialist at United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for providing key reports, information, and meetings with electoral authorities during our evaluation visit in Honduras.

Finally, it is our hope that this report can help place the USAID and Sida support to the Honduran electoral authorities in perspective, while also helping USAID, Sida, the Consortium for Electoral and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) partners, UNDP, the TSE, and others to identify ways in which future programming can build on its successes and further the development of Honduras' democratic institutions.

Washington, D.C.

September 2010

Jeffrey Carlson, Project Director

Patricio F. Gajardo, Team Leader

Horacio Boneo, Team Member

Jennie Lincoln, Team Member

Patrick Quirk, Technical Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Honduras is a country in Central America that emerged in 1982 from an extended period of military rule. Since then, there have been regular, periodic elections that have strengthened the country's democratic institutions. USAID and Sida provided support to the electoral process in 2008 that was designed to support the Honduran electoral process through the primary elections of 2008 and the national elections held on November 29, 2009. The elections assistance was put in place to provide technical assistance to support the administration of the elections, institutional strengthening of the TSE and RNP, and non-governmental election monitoring, as well as to provide international observation for the national elections scheduled for November 2009. However, an extra-Constitutional removal of the President (*coup d'état*) on June 28, 2009 interrupted the political process. USAID decided to continue its electoral assistance, but other donors did not. This report was requested by USAID and Sida to assess the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of their electoral assistance funded during 2008-2009 electoral cycle.

On September 30, 2008, USAID awarded a Cooperative Agreement to CEPPS that included technical assistance for the Honduran elections institutions through IFES; support to the civil society coalitions implementing election monitoring through assistance from NDI; and deployment of international electoral assessment missions through NDI and the IRI. Sida, on the other hand, has been providing electoral assistance to Honduras since 2003. During the period 2003-2007, Sida provided funding for institutional strengthening of the TSE and the Civil Registry Office (*Registro Nacional de las Personas – RNP*) through the Organization of American States (OAS). In January 2008, Sida entered into a new agreement with the OAS for phase-out support during 2008-2010. However, due to severe problems with the assistance provided by the OAS, the agreement was terminated in January 2009. After the termination of the agreement with the OAS, Sida decided to provide the assistance directly to the TSE and through UNDP in the case of the RNP. The period of the assistance was March 2009-June 2010.

On the basis of the recommendations of a needs-assessment mission that took place in November 2007, UNDP decided to launch a large scale project with the aim of providing technical assistance to the TSE, which was largely funded by Sida. The project involved two phases: a) support the organization of the primary elections in 2008; and b) support to the general elections of 2009 based on the experience obtained during the implementation of the first phase.

From a long term perspective, the overall objectives of the USAID and Sida programs were achieved. It is fair to conclude that, given the political crisis of 2009 and the suspension of funding by various donors, the electoral process was able to overcome multiple challenges and produce an acceptable and recognized elections. In particular, the uninterrupted commitment and support of USAID has been essential to the electoral and political progress achieved in Honduras during the 2008-2009 electoral cycle. The assistance, channeled through the International Foundation for Elections Systems (IFES) played a particularly significant role in strengthening the capacity of the electoral commission. Likewise, the support of Sida to the TSE and UNDP prior to the withdrawal of donor funds in September 2009 also played a significant role.

As Hondurans prepare for a new electoral cycle in 2012, USAID, along with the international donor community, should keep supporting the TSE and civil society efforts to strengthen the electoral process and ensure political stability in the country. In the end, it will be up to the Honduran electoral actors and citizenry to build trust and to regain confidence in the Honduran electoral and political system.

1. Scope and Methodology of the Assessment

Creative Associates International, Inc (Creative) received funding from USAID (and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency - Sida through USAID) to perform an assessment of the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of electoral assistance provided to Honduras to evaluate USAID- and Sida-funded electoral assistance during the 2008-2009 electoral process, and to make recommendations for future electoral assistance. Creative sub-contracted the SUNY/CID to provide an evaluation specialist on the assessment to be a member of the team.

The assessment team (See Annex A for Assessment Team Biographies) was comprised of Patricio Gajardo, Jennie Lincoln and Horacio Boneo, who covered the six areas of the Statement of Work based on their experience, with Jeffrey Carlson playing an oversight role and Patrick Quirk providing technical support. Jennie Lincoln and Horacio Boneo focused on Overall Electoral Assistance, Institutional Strengthening, Civil Society Oversight of the Electoral Process, and Electoral Reform. Patricio Gajardo focused on Donor Coordination, and the Coup and Donor Reaction.

The assessment team was tasked with assessing the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of electoral assistance funded by USAID and Sida during 2008-2009, including assistance provided in cooperation with UNDP, aimed at strengthening the transparency and accountability of the Honduran electoral process through the elections institution and civil society empowerment. The assessment addresses a series of questions in the following areas, as outlined by USAID in the contract scope of work (SOW) (See Annex B for the SOW and full list of the questions):

1. Overall Electoral Assistance
2. Institutional Strengthening
3. Civil Society Oversight of the Electoral Process
4. Electoral Reform
5. Donor Coordination
6. The Coup and Donor Reactions

The team's assessment approach was grounded in USAID's document "*Conducting a DG Assessment: A Framework for Strategy Development* (2000)." Accordingly, through data collection and interviews, the team's approach included a consideration of the *Framework's* analytic steps: defining the country's DG problems, identifying the main political actors, describing institutional roles and incentives, and recommending actions that correspond to USAID's programmatic objectives. Recommendations for future programming align with USAID's Governing Justly and Democratically indicators for Elections and Political Processes.

On July 21, 2010 before the site visit to Honduras (from August 8-28, 2010), the team began collecting key documents and conducting initial interviews in Washington, D.C. The team conducted targeted interviews with stakeholders over the course of 55 meetings (See Annex C for List of Meetings) with the TSE, politicians and political parties, civil society groups, journalists, academics, implementers (IFES, NDI, IRI and UNDP), and donors (USAID, Sida and some G-16 members such as Canada, Spain, Switzerland and the Inter-American

Development Bank). The team held an entry meeting with the USAID/Honduras DG staff, Sida representative, and UNDP personnel, and an exit briefing with the USAID/Honduras DG staff and the Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States Embassy in Honduras. Preliminary and mid-term reports were submitted based on the parameters and schedule provided in the Request for Quotation (RFQ).

This final report reflects the summary assessment of the team's efforts and presents recommendations for future actions by USAID and Sida to support the Honduran electoral process through the TSE and civil society organizations.

2. Honduran Electoral Environment

In 1982, after a long history of military rule, formal democracy and civil governments were introduced. A more fundamental process of democratization was established in 1994. Despite some advances made, public administration suffers from lack of technical capacity and is still penetrated by political partisanship as well as wide-spread corruption. Confidence in the political system, especially in the politicians and authorities, is very low among the Honduran people and there is a demand from many actors within civil society to change towards a more open, transparent, non-violent, democratic and participatory society. Abstention in elections has generally been high. According to official estimates, in the 2005 general elections, only 54% of the population voted. One likely explanation is that poor and illiterate citizens living in rural areas are not registered or do not have identity cards, therefore they do not have the right to vote. Other explanations could be related to the high migration rate as well as the public mistrust in authorities and a general lack of interest in politics. Difficulties in deleting deceased and migrant voters from the voter list have resulted in a somewhat “inflated electoral roll” that tends to exaggerate the real rate of abstention.

In general terms, Honduras had been seen as a stable country but with a developing democracy. The Electoral Reform in Honduras initiated in the 1990s and first resulted in a political manifest on political and electoral reforms signed in 2001 by the five political parties. After those reforms, a new legal framework with the Electoral Law entered into force in May 2004. According to the new law, the former Electoral Tribunal was separated into two new entities, the Electoral Supreme Tribunal (*Tribunal Supremo Electoral*) and the Civil Registry Office (*Registro Nacional de las Personas*).

The elections held in 2005 were the first ones organized under the new framework and even though the institutions were still weak, unconsolidated and received a large amount of criticism, they managed to conduct their duties satisfactorily. Since then, the new electoral institutions have continued developing organizationally and institutionally through regulations, inter-institutional mechanisms, better trained staff, media and public relations activities, and operative plans.

At the end of 2007, the electoral law was modified once again. Some of the changes are direct results of recommendations made by the TSE, which should be looked upon as very positive. However, other changes such as logistics, transmission of results, and operational-technical insufficiencies within the TSE are quite disquieting for democratic development. Further, the sustainability and institutional strengthening of the two institutions since the modifications do not solve key problems. The reform was put to a test in the primary elections in November 2008 and some major deficiencies were found, especially concerning the counting of votes at the local level and training of the poll workers. As a result, a crisis erupted due to delays in the vote counting, which was partly mitigated by a quick-count program.

On November 30, 2008, Honduras held primary elections in which the four competing parties selected their candidates for president, vice-president, and mayors for the November 2009 general elections. The OAS observation mission stated that voting proceeded in an “orderly

manner” and deemed the electoral process “a step forward and a deepening of democracy for the country.”

In the last year of his term, President Manuel Zelaya promoted a constitutional referendum to convene a constituent assembly to change the Honduran constitution – a move that many thought was to pave the way for his reelection. On June 28, 2009, the Honduran military ousted President Zelaya and immediately thereafter, the Honduran Congress named Roberto Micheletti the country’s interim President. In response to the *coup d’etat*, a violation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the OAS expelled Honduras from the organization. Other states condemned the *coup d’etat* as well, and not a single state recognized the Micheletti regime. A constitutional crisis ensued, with Costa Rican President Oscar Arias serving as the lead negotiator between the deposed president and the Micheletti regime. These negotiations resulted in the nine-point Tegucigalpa/San Jose Accord.

Amidst the political crisis, the TSE continued preparations for the November 29, 2009 general elections, which the government had scheduled prior to the *coup d’etat*. The tense political situation within Honduras represented strong challenges to organizing the general election and ensuring that the Honduran people had confidence in the integrity of the process. Zelaya called for a boycott of the elections. The OAS refused to observe the electoral process. Despite reports of pre-election violence and repression of opponents of the *de facto* government, according to TSE estimates, approximately 50% of eligible voters cast ballots. According to official results, Porfirio Lobo Sosa of the opposition conservative National Party (*Partido Nacional*) won the presidency with 56.56% of the vote, compared to Elvin Santos, the Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal*) candidate, who received 38.1%. Soon after the final tally, the United States, Colombia, Panama, Peru and Costa Rica recognized the election results.

During the 2008-2009 electoral cycle both the TSE and the RNP were considered to be highly politicized and serving as tools for the two main political parties to maintain power. In general, civil society was still weak even though there were a few strong NGOs fulfilling watch-dog functions. Media also played an important role in creating confidence and trust in public institutions such as the TSE. At the same time, they were also representing sectors of power in the country and were hence not to be considered completely objective.

3. Post-Electoral Support-International Assistance Overview

The assistance provided by USAID and Sida (which ceased activities in Honduras in September 2010) supported efforts implemented by IFES, NDI, and IRI (USAID funding), and the OAS, UNDP, and TSE (Sida funding). (See Table). This support, which made up the lion’s share of the international community’s electoral assistance, supported the electoral processes in three major areas: (1) Election Administration and Institutional Strengthening; (2) Civil Society Oversight; and (3) International Assessments. Each area is briefly discussed below:

USAID Assistance Funding (in USD)		
NDI	IFES	IRI
\$1,369,780	\$791,753	\$287,500
Total: \$2,549,033		
Sida Assistance Funding (in USD)		
TSE	UNDP	OAS
\$360,000	\$964,000	\$1,924,000
Total: \$3,248,000		

Election Administration and Institutional Strengthening

The TSE activities were complemented and supported by IFES and UNDP, who worked together to provide assistance in institutional strengthening, election administration, the system for the Transmission of Preliminary Results (TREP), training of election officials, and monitoring the media coverage of TSE efforts. Although formal coordination between IFES and UNDP ceased following the suspension of support by Sida, the TSE directly hired former UNDP electoral experts which allowed for a degree of continuity. Additionally, IFES supported the TSE’s coordination with a consortium of civil society organizations to enfranchise voters with disabilities.

Civil Society Oversight

NDI first provided technical assistance in Honduras through a 2008 grant to the Civic Movement for Democracy (MCD). The grant focused on strengthening the technical capacity of Honduran observer groups to conduct nationwide systemic observation of the election-day process, and was administered through the Federation of Organizations for the Development of Honduras (FOPRIDEH). In advance of the 2008 primary elections, MCD joined the umbrella organization Election Watch (*Mirador Electoral – ME*), a UNDP-funded network of domestic organizations observing pre-electoral and election-day processes for the 2009 general elections. Despite some shortcomings concerning timeliness, ME’s final report from the 2008 primary elections was well received. However, due to the partisan profile of MCD, a new configuration was required to effectively provide a neutral observation of the 2009 general elections.

In early 2009, NDI facilitated the formation of a new consortium, Making Democracy (*Hagamos Democracia – HD*). The new coalition retained lessons learned from the 2008 primary election experience and provided continuity by including former MCD members which NDI had

previously worked with. As with the previous coalition, funding was provided through a sub-grant administered by FOPRIDEH. Other members of the new consortium included Center for National Research and Studies (CIEN), CARITAS, and the Protestant Fellowship. NDI worked with HD to retain a nonpartisan and neutral profile following the June 28 coup d'état. CIEN subsequently left the consortium and FOPRIDEH and CARITAS assumed the coordinating role.

International Assessments

For the General Elections in 2009, NDI deployed an international assessment team. NDI preferred to call it an international “assessment” of the electoral process, since the size of the observation group and the length of the observation process did not comply with all the requirements of international observation standards. While the group was too small and the period too short to be considered an observation endeavor, the circumstances in Honduras at the time suggested that an assessment effort on a smaller scale would be very useful. The group produced a report recommending reforms to improve the electoral process and national reconciliation process.

Concurrently, IRI conducted a 12-member international election observation mission of short-term election observers to witness Honduras’ General Elections. The somewhat ambitious objectives of the mission were to: 1) increase confidence of the electorate, political parties and candidates in the election process; 2) act as a deterrent against fraud; 3) provide an impartial assessment of and set of recommendations for the electoral processes; and 4) obtain public recognition of the Honduran electoral process based on IRI’s credible international election observation mission findings.

3.1. USAID-Funded Assistance

CEPPS’ three implementing partners, IFES, IRI, and NDI, had well-defined program activities geared toward a common objective. IFES focused its technical assistance on the TSE, the country’s Supreme Electoral Council. IRI sponsored an international election observation mission of short-term election observers to witness the Honduran Primary and General Elections processes of 2008 and 2009. NDI focused on strengthening the technical capacity of a Honduran observer group to conduct a nationwide systemic observation of the election-day process with different domestic umbrella groups. NDI also deployed an international assessment team to five sites outside Tegucigalpa and a small core group to interview key electoral and political players during the 2009 general elections.

3.1.1. NDI

NDI provided support to the observation of both the primary elections of November 2008 and the general elections of November 2009. NDI supported both domestic observation and an international assessment. In the case of domestic observation, NDI provided support to two different groups: the Civic Movement for Democracy (*Movimiento Cívico para la Democracia*) in the primaries of 2008, and Making Democracy (*Hagamos Democracia*) during the 2009 general elections.

NDI's support for the domestic observation of Primary Elections by *Movimiento Cívico para la Democracia* took place in 16 departments, and covered 201 polling stations (MERs) with approximately 189 volunteer observers, 160 of which had fixed positions to carry out the observation exercise. The election observation focused on observing the opening of the polling stations and delivering the documentation from municipalities to the departmental electoral tribunals. The latter was not completed due to delays in the submission of the tally-sheets. MCD also observed the national tally at the main recount center. The observation was coordinated with *Mirador Electoral* (funded by UNDP/Spain), which focused in the pre-electoral stages.

In early 2009, NDI advised MCD's Board of Directors that public activities by some Board members risked its reputation for political neutrality. As MCD did not implement the required changes, NDI, in consultation with USAID, ended its relationship with MCD. As a result, NDI's support for the domestic observation of the General Elections through *Hagamos Democracia* started working with key members of MCD. NDI then helped to build and consolidate a new consortium with Making Democracy (*Hagamos Democracia*). Members of this consortium included: CIEN, CARITAS, *Confederación Evangélica* and FOPRIDEH, who administered the sub-grant for HD in the amount of approximately US\$500,000. NDI began providing technical support to ensure the quick-count program.

After the *coup d'état* on June 28, 2009, tensions within the group increased and CIEN decided to withdraw, being replaced by the *Universidad Metropolitana de Honduras*. It became clear that it would be impossible to reach the initially planned number of observers due to the political turmoil throughout the country and HD decided to concentrate its efforts in the quick-count, which only required covering 1,200 sample points. NDI developed and distributed observer training materials. HD also established close coordination with *Mirador Electoral*, and obtained the necessary authorizations from the TSE. A simulation was conducted on November 15, which allowed for the identification and correction of weaknesses.

The quick-count was successfully conducted and as the TSE was experiencing technical difficulties and was unable to project the election results with confidence, it decided to publicly release HD's quick-count results. The projection had an error of +/- 1.16 percent.

The International Assessment of the Electoral Process by NDI occurred from November 25 to December 1, 2009. NDI deployed a 21-member international assessment team (13 international experts and 8 NDI staff). Two-person teams were deployed to five sites outside Tegucigalpa and a small core group interviewed key players. According to international standards, the group was too small and the period too short to be considered an observation endeavor, although the circumstances in Honduras at the time suggested that an assessment effort on a smaller scale would be very useful. The group produced a report recommending reforms to improve the electoral process and the national reconciliation process.

3.1.2. IFES

Although IFES involvement started in 2008, there were tight lead times to develop full-scale activities for the 2008 primaries. However, through prompt coordination with the existing

UNDP and Sida-funded assistance, IFES was able to collaborate on specific activities related to TREP and training. Consequently, a heavy proportion of the activities under the CEPPS agreement were related to the 2009 General Elections. IFES concentrated its programming on providing technical assistance to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (*Tribunal Supremo Electoral*) in activities related to training of election officers, transmission of preliminary results, enfranchising voters with disabilities, and monitoring the media. IFES activities were conducted in coordination with UNDP, which was the main provider of technical assistance to the TSE. When UNDP withdrew its support on September 23, 2009, the full implementation of the technical assistance fell on IFES.

Regarding the training of election officials, limited assistance was provided by IFES for the primary elections in 2008, complementing the support provided by UNDP with Sida funding. During 2009, IFES collaborated in the design of training materials and produced a video that was used to train poll workers a few days before the elections.

The total number of poll workers participating in the November 2009 elections was 152,480 (10 poll workers –five principals and five alternates- for each of the 15,248 polling stations). IFES was involved in the training of 83,908 poll workers with 63,155 receiving accreditation (75.3 percent). The National Party (*Partido Nacional* - PN) and the Liberal Party (*Partido Liberal* - PL) had the largest number of trained poll workers and the highest presence in polling stations (13,667 and 12,848 respectively). Others smaller parties trained poll workers in about one-third of the polling stations. The remaining 67,557 poll workers were not trained through this formal mechanism, and were trained by the parties without any formal TSE/IFES intervention. Trafficking in elections credentials may have increased the presence of untrained poll workers.

Concerning the Transmission of Preliminary Results (*Transmisión de Resultados Electorales Preliminares*), IFES and UNDP provided significant technical support to its design and implementation. The TREP mechanism was the basis for the processing and release of preliminary electoral results in the least amount of time possible.

For the 2008 primary process, IFES assisted in the direct training of 6,210 TREP officials throughout the country. Regardless of the short preparatory timeframe, the TREP exercise provided a significant level of transparency and credibility to the process. Despite a few minor setbacks, the TREP was generally a successful program.

According to the September 2008-January 2010 IFES Final Report “...the TREP program in both elections utilized cell phone transmission, which was tested and proven to be both effective and cost efficient”.

IFES’s support to enfranchising voters with disabilities included assisting the TSE to sign a cooperation agreement with the three largest civil society organizations that promote the rights of persons with disabilities: Coordination of Rehabilitation Institutions and Associations of Honduras (CIARH); the National Federation of Organizations of Persons with Disabilities of Honduras (FENOPDIH); and the National Federation of Parents of Persons with Special Needs of Honduras (FENAPAPENSH).

IFES worked jointly with the TSE and organizations for persons with disabilities (*Personas con Discapacidades* – PCD) to facilitate their access to a sample of MERs based on recommendations from PCD organizations. This pilot project covered a total of 112 polling stations located in 11 departments (27 municipalities).

The program also included production of instructional materials on (1) basic rules of conduct when aiding persons with various disabilities, and (2) radio and television spots produced and hosted by persons with disabilities. A total of 226 election-day custodians were trained to provide support at polling stations during the general elections. One hundred fifty-seven mobile access ramps were built and a total of 3,635 voters with disabilities were assisted by the custodians.

Finally, IFES contributed to the setup and operation of a media monitoring center that covered the four main newspapers (*El Tiempo*, *El Heraldo*, *La Tribuna* and *La Prensa*), four radio stations (HRN, *Radio America*, *Radio Globo* and *Radio Cadena Voces*) and six TV stations (Channels 3, 5, 9, 10, 30 and 36). The items that were analyzed were articles in broadcasts referring to the November 2009 elections.

As to the specific results of the assistance, the monitoring system kept the TSE well informed of the coverage of their activities. However, IFES noted that the TSE did not take special advantage of the information as they failed to issue press releases or convene press conferences.

3.1.3. IRI

IRI provided support to the observation of the General Elections of November 2009 with somewhat ambitious objectives (as noted earlier). IRI sponsored a 12-member international election observation mission of short-term election observers to witness Honduras' General Elections. IRI's international observation team was comprised of Members of Parliament (MP) from Spain, Peru, and Mexico, a former European Union MP from The Netherlands, civil society representatives from Poland and Spain, and former government officials from the United States, all of whom were present on the ground two days before election-day. On election-day, IRI's observer teams visited more than 70 voting centers, observing the electoral process in more than 500 polling stations. After election-day, one team remained in Tegucigalpa conducting meetings to assess the post-electoral environment.

3.2. Sida-Funded Assistance

Sida has been providing technical assistance to the TSE and the RNP since 2003, through agreements with the OAS and UNDP. The OAS program was evaluated in 2007 in collaboration with the TSE and the RNP. The most important result was that the institutions managed to carry out the 2005 elections, despite the short preparation time. The evaluation highlighted the urgent need to strengthen the TSE and the RNP and at the political level, to increase the commitment towards sustainable democratic development. One of the most significant concerns was that the changes in the 2004 electoral framework related to institutional and political decision-making did not promote the expected depoliticization of the TSE and the RNP. The political parties still have a disproportionate degree of influence in the decision-making processes within these two organizations.

3.2.1. OAS

Sida contributed approximately US\$3,000,000 through the period 2003-2007 to support the TSE and the RNP. The main objectives of the program were to strengthen and institutionalize the TSE and the RNP in order to support the electoral process, carry out the elections in 2005, and provide post-electoral support for potential electoral reforms.

In January 2008, Sida decided to continue the aid, using the OAS as the main implementing agency. Sida's contribution was US\$1,924,000 (divided equally between the TSE and the RNP) for the period January 2008 - June 2010. A direct contribution of US\$463,400 from the OAS was added to this program.

The overall objectives of the project were to contribute to transparent and free elections and to an efficient and independent electoral authority. The specific activities were oriented towards: (1) setting up geographical and political electoral divisions; (2) disseminating electoral and civic education information campaigns; (3) defining procedures concerning administration and electoral logistics; (4) analyzing current electoral reforms and subsequent adjustments of administrative electoral processes; (5) evaluating TSE's work after the 2008 primary elections; and (6) applying lessons learned for better results in 2009.

On April 2008, shortly after the beginning of the project, there were serious disagreements between Sida and the OAS concerning the implementation of the program. Sida decided to terminate the agreement with the OAS effective January 30, 2009 and to continue support for the TSE and RNP through UNDP.

Given the events described above, the OAS was only able to implement the first part of a Verification of the Primary Sources of the National Electoral Census, as well as a document describing in detail the processes to build the electoral census. The OAS frequently undertakes such initiatives in countries where it provides technical assistance. In the case of Honduras the activity was not initially programmed. However, it was decided, with the agreement of the TSE and the RNP, to conduct it in two stages: (1) Desk study before the elections and (2) Field analysis after January 2009, the month that the agreement with Sida was terminated.

3.2.2. UNDP

On the basis of the recommendations of a needs-assessment mission that took place in November 2007, UNDP launched a large-scale project, with funding primarily from Sida, to provide technical assistance to the TSE. This support to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) through its Democratic Governance Program totaled approximately US\$964,000 from 2008-2009. This funding was suspended in September 2009 as a consequence of the *coup d'état*. However, Sida and UNDP reprogrammed these funds to be executed until the end of 2010 in capacity building and technical assistance related activities. Other support for the program came from the TSE, UNDP, and EU.

The project involved two phases to support the TSE. Phase one included supporting the organization of the primary elections in 2008 and consisted of the following components: (1)

support of the TREP; (2) support to public information; (3) support to poll worker training; and (4) support to the implementation of an electoral gender approach. Phase two included support to the general elections of 2009 based on the experience obtained during the implementation of the first phase. The main components of phase two were: (1) support to the TSE Electoral Plan; (2) capacity building related to the TREP; (3) technical assistance to poll workers; (4) continued support to public information; (5) media Monitoring (service contract implemented by IFES); and (6) systematization of Gender participation relevant data.

In 2010, the planned activities include supporting the TSE to: (1) formulate a 2010-2014 Strategic Plan; (2) carry out a 2008-2009 Strategic Evaluation; (3) create and install a Gender Equality Office; and (4) support the socialization and consultation on the topics of possible electoral reform.

3.2.3. TSE

In March 2009, Sida entered into a direct agreement with the TSE for assistance aimed at institutional strengthening. Based on the terms of the agreement, this cooperation was to end in June 2010, however, as a consequence of the *coup d'état*, Sida suspended cooperation with the TSE at the end of September 2009. The remnant funds were subsequently reprogrammed for other specific activities as per Sida's instructions. The Sida agreement totaled an amount of \$3.9 million Swedish Kronas (SEK) (approximately US\$560,000), and a total of \$2.5 million SEK (approximately US\$360,000) were disbursed to the TSE.

The objectives to support the TSE were to: (1) develop a proposal for reform of the Electoral Law; (2) update the electoral sectors based on new and existing population centers; (3) have the primary sources of the voter registry integrally verified; (4) develop a strategy for information to the public and civil voter education implemented with special focus on first time voters; and (5) generate the necessary conditions in the TSE to implement and monitor the project, including presentation of reports to Sida.

As in other cases, project implementation was affected by suspension of the disbursements of Sida funds in early October 2009. However, the agreement between Sida and the TSE continued to be valid, and the TSE continued the implementation of some of the activities with their own funds. In March 2010, the disbursements were restarted, and the remaining funds were used in updating the electoral divisions and the strengthening of the Department of Cartography, the final audit, and unforeseen expenses. Overall, the TSE demonstrated its capacity to effectively utilize and account for donor funds.

4. Electoral Assistance Findings and Conclusions (Q&A Format)

4.1. Overall Electoral Assistance

Were the activities supported by USAID, Sida and UNDP relevant to the needs of Honduras and the TSE?

All the activities supported by the donor agencies and implementers were relevant to the needs of Honduras and the TSE. The TREP program provided rapid results of the electoral process conducted by the TSE and that program was reinforced with the quick-count project managed by the domestic observation group. Other important activities that were relevant and beneficial to the TSE and Hondurans in general included programs supported by IFES and UNDP. Such activities included the first-of-its-kind disability project; the political party poll worker training; and the media project that provided useful information to voters in general.

The domestic and international observation missions sponsored by HD, IRI and NDI could also be considered important, though the special circumstances surrounding the electoral process made it difficult for these activities to succeed. In normal conditions, the usefulness of international observation or assessment missions that do not fulfill the internationally agreed standards as described in the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation might be questioned. Neither of the international missions supported by USAID met such standards. However, given the time frame in which the decision was made and the special situation in Honduras, those programs managed to overcome technical limitations and make a positive contribution to the overall effort of supporting the legitimacy of the electoral process. The absence of the OAS and other recognized international observation groups made NDI and IRI's assessment/observation processes more meaningful in the eyes of the international community. The recognition of a free, fair and transparent electoral process provided a strong argument to support the new government.

What were USAID's best technical approaches to improve the elections process through the CEPPS program?

The most useful components – those that had the most impact – were the technical support initiatives provided by IFES to the TREP and the quick-count undertaken by *Hagamos Democracia* supported by NDI. The pilot project for voters with disabilities was also acclaimed as a success by the majority of the people interviewed. Such an activity had never been attempted before. It reinforced the positive image of the Electoral Commission and motivated the organizations working on behalf of persons with disabilities which could result in long-term sustainability and probable expansion of the activity.

What were the weakest components of USAID-funded electoral assistance through the CEPPS?

The weakest component, from a technical standpoint, was the international observation program, as it did not fulfill minimum standards. However, it had political significance, given the prevailing situation. The absence of traditional observation missions such as the OAS and the EU provided them with more visibility in spite of their logistical limitations.

The timing of USAID's electoral assistance was another main weakness. International assistance programs are organized according to pre-approved country strategies, but they must also be flexible enough to avoid major delays in approving and providing funds during emergency situations like the 2009 political crisis in Honduras. Programs should continue to focus their attention on medium and long-term strategies in order to be more effective. In general, donor ability to provide a quick response and funds to local groups is rather lengthy due to bureaucratic procedures.

Similarly, which were the strongest and the weakest approaches, aid modalities and methods used in the electoral support funded by Sida?

The strength of the Sida funded project was its ability, for the first time, to convince the political parties and the TSE to provide large scale training to poll workers. The excellent links established between the UNDP project and the TSE, as well as the setting-up of the Gender Office, were another success. Direct assistance to the TSE during 2010 was successful, partly because the funds were limited and the TSE made a good effort to organize various training divisions.

It was more difficult to judge the weakest approaches of the electoral support funded by Sida, due to two factors. Based on comments made by a UNDP official, election activities sponsored by UNDP started too close to the primary election date (the OAS also had electoral programs that started in 2003, but the majority were not related to the primary process). In addition, during 2009, the disruption in the political process resulted in a suspension of Swedish aid in September, with most activities already in process.

To which extent was a human rights-based approach used when designing and carrying out electoral support?

None of the support provided had a direct connection with Human Rights, except in the very general sense that all of them supported the population's right to vote. In the case of the UN, the human rights-based approach is generally understood as the obligation of those involved in a project to contribute to create the conscience, within the supported organization, of institutional obligation to support and inform the target population about human rights. It is extremely difficult to judge

whether such a conscience was created, although the creation of a Citizen Participation Division (*Dirección de Participación Ciudadana*) with sections addressing women, youth and persons with disabilities can be considered an indicator of achievement of this goal.

What opportunities regarding assistance might USAID and Sida have missed?

The provision of quality advisory support at the highest level of the TSE could have been more permanent. This type of assistance is particularly useful when magistrates are new to the job and lack electoral experience as was the case in May 2009. A good example was the use of Rafael López-Pintor during the 2008 primary process (USAID paid his consulting fees through IFES, and UNDP paid for other logistical expenses). It may have been helpful to bring additional high-level electoral experts during the political crisis in order to advise the “new TSE” members. However, the political sensitivities and the difficult context in which the international cooperation was operating made that difficult. Based on meetings held with IDB, COSUDE, and Canadian and Spanish representatives (the team of experts were not able to meet with EU and Japanese delegates during our assessment mission to Honduras) we were able to infer that there was a coordinated effort among international donors. The major difficulty seemed to be focused on the lack of support of the electoral process after the *coup d’etat* due to political pressures. We were told that many donors met, even before the June 28 crisis, but very few countries committed their support to the elections.

What were the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the supported activities?

The activities were generally effective and had the foreseen impact. Sustainability is much more difficult to attain and it can be generally argued that when support is provided so close to election-day, it is more difficult to achieve.

- In the case of USAID-funded activities, support of the national observation program undertaken by MCD had limited impact. The second stage, provided through *Hagamos Democracia*, was effective and had a significant impact according to both participants in HD and TSE magistrates. The results of the quick-count provided by HD were used by the TSE to compensate delays with the results provided by the TREP. The results provided by HD were pivotal in keeping the general population peacefully waiting for the official results. However, sustainability will be limited unless those programs continue to be strengthened. Local authorities and organizations can learn these processes and can apply them on their own in the future. The other positive impact of domestic observation efforts was the organization of a network of volunteers distributed throughout the country (over 1,200 individuals in this case). Such a network can be significantly important while promoting sustainability if similar programs are developed under

the same strategic process. For instance, the network can be used for an analysis of the accuracy of the voter registry. Additionally, HD should benefit from other organizations that have worked in similar programs, such as the *Acuerdo de Lima* group, which is an experienced consortium of domestic organizations from Argentina, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela, etc.

- The international “assessment” conducted by NDI and the “observation” conducted by IRI, even if they did not fulfill accepted standards, partially achieved the sought-after impact. NDI and IRI have a wealth of experience conducting these types of missions. Nonetheless, this type of activity is not sustainable at the local level. Twenty-person election observation missions staying one week in the country does not have the same impact as one thousand domestic observers living in the host-country.
- Both USAID and Sida were involved in training efforts - through IFES and UNDP in the case of polling station and TREP workers – with adequate impact. But the training provided will not be sustainable, as it was limited in duration and in depth. The trained workers will not retain the information they received and for a new election, four years later, it will be necessary to undertake new training efforts. However, the ability to provide training could be sustained if the Institute for Citizenship Education and Training (*Instituto de Formación y Capacitación Ciudadana*, IFCC) continues to develop materials and maintains the list of individuals who previously worked as polling station officers.
- In the opinion of the assessors, the activities implemented by the OAS rate poorly on all three dimensions due to various changes of key and experienced personnel and the scope of work of the OAS/Sida programs, with the exception of some training and public information systems, that could be undertaken by the IFCC.
- Most of the activities implemented through UNDP were related to training and public information. The support provided to the implementation of gender-based approaches has resulted in the creation of an office within the TSE which will promote sustainability. A similar office related to persons with disabilities will sustain efforts started by IFES in 2009. There are other activities in process, particularly the one focusing on the TSE Electoral Plan, the Strategic Plan for 2010-2014, and the support to the Socialization and Consultation of Electoral Reforms that will lead to a final proposal for a new electoral law. These projects can make significant contributions to the strengthening and institutionalization of the TSE.
- Sida-funded activities were implemented directly by the TSE, particularly the cartography project, which qualifies well on all three dimensions - effectiveness, impact and sustainability. For example, in the case of the cartography project, the TSE organized a database with information on all polling centers. As a result, information exists in a systemized format that can be effectively used in future elections.

In summary, all these activities can be considered generally effective and had adequate impact. However, in the opinion of the assessment team, the sustainability of these efforts will be limited unless follow-on initiatives are undertaken. Illustrative initiatives include strengthening support for the cartography program and for the domestic observation umbrella group that needs to maintain a well-trained, core group during non-election periods. Assistance during non-election years is a key component for saving funds and increasing impact during election years.

What overall recommendations would be relevant for future electoral assistance in Honduras, funded by USAID and/or other members of the donor community?

While there are many potential areas for support, there are three that should be given priority.

First, it would be important to provide support to the TSE in relation to the implementation of the IFCC, which should focus on documenting and maintaining the experience achieved during previous elections in training, civic education and public information. Since this project will not involve a large amount of funds, it is recommended that the program be implemented through UNDP or eventually through a direct grant to the TSE, which has demonstrated its capacity to effectively utilize and account for funds. While such a direct grant would avoid administrative costs associated with implementing organizations such as UNDP, there are other benefits of utilizing such organizations that should be considered, including their ability to draw upon networks of experts and comparative information.

Second, it is recommended to continue support to the *Hagamos Democracia* umbrella group. The network can be used to conduct an audit of the electoral census. This will provide the TSE with an estimated total of deceased persons still included in the voter list, those who have migrated and those who have changed address within Honduras but have not reported the new address. Another activity would be to conduct distance learning on electoral subjects, both through electronic and printed materials, using the contact mechanisms that were successfully used during the observation process.

Third, emphasis should be placed on support for electoral reform by different stakeholders. Some of the basic problems of the electoral system remain to be solved. Assistance could be provided to support the TSE, possibly in collaboration with CSOs, in (1) socialization activities that are presently in progress; (2) complementary activities such as seminars with international experts to discuss key electoral reforms; (3) distribution of key materials (comparative analysis) related to electoral reform; (4) development, printing and dissemination

of election documents; and (5) study tours for TSE magistrates and divisional officers.

4.2. Institutional Strengthening

What components were the most successful in achieving a national impact to advance independence, transparency, inclusiveness, democratic credibility, efficiency, and accountability from the TSE?

The magistrates of the TSE affirmed that international assistance was crucial for electoral administration and institutional strengthening during delicate political conditions. Beyond the accomplishment of conducting the electoral process itself, however, it is difficult to assess a national impact resulting from the international assistance to the TSE.

Four components were identified as having contributed directly to the TSE's successful implementation of the elections in terms of efficiency, transparency, inclusiveness and democratic credibility. First, efficiency was improved with the training of poll workers. Second, both efficiency and transparency improved with the implementation of the TREP which was designed to accelerate the reporting of election results. Third, the pilot project to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities (PCD) gave access to a segment of the population that previously had been hindered from voting. The program had a limited impact in terms of the percentage of the population, but had a tremendous success among PCDs and other minority groups. Fourth, the quick-count by *Hagamos Democracia* provided checks and balances on potential manipulation of results. Thus, the coordination of the TSE with *Hagamos Democracia* to announce the preliminary results enhanced the democratic credibility of the electoral process and strengthened citizen trust in the institutional accountability of the TSE.

To what extent is the impact sustainable?

Time pressures in the organization and administration of the elections appeared to have resulted in limited attention paid to sustainability. Even very successful components, like the support to *Hagamos Democracia*, did not include the effective transfer of knowledge in relation to the more technical aspects of quick-count sample design. NDI provided strong support to the HD consortium, but their transfer of knowledge on specific technical areas was not always shared with local organizations.

In the face of limited resources, should USAID and other donor resources be directed towards programs that operate at the local, national or regional level in the future?

In order to have successful, sustainable programs, it is recommended that resources be invested at all levels. The most efficient and successful programs are

managed from the bottom up, meaning from the local to the regional to the national level. The team believes that the assistance should be continued in non-elections years in order to maximize impact of all programs and in the end provide sustainability among local groups and organizations. At the same time, the EWG participant donors in the EWG that are interested in continuing support to the electoral process need to work together and with the TSE to support the electoral entity during non-election years. It is advisable to support efforts to decentralize the TSE through departmental offices, which do not exist, in order to allow the TSE to better manage elections on the local levels. Doing so would also encourage effective bottom up management.

Are there legal or institutional constraints for independence, inclusiveness, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability of an electoral process?

There are legal and institutional constraints on independence, inclusiveness, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability of an electoral process, as demonstrated by the politicization of the electoral structure, as well as the financial dependence of both the TSE and the RNP. Only through an electoral reform that institutionalizes an independent TSE can this be changed. For example, the main idea behind the 2003 electoral reform was to select an Independent Election Commission with nonpartisan magistrates. On paper it looked like a good idea, but in reality the situation was completely different. Though the four current magistrates all represent different political parties, they are presently working and focusing more on strengthening their institution than blindly responding to the pressures of their parties.

Are there clearly identified areas in which political interventions limit the TSE in issues regarding transparency and accountability?

The TSE has a clear history of politicization that has begun with the appointment of Magistrates and continued through the hiring of staff and selection of poll workers. Given the politicization of the TSE, and based on different interviews, political interventions could have occasionally limited TSE transparency and accountability. However, the assessment team did not find strong evidence of clearly identified cases of such political interventions during the last electoral process.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the TSE and RNP working relationship?

A clear strength is that some of the RNP personnel and consultants formerly worked on TSE related projects, which is an added value in future coordination efforts between the two institutions.

The main weakness is poor communication and information sharing, particularly of voter list updates. The working relationship between the TSE and the RNP

could be improved. The TSE is concerned about its dependence on the infrastructure coverage of the RNP. It would like to develop its own, at least at the departmental level. Conversely, the RNP has nationwide coverage and the TSE would like to have a similar structure, but this will have a financial impact.

How can the TSE strengthen their human resources and information database; specifically in training, cartography and electoral census?

The TSE can strengthen its training, cartography and the electoral census by conducting permanent training in those areas. The TSE should reinforce a training division in order to develop long term internal capabilities. The training capabilities the TSE presently has focus on a handful of activities that are solely oriented towards election-year. The assessment team recommends that additional support be provided to the new offices of gender, youth, disability, etc. and support them during non-election years. However, the small size of the organization makes it difficult to develop sound strategies. Cartography should continue to receive support, particularly at the current stage of updating the lists of neighborhoods and villages (*listados de colonias y caseríos*). It is necessary to conduct an audit of the electoral census since it is the main weakness of the electoral system.

What are the types of strategies that USAID and other donors can support to strengthen institutional capacity in the future?

Overall, the TSE and the RNP should continue to receive support to strengthen institutional capacities in those organizations. The TSE is presently restructuring its organization and creating new divisions in order to strengthen their institution. This will create a more effective organization, less dependent on foreign assistance in the future. This type of assistance needs to be provided on non-election years in order to have a significant impact. In the case of the RNP, the institutional strengthening is more cumbersome, since it is a bigger organization and has a more complex structure.

4.3. Civil Society Oversight of the Electoral Process

What are the strengths and weaknesses identified in the civil society coalition that carried out domestic monitoring in the 2008 primaries?

MCD, the group initially supported with technical assistance for domestic monitoring during the 2008 primaries, was successful in completing the election observation. However, in January of 2009, NDI convened a meeting with the leadership of MCD to discuss the political activities of some of its members. NDI considered the nature of these political activities as a threat to the neutrality of the domestic observer group. When MCD did not adopt a politically neutral role, NDI was forced to seek a new partnership arrangement which resulted in the formation of the *Hagamos Democracia* consortium. It is important to

highlight that there are numerous groups in Honduras that are interested and have the capability of working in election-related programs. However, the ability to maintain a neutral role is an ongoing challenge in a highly-charged political environment.

What are the strengths and weaknesses identified in the civil society coalition that carried out domestic monitoring in the 2009 general elections?

A key strength of the *Hagamos Democracia* consortium is its breadth of organizations.– Both CARITAS and FOPRIDEH have extensive networks around the country that were essential to the success of the venture. This success is due, in part, to the coordinating role undertaken by FOPRIDEH, which had the organizational structure necessary to facilitate activities and to undertake the administration and financial requirements of the NDI sub-grant. Another strength worth highlighting was the successful quick-count program implemented on election-day in coordination with the TSE.

The principal weakness of HD is that the consortium is not sustainable unless activities are designed and financed. Another weakness stems from the extreme polarization of the political environment, which affects relationships between the groups. Numerous people and organizations ended their friendships and working relationships due to the 2009 political crisis. It is imperative that the international community play a role to maintain stability in the groups that are working together and try to bring consensus among the ones that have differences.

Is there evidence that civil society has become more empowered in election monitoring as a result of USAID-funded activities?

Yes, there is conclusive evidence that some sectors of civil society have become more empowered by USAID-funded activities. First, the organizational experience brought a large cross-section of civil society into a neutral, observer role in a highly charged political environment. The HD consortium and the ME group were able to coordinate activities together and at the same time strengthened their institutions through the election observation work. These groups tried to develop programs that benefited the Honduran citizenry as a whole. Citizens felt that they played a direct role in assuring the electoral process. Second, the legitimacy afforded by the TSE to the domestic observers played a mutually-reinforcing role that contributed to the recognition that the electoral process accurately reflected the will of the Honduran people. The specific and most notorious example in this case was the quick-count results shared by the HD consortium with the TSE magistrates. Both institutions benefited from this sharing of the information. The TREP was not as successful as was intended, but when the final results arrived, the numbers between both groups were very similar.

What are the windows of opportunity for Honduran civil society to continue to be engaged in election-related issues?

It is important for Honduran civil society to sustain the level of effort between elections and leverage the work of the 2008-2009 electoral periods. There is interest and political will to address civic education and electoral reform in the near future. This interest should continue and not be lost before the next election cycle starts. The TSE started visiting different departments around the country in order to interact with key political and civil society leaders at the local levels in order to obtain useful feedback and support of their work plan for the next election cycle. The TSE is also gathering information, ideas and support for future electoral reforms. This is a useful and ground-breaking exercise that can provide a much better image of the TSE as an institution. Civil society should also be planning future activities in order to request advance support from the international community.

Who were other relevant actors in civil society throughout the electoral process?

Other relevant actors in civil society included the UNDP-funded group, *Mirador Electoral*, which complemented the observation conducted by *Hagamos Democracia*. *Mirador Electoral* focused its programs on the pre- and post-electoral processes and on the qualitative aspects of the election. ME published useful election reports on their observation experience from the 2008 primary and 2009 general elections. The report includes analysis on media coverage, campaign finance, political violence monitoring, statistical data, and general recommendations. HD reporting focused on election-day activities and, in particular, the quick-count.

Were their interventions considered positive or negative?

Overall, the interventions were considered positive by those actors who recognize the legitimacy of the elections and negative by those who consider them to be illegitimate. There was a minority of people interviewed who claimed to know nothing about the domestic observation efforts. Political party representatives tended not to be familiar with the different domestic observer groups and their roles during the electoral process.

What are the types of strategies or programs that USAID and other donors can support in the future to further empower civil society engagement in election-related issues?

Strategies and programmatic initiatives that can be supported in the future to further empower civil society engagement in election-related issues include the following: (1) use the current network to gather information for the evaluation of the electoral census; (2) support civil society organizations to participate in future

electoral reform debates; and (3) design and implement a distance-learning program for members of the network and other potential clients. HD and ME can benefit from the experience of other Latin American organization that for many years have been working on these types of electoral matters. They have a network, mentioned in a previous section, named *Acuerdo de Lima* and can be in contact through the network of NDI supports.

4.4. Electoral Reform

Are there limitations, constraints, or barriers to participation in the Electoral Law, census or other relevant laws and regulations (pertaining to running for office)?

There are a number of problems that became evident during the interviews; some are related to the laws and some to standard practices. It was suggested by some of the interviewees – mostly from the civil society – that there are too many obstacles to independent candidacies, which civil society values highly, and that it is difficult to compete in the primaries. However, the number of independent candidates and movements participating in the primaries indicates the opposite. The eventual constraints are not in the law. What most interviewees wanted was greater involvement of the TSE in all the stages of the primary and general elections processes.

Are there limitations, constraints, or barriers to women's participation in the Electoral Law or other relevant laws and regulations (pertaining to running for office)?

The assessment team found no formal legal barriers to women's participation. There was no evidence of limiting women's participation in the political process, although the numbers of formerly elected officials are relatively low in comparison to the number of women registered in the voters list. Women represent the majority of the population in the country and in the voter lists, but they are a small minority in terms of political representation.

How did the recently concluded electoral process include and impact women as candidates, elected officials and voters?

The percentage of women voters was larger than that of men, as has historically been the case in Honduras. However, there were rather low proportions of elected women at both the national and municipal levels. For example, out of 298 municipalities only 17 (6%) have women Mayors. Another statistical figure is that the number of women deputies in the National Assembly has decreased from 32 in 2005 to 25 in 2009, with a total of 128 legislators.

How could the outcome for women be improved?

A number of proposals for increasing participation of women have been sponsored by civil society organizations. One of these proposals is increasing the percentages of women in party lists from the present 30% to 50%. Another proposal is the mandatory requirement of the political parties to intercalate the names of women throughout the list. An additional suggestion is that when an elected official resigns, he/she should be replaced by a person of the same sex. Usually, women that resign or are asked to do so are replaced by a male candidate. According to the Swedish-based organization International IDEA: “Democracy is supposed to transform power relations between men and women by promoting equal distribution of power and influence between women and men.” An increasing number of countries are introducing various types of gender quotas for elections. In fact, half of the countries of the world today use some type of electoral quota for their parliament. There are three types of recognized gender quotas: (1) Reserved seats (constitutional and/or legislative); (2) Legal candidate quotas (constitutional and/or legislative); and (3) Political party quotas (voluntary).

Are there limitations, constraints, or barriers to participation within the political parties’ practices or bylaws?

There are clearly limitations and barriers in present political practices. The team did not analyze the political parties’ bylaws since there was not enough time to conduct such analysis. The subject was not covered in the interviews with political parties, as the time available was used for questions concerning more relevant topics. On the basis of the experience of members of the team in other countries, political party bylaws are formally adequate as they have to fulfill requirements established by law, and the adequacy of their by-laws is one of the few things that are usually checked carefully. In most cases, however, the practice differs somewhat from what is stated in the bylaws.

Are there specific recommendations for electoral reform based on the findings of question 2 and 3 above?

In the specific case of women participation, the recommendations for reform are as follows: (1) Increase the percentages of women in party lists from 30% to 50%; (2) include the mandatory requirement of the political parties to intercalate the names of women throughout the list; and (3) when an elected official resigns, he/she should be replaced by a person of the same sex.

What recommendations can be made to the TSE for a future electoral reform?

There have been discussions on the possibility of a change in the electoral system, moving from the present system of open list proportional representation to a single member district system. Such a new system would have numerous side-

effects, many of them quite troublesome. It would have administrative implications, such as the need to delimitate the boundaries of the constituencies. This is theoretically a technical job, but with important political implications. The TSE has chosen not to get involved in discussions concerning a new electoral system. While the TSE may not be involved in the more political aspects of the discussion concerning how seats will be allocated, it is the TSE's duty to fully inform the public and the political bodies about the consequences and implications of the alternative choices. Such alternatives include the identification of different systems that are not included in the public debate, which seems to be focused in replacing the open list proportional representation system with a departmental single member constituency based system. In addition to discussing the consequences and implications of changes to the electoral system, the TSE should coordinate with civil society to address other more technical areas of electoral reform to enhance transparency and accountability of political actors and election administrators. Such areas of reform could include ballot access, campaign financing, campaign regulations, election-day procedures, and election dispute resolution among others.

4.5. Donor Coordination

What are the strengths and weaknesses of co-financing technical assistance for specific areas?

It is rare to find a case of an electoral process that is funded by a single donor, and it will probably not be the case for Honduras in the future. There are two approaches that are followed in order to unify efforts and funds from different donors. The first approach involves the use of „basket' funds, where the electoral organizations present a list of needed support and an organization (most frequently the OAS or the UN) is charged with the administration of the trust fund. Donors contribute to the fund, in some cases specifying the items on which their contribution should be spent. The second approach is an agreement between donors and the election commission or entity on the allocation of funding for the different items. Each of the donors will then implement its component following its own regulations. There is also a combination of the two, in which some donors contribute to a trust fund, and others contribute independently, but in coordination. The basic strength of these approaches is that they avoid duplication – although there is never assurance that the needs of the electoral organization will be fully covered. By avoiding duplication effective coordination can help enhance national ownership in the process by fostering more effective coverage of national priorities.

There are also a few weaknesses in these approaches. First, there is a tendency for donors to concentrate on certain components, which are more visible or easier to implement. Sometimes other necessary, less visible, but more important, contributions which may be priorities of national institutions are not offered. While effective coordination offered by the „basket' fund approach or other mechanism can help mitigate this concern, „basket' funds are burdened with

overhead costs. Second, it is common for the funding related to certain commitments to be delayed, placing the „basket’ funds in a difficult position. In such cases, direct and coordinated donor funding can be more reliable. Third, if one or more of the donors suddenly withdraws, as was the case in Honduras, albeit under extraordinary circumstances, the mechanism collapses, and the remaining donors and the recipients have to adjust to the new situation.

The TREP mechanism was the basis for the processing and release of preliminary electoral results. USAID/IFES and Sida/UNDP provided significant technical support to the TREP and its design. The main responsibility for the support during the primaries fell on UNDP, as IFES had arrived only shortly before and was able to provide only limited cooperation.

For the general elections, UNDP had withdrawn, and the TSE appointed a General Coordinator who replaced the UNDP consultant that had assisted with the activity. Furthermore, the TSE had changed leadership and the Consultative Council of Political Parties got quite involved in the subject. There were tensions between the TREP coordinators, originally five related to different parties and the TSE decided to appoint a General Coordinator, but tensions subsisted.

However, in spite of the numerous problems described above, the TREP was a rather successful operation. After deducting duplicate calls (some 7,500) 12,262 calls were received, of which 10,755 were accepted. This represented coverage of 70.5% of the MRE and 71% of the votes. Most of the calls were received before 9 pm. The results of this 70% had less than 1% difference with final results.

What are the benefits of continuing donor coordination under the G-16 for future election assistance?

The G-16 is the best way to coordinate and is useful for discussing general issues regarding the political context, as well as the overall support. However, after commitments are made, a smaller operational committee comprised of those who will effectively contribute to and be in charge of oversight, should be created. According to an IDB representative, it was suggested that an Election Working Group (EWG), committed to supporting election related programs, must be formed for this specific role.

What were the most effective approaches to providing technical assistance from the international donors?

During the assessment mission, the team was able to meet with UNDP, IDB, COSUDE, and CIDA representatives, all of whom mentioned the importance of donor coordination. The G-16 is a good venue to continue discussing and analyzing future assistance to the electoral process, but this should only be done with donor countries that are committed to supporting the TSE, the RNP, or NGOs and civil society groups working in this specific area. The EWG should be

created as an arm of the G-16 which will be dedicated to discussing electoral issues and assistance. An IDB official recommend waiting for the Government of Honduras to come up with specific priorities included in the Government Plan (*Plan de Nación*) in order to coordinate and cooperatively organize electoral assistance funds. It is not known where the GOH will prioritize the electoral component. Once it is prioritized, donors can then coordinate the type of assistance that can be provided to the TSE. Donors need to coordinate what electoral areas to support (TSE and RNP). The TSE will continue to need specific assistance in areas such as poll worker training, TREP, get-out-the-vote, and institutional strengthening. The RNP will need support on institutional strengthening and in the renewal of the ID card.

What overall recommendations would be relevant to further enhance donor coordination in election-related matters for Honduras?

In order to enhance donor coordination, an effective and basic approach should take into consideration the main electoral problems and weaknesses based on studies and recommendations. The OAS, IFES, IRI, NDI, HD, ME, and others have observed elections in Honduras and have provided various recommendations, conclusions and lessons learned. Some of previous recommendations have been campaign finance control, national training program to poll workers, party poll watchers, gender equality, get-out-the-vote campaigns, etc. Interested donors should agree and manage a common pool of resources to be used as a framework in order to channel the potential assistance of beneficiaries in a more coordinated way.

Donors need to have a coordinated agenda as soon as possible in order to support future electoral processes (future primaries and general elections). The assistance provided during non-election years is sometimes more effective and less costly than that given weeks or days before an electoral process.

Donors must first analyze the root of all the electoral successes and failures before they can accurately commit its assistance. There is usually a list of priorities that the electoral authority and/or NGO groups will provide to donors. In order to avoid duplication of efforts and since the funds may be limited in this field, the proposed strategy may enhance coordination among the different donors and benefit the potential recipients.

4.6. The Coup and Donor Coordination

Considering the highly polarized political situation after the June 28 coup, the disputed legitimacy of the elections, and the different positions taken by donors regarding whether or not to provide or continue electoral assistance – what conclusions or assessment can be made concerning the relevance, effectiveness and consequences of different donor positions and actions when it comes to the overall goal of promoting democracy in Honduras?

The withdrawal of support by several donors impacted the cooperation to the TSE and the RNP, but the remaining providers compensated for such withdrawal. It is clear that the withdrawal had an impact on the adequacy of the electoral process. Specifically, the local electoral authorities were clearly affected by the withdrawal of important donations in specific areas of work (poll worker training, *custodios electorales*, TREP, media monitoring, etc.) two months before the electoral process. Some TSE members stated that the funding was not the most important aspect of the withdrawal, but the sensation of being left alone with no personal support. The electoral process was finally completed within local and international standards and it was recognized by all international and domestic observer groups. Moreover, the participating political parties and candidates officially recognized and accepted the victory of now President Porfirio Lobo

In some cases, assistance efforts could be postponed (for instance the RNP), while in others it was compensated by the ingenuity of those who remained providing support. USAID was the only donor that continued to provide support to the TSE and the electoral process through the CEPPS partners. IFES, IRI and NDI were able to accomplish the majority of their programs. More important, they were able to be involved in key areas of the electoral process (TREP and quick-count) that helped maintain stability in a country with a high level of polarization. For many people, these elections were held in a contaminated environment so the results would be considered a farce. In the end, the Honduran people themselves decided what to do and who to vote for. With the benefit of hindsight, it can be argued that the withdrawal caused unnecessary harm to programs such as the TREP and the quick-count and ultimately had no significant negative impact on the final results. The coordination efforts between the TSE and HD proved to be decisive during one of the most fundamental areas of the electoral process: the electoral results. Both organizations were able to coordinate through the TREP and quick-count programs. The latter one had the most impact, since it was an independent group among all political actors.

The Honduran electoral experience was unique. It started with a novelty primary process in 2008, a *coup d'état* in mid-2009, and General Elections in November of 2009 that provided legitimacy to the new GOH.

5. General Conclusions and Recommendations

USAID's and Sida's assistance to the TSE and other electoral civil society actors through CEPPS, OAS, and UNDP was effective. The electoral support program started with the preparation of the 2008 primary process and continued for the November 2009 electoral cycle. While the TSE has clearly made significant leaps in its technical competence and its capacity to manage the electoral process, weaknesses remain, and there is still ample work to justify a follow-on program. The same has to be said for programs developed by civil society groups that participated in the electoral support program.

Through its assessment of USAID's and Sida's electoral support program, the assessment team arrived at a series of findings concerning the strengths and weaknesses of programs. On the basis of these conclusions, the team has developed a series of priority recommendations which will, if implemented, a) increase the efficiency of USAID and other donors' future assistance to the TSE; and b) lead to greater technical capacity and independence for the TSE.

5.1. Conclusions

- While limited assistance was provided by IFES with USAID funding for the primary elections in 2008, due to the start date of the program, IFES effectively complemented the support provided by UNDP with Sida funding. During 2009, IFES and UNDP collaborated effectively to support institutional strengthening and electoral administration issues until the withdrawal of UNDP, at which time IFES became the main direct partner to the TSE, which also directly hired key former UNDP staff.
- The assistance provided through IFES was quite satisfactory, given the difficult conditions in which it was provided after the withdrawal of UNDP. IFES adapted swiftly to the changing circumstances and made significant contributions that complemented the much larger efforts conducted by the previous implementer.
- The assistance provided through NDI was quite satisfactory. In the case of national observation, NDI was quick and effective in adapting to changing circumstances that increased the complexity of the mission. The decision to launch a new consortium because of the politicization of the one involved in the primaries was the correct one. The same can be said concerning changes in the size and scope of the HD observation effort, and the decision to concentrate in the quick-count that proved to be successful.
- In normal conditions, the assessment team would have considered that the minimum international election observation standards were not reached. However, these were not normal conditions and, given the very special circumstances in which the 2009 elections took place, the effort contributed to providing legitimacy to the electoral process. It should be further noted that the decision by NDI to use the term international "assessment" rather than "observation" was the right one.
- IRI's effort contributed to the legitimacy of the electoral process. As in the case of NDI, in normal conditions the assessment team would have considered that the minimum

international election observation standards were not reached. It should be further pointed out that, in spite of the election restrictions, IRI opted to use the term “international observation”, rather than “international assessment,” used by NDI. Given the short time frame of the observation program, the objectives defined for the mission were very difficult to accomplish. The political environment was completely charged and the lead time the observe groups had in order to organize an acceptable observation mission was less than ideal.

- As to the controversy between Sida and the OAS, and according to the conversations held with all the relevant actors, there was a fundamental difference between the two groups. Sida supported OAS programs from 2003 until 2008 when the termination of their agreement was final. The OAS wanted to run the program as theirs, while Sida felt that local ownership of the program by the TSE was most important.
- It should be noted that there were also other relevant issues. The belief of the OAS was that the Direction of Electoral Cooperation and Observation was not satisfied with the performance of the people in the field. On the other hand, Sida and the TSE were satisfied with the work of the OAS field directors. It is worth mentioning that, after the signing of the second phase of Sida support, the TSE chose the same person that OAS had dismissed as Project Advisor. Sida had recently conducted an evaluation of the 2003-2007 support with quite positive results. The technical personnel that were dismissed had been responsible for the implementation of these activities. In spite of being its first experience with direct assistance, the TSE delivered adequately on the objectives of the project. The TSE has shown the capacity for managing and handling direct funding provided by Sida in 2009.
- The international community was united in not recognizing the Micheletti government and in 2009, the suspension of support two-and-a-half months before election-day significantly diminished the impact of the assistance given by Sida and managed by UNDP. However, the activities developed in the initial months contributed significantly to the success of the election process, even if they had to be completed by other organizations and or consultants.

5.2. Recommendations

- Provide long-term assistance to the modernization of the administrative and structural components of the TSE and the RNP. Direct funding of the TSE, in particular, should be considered in the future as it has demonstrated its capacity to effectively utilize and account for donor funds.
- Include realistic expectations about program outcomes that should be defined appropriately and plan them with ample time before the next electoral cycle.
- Develop long-term strategic electoral and leadership programs. USAID should pay special attention to youth leaders and women around the country, especially at the departmental and municipal levels. The majority of the Honduran population base is

composed of women and youth (18-30 years old). There is a new generation of young leaders around the country that are eager to participate, but have not been given the opportunity to engage politically.

- Donors should maintain a low profile in cases of increasing internal political conflict. The polarization in the country is very high and local groups are divided for or against different donors providing funding support in the country. Donors should work closely together in order to reach a broader segment of the society and achieve a bigger impact with their programs.
- Develop trust in local partners (TSE and CSOs) and demonstrate political neutrality. Projects need to engage all political stakeholders in the country and disassociate from favoring particular political or civil society groups. It is important that all sectors of society be engaged more actively in support for transparency, accountability and democratic governance.
- Engage local consultants and trainers in workshops or other activities in order to strengthen sustainability efforts. It is necessary to build capacity and sustainability in the country by ways of promoting greater ownership of acquired information and skills.
- Promote greater communication and coordination among local partners. It is important to find mechanisms that allow greater communication and coordination between local partners to avoid duplication of efforts and generate greater synergies from different project activities. This is an important element since civil society organizations mirror in many ways the problems affecting the political system.
- Coordinate with the international donor community in the near future. Donor coordination is essential, particularly in a country like Honduras. The EWG should continue working together in order to discuss and plan electoral matters in a more coordinated way. The donors interested in supporting electoral programs should be the ones participating in this group.
- Engage all political stakeholders in the country since it is essential to diversify the ideological orientation of local groups. Diversification of groups is essential in order to strengthen civil society organizations. Donors should focus on supporting smaller local level organizations or networks that can perform programs focused at grass-root levels.
- Encourage the TSE and the RNP to take steps to mitigate partisanship in their ranks through merit-based hiring practices and developing an *esprit de corps* within each institution. At the same time, each should develop strong public relations campaigns in order to show that they are taking concrete steps to serve the public interest, rather than separate partisan interests. In reality, the magistrates of the TSE may continue to be appointed in a partisan manner, but it is in their benefit to demonstrate a more institutional face, particularly during departmental visits and dialogues around the country.

ANNEXES

- A. Assessment Team Bios**
- B. Scope of Work and List of Questions**
- C. List of Meetings**

ANNEX A - ASSESSMENT TEAM BIOS

Jeffrey Carlson

Team Leader for the Electoral Education and Integrity Program Creative Associates International

Jeffrey Carlson possesses more than 15 years of international elections experience with a specialization in electoral integrity and political finance with Creative Associates International (Creative), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Designing and implementing international democracy and governance initiatives in countries around the world, he brings vast technical and comparative knowledge, as well as cross-cultural understanding to his work. Carlson is currently Team Leader for Creative's Electoral Education and Integrity Programs in Washington, DC. From 2007-2009, Carlson served as Chief of Party for IFES in Egypt, and before that he managed IFES's global initiatives on political finance and public ethics. These initiatives supported efforts by policy makers, governmental regulators, political parties, civil society, media, and academics to develop more transparent, accountable, and credible systems of political integrity in more than 20 countries around the world. In addition to managing other election-related and civic education programs, he has written and contributed to the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network and several electoral and political integrity publications, including IFES's *Political Finance in Post-Conflict Societies* and *Money and Politics Guide*. An honorary member of the Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials (ACEEEO), Carlson holds a master's degree in public management from the University of Maryland.

Patricio Gajardo

Assessment Team Leader and Evaluation Specialist

Patricio Gajardo, an evaluations and elections expert, brings 18 years of experience designing, implementing and evaluating elections and political processes programs. As an election specialist he observed and verified presidential, legislative, municipal/local elections and referenda in over 15 countries, particularly in Central America and has participated in a total of 45 election observation missions. With expertise in evaluation and as a member of election missions, he conducted numerous field surveys, interviewed political leaders, and liaised between international and national observation groups. Mr. Gajardo also has experience working with international donors, including USAID, UN, Sida and DFID, to finance programs in Latin America. Responsible for all IFES programs in the Americas, he coordinated field offices, implemented projects, and developed new programs. Mr. Gajardo has also designed and managed numerous USAID and OAS-funded programs in Central and South America. Mr. Gajardo developed an extensive knowledge of Honduras's political and electoral systems while conducting out-of-country voter analysis for the National Election Tribunal. In his most recent role as an elections advisor to USAID in Nicaragua, Mr. Gajardo worked with civil society and political parties to evaluate electoral processes and recommendations. He provided significant political and electoral analysis and also served as the main liaison between USAID and the US Embassy in Nicaragua. In addition, he coordinated the CEPPS program in Nicaragua, managing programmatic activities of organizations such as IFES, IRI and NDI during pre- and post-election processes. Mr. Gajardo was actively involved in the 2006 elections in Nicaragua as the

Deputy Chief of Mission for OAS, where he selected and assigned 180 observers in 17 departments and regions around the country. As an elections assessment specialist, he provided a pre-election evaluation of the political and electoral system in Paraguay where he served as the main liaison between IFES and the Paraguayan Election Commission. Mr. Gajardo coordinated an electoral registry audit program in El-Salvador and worked closely with the Salvadorian Election Commission (TSE) and the Civil Registry Office. Mr. Gajardo, a native Spanish speaker, has a BA in International Relations and Latin American Studies.

Dr. Horacio Boneo
Senior Elections Expert

Dr. Horacio Boneo is an elections practitioner with more than 45 years of experience and expertise in the evaluation of election processes, electoral systems administration, electoral reform, and civil and electoral registries. Dr. Boneo has aided in improving the electoral systems in more than 50 countries while holding high ranking positions at the UN and the International Institute for Democracy and Election Assistance. He has represented numerous international missions as an elections expert for projects funded by USAID, Sida and the UN. In his present role as a consultant he has designed and evaluated electoral systems, for organizations such as Creative, NDI, IFES and UNDP. Dr. Boneo also brings extensive Central and South America experience, where he has designed evaluations for several countries in the region. In Honduras, he worked as an advisor for the UN/Department for Development Support & Management Services, assisting the organization to implement election-based programs. In the past year, Dr. Boneo carried out an assessment of the capacity and strategic plan of the Guatemalan TSE, evaluated the role played by the Instituto Federal Electoral in the control of media and of political parties in Mexico and appraised the electoral reform process in El Salvador. Dr. Boneo is fluent in English, Spanish and Italian and holds a Master's in Public Policy and a Ph.D. in Economics.

Dr. Jennie Lincoln
Evaluation Specialist

Dr. Jennie Lincoln, an expert on democracy and Latin American politics and a political science professor with over thirty years of electoral assessment, research and program experience in Latin America and the Caribbean. Over the course of her career, Dr. Lincoln has participated in both the design and evaluation of election assistance and legislative strengthening projects for USAID in Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Venezuela and Nicaragua with Creative Associates; Management Systems International (MSI); SUNY-CID; Development Associates, Inc.; and IFES. Dr. Lincoln's expertise in democratic initiatives, particularly electoral processes and legislative strengthening, stems from extensive academic study and programmatic fieldwork in Central America. During her Fulbright professorship in Costa Rica (1984-1986), she participated in the early formation of the Center for Electoral Assistance and Promotion (CAPEL), created to support election administration in the hemisphere. During that time, she served as a credentialed observer for elections in Honduras (1985) and Costa Rica (1996). Dr. Lincoln served as Associate Director of the Carter Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program, leading election observation projects in Panama, Nicaragua, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Guyana in the 1990s, and observing elections in

Venezuela (2004) and Nicaragua (1996 and 2006). Dr. Lincoln is fluent in English and Spanish and holds a Master's and PhD in Political Science.

Patrick Quirk
Technical Manager

Patrick Quirk brings nearly six years of designing, implementing and evaluating elections, civil society and media development projects in more than 13 countries including Honduras, Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Nicaragua. Mr. Quirk has experience designing, organizing and implementing electoral assessments. Most recently, he performed two assessments in Somaliland related to the 2010 Presidential elections: (1) an August 2008 Quality Control Assessment of the National Electoral Council's (NEC) preparations for the 2008-2009 voter registration process; and (2) a July 2009 assessment of the procedures used to develop the Final Voter's List (FVL). For each assessment Mr. Quirk coordinated in-country logistics, developed the assessment methodology and drafted the final report. Currently pursuing a Ph.D., Mr. Quirk is fluent in Spanish and holds MA Degrees in International Affairs and Political Science.

ANNEX B – SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The assessment shall determine the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the electoral support aimed at strengthening the transparency and accountability of the Honduran electoral process through the elections institution and civil society empowerment. In particular, the assessment shall analyze and address, at a minimum, the following sets of questions:

QUESTION 1: OVERALL ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

Were the activities supported by USAID, Sida and UNDP relevant to the needs of Honduras and the TSE? What were USAID's best technical approaches to improve the elections process through the CEPPS program? What were the weakest components of USAID-funded electoral assistance through the CEPPS program? Similarly, which were the strongest and the weakest approaches, aid modalities and methods used in the electoral support funded by Sida? To which extent was a human rights-based approach used when designing and carrying out electoral support? What opportunities regarding assistance might USAID and Sida have missed? What were the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the supported activities? What overall recommendations would be relevant for future electoral assistance in Honduras, funded by USAID and/or other members of the donor community?

QUESTION 2: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

What components were the most successful in achieving a national impact to advance independence, transparency, inclusiveness, democratic credibility, efficiency and accountability from the TSE? To what extent is the impact sustainable? In the face of limited resources, should USAID and other donor resources be directed towards programs that operate at the local, national or regional level in the future? Are there legal or institutional constraints for independence, inclusiveness, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability of an electoral process? Are there clearly identified areas in which political interventions limit the TSE in issues regarding transparency and accountability? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the TSE and RNP working relationship? How can the TSE strengthen their human resources and information database, specifically in training, cartography and electoral census? What are the types of strategies that USAID and other donors can support to strengthen institutional capacity in the future?

QUESTION 3: CIVIL SOCIETY OVERSIGHT OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

What are the strengths and weaknesses identified in the civil society coalition that carried out domestic monitoring in the 2008 primaries? What are the strengths and weaknesses identified in the civil society coalition that carried out domestic monitoring in the 2009 general elections? Is there evidence that civil society has become more empowered in election monitoring as a result of USAID-funded activities? What are the windows of opportunity for Honduran civil society to continue to be engaged in election-related issues? Who were other relevant actors in civil society throughout the electoral process? Were their interventions considered positive or negative? What are the types of strategies

or programs that USAID and other donors can support in the future to further empower civil society engagement in election-related issues?

QUESTION 4: ELECTORAL REFORM

Are there limitations, constraints, or barriers to participation in the Electoral Law, census or other relevant laws and regulations (pertaining to running for office)? Are there limitations, constraints, or barriers to women's participation in the Electoral Law or other relevant laws and regulations (pertaining to running for office)? How did the recently concluded electoral process include and impact women as candidates, elected officials and voters? How could the outcome for women be improved? Are there limitations, constraints, or barriers to participation within the political parties' practices or bylaws? Are there specific recommendations for electoral reform based on the findings of question 2 and 3 above? What recommendations can be made to the TSE for a future electoral reform?

QUESTION 5: DONOR COORDINATION

What are the strengths and weaknesses of co-financing technical assistance for specific areas? What are the benefits of continuing donor coordination under the G-16 for future election assistance? What were the most effective approaches to providing technical assistance from the international donors? What overall recommendations would be relevant to further enhance donor coordination in election-related matters for Honduras?

QUESTION 6: THE COUP AND DONOR REACTIONS

Considering the highly polarized political situation after the June 28 coup, the disputed legitimacy of the elections, and the different positions taken by donors regarding whether or not to provide or continue electoral assistance – what conclusions or assessment can be made concerning the relevance, effectiveness and consequences of different donor positions and actions when it comes to the overall goal of promoting democracy in Honduras?

To enhance the quality of the impact evaluation, these questions may be refined and narrowed by USAID, Sida and the Contractor in the course of designing the evaluation. However, such refinements are not expected to increase the ceiling price of the task order. The evaluation shall utilize a variety of evaluation methodologies; interviews shall not serve as the only means for obtaining data. Additionally, the Contractor shall seek out internal and external documentation available in order to support the task at hand. Such documentation may include internal reviews and/or evaluations, legal reform proposed to Congress, internal and external audits, electoral studies and other materials pertinent to the scope of the activity. USAID and Sida expect the Contractor to make efficient use of assistance opportunities and take into consideration sensitivities surrounding the political conflict in order to monitor the conditions of the electoral process.

The assessment team shall be comprised, at a minimum, by two evaluation specialists and one elections expert in order to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter being reviewed.

ANNEX C – LIST OF MEETINGS

Date	Person/Title/Organization
August 04	Nhelly Saleh (Regional Director for Latin America – IFES) Jim Swigert (Regional Director for Latin America – NDI) Sarah Barker (Program Officer – NDI)
August 05	Alex Sutton (Regional Director for Latin America – IRI) Susan Zelaya-Fenner (Program Officer – IRI)
August 09	Entry Briefing David Thompson (DG Director – USAID) Brioni James (Deputy DG Director – USAID) Gabriela Leva (AOTR/Elections – USAID) Laura Berger (Democracy Officer – USAID) Sonia Zacapa (Senior Rule of Law/Civil Society Specialist – USAID) Par Skold (Sida/Honduras Representative) Rocío Tábora (Governance Coordinator – UNDP) Ana María Tello (Elections Specialist – UNDP)
August 10	Eduardo Núñez (Executive Director – NDI/Guatemala)
August 11	Jaime Vargas (IT Expert, Former IFES/Honduras Consultant) David Matamoros (Magistrate President, Tribunal Supremo Electoral – TSE) José Saúl Escobar (Magistrate) Enrique Ortez (Magistrate) Alejandro Martínez (Secretary General – TSE) Darío Valladares (Administrative and Finance Director – TSE) Judith Lobos (International Advisor – TSE) Ana María Tello (Elections Specialist – UNDP) Eduardo Stein (Chief Coordinator, Truth Commission)
August 12	Adán Palacios (Executive Director – Mirador Electoral) Judith Lobos (International Elections Advisor – TSE) Silvia Eiriz (Head of Political Section – US Embassy) Michael G. Stevens (Public Affairs Officer – US Embassy) Ledy C. Pacheco (Information Specialist – US Embassy)
August 13	Jorge Yllescas (President, <i>Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Nacionales</i> – CIEN) Alejandro Martínez (Secretary General – TSE) Leticia Henríquez (Legal Advisor for the Secretary General – TSE) Miguel Angel Ventura (Cartography Division – TSE) Juan Carlos Canales (Cartography Division – TSE)
August 14	David Thompson (DG Director – USAID) Mario Aguilar (Elections Advisor and former TSE Magistrate)

August 16	Ana Maria Tello (Elections Specialist – UNDP) Sandra Ponce (Public Prosecutor of Human Rights) Víctor Meza (Director, <i>Centro de Documentación de Honduras</i> – CEDOH) Armando Enamorado (Dean, <i>Universidad Metropolitana</i> – UM)
August 17	Rolando Bú (General Director – FROPRIDEH) Eduardo Maldonado (Journalist and former PL candidate 2008 primaries) Darío Valladares (Administrative and Finance Director – TSE) Carlos Romero (Electoral Director – TSE) Antonio Teruel (Coordinator, Citizen Participation Unit – Caritas) Sara Orellana (Assistant, Citizen Participation Unit – Caritas) Celia Casco (Coordinator, Human Development Unit – Caritas) Jorge Hernán Miranda (General Secretary Representative – OAS)
August 18	Rosa de Lourdes Paz Haslam (Magistrate – Supreme Court of Justice) José Noe Cortés (Executive Secretary, <i>Partido Nacional</i> – PN) Jorge Reina (Director, National Civil Registry – RNP) Gerardo Martínez (Deputy Director – RNP) Manuel Sagastome (Deputy Director – RNP) Luis E. Martínez (Division Chief, IT and Identification – RNP) Sigfrido Zepeda (Division Chief, IT and Identification – RNP) Juana Belinda Cárcamo (Deputy Chief, Identification – RNP) Nelson Muñoz (Systems Analyst – RNP) Fernando Lezama (Program Coordinator – UNDP) Jorge Aguilar (President, <i>Partido Innovación y Unidad Social Demócrata</i> – PINU)
August 19	María José Jarquín (State Modernization Specialist – IDB) TSE Project Support Meeting Luca Renda (Deputy Resident Representative – UNDP) Rocío Tábor (Governance Coordinator – UNDP) Ana María Tello (Elections Specialist – UNDP) Blanca Antonini (UN Consultant) Andrés Salazar (UN) Alejandro Philion (Election Assistance Division – EAD/UN) Miriam Arredondo (<i>Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo</i> – AECID) Gabriela Leva (AOTR/Elections – USAID) Rudi von Planta (Resident Deputy Director, Swiss Cooperation Office – COSUDE) Armando Sánchez (<i>Federación Nacional de Organismos de Personas con Discapacidad de Honduras</i> – FENOPDIH) Efraín Díaz Arrivillaga (Former National Deputy, <i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano</i> – PDC)

August 20	Travel to Comayagua to attend TSE’s Socialization Campaign Visit Javier Menocal (President of the Electoral Affairs Commission – National Assembly) Manuel Gamero (<i>El Tiempo</i> newspaper) Nilla Ingstorp (Former Sida/Honduras Representative) Pablo Gutierrez (Director, <i>Departamento para la Cooperación y Observación Electoral, Secretaría de Asuntos Políticos –OAS</i>)
August 21	Gabriela Leva (AOTR/Elections – USAID) Sonia Zacapa (Senior Rule of Law/Civil Society Specialist – USAID)
August 23	Xiomara Sierra (FOPRIDEH and former <i>Hagamos Democracia</i> Technical Coordinator) Arturo Corrales (Minister, <i>Technical Secretariat of Cooperation – SETCO</i>) Wilfredo Méndez (Executive Director, <i>Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos – CIPRODEH</i>)
August 24	José Leon Aguilar (Executive Director, <i>Fundación Democracia sin Fronteras – FDF</i>) Daniel Hernández (<i>Federación Nacional de Padres de Personas con Discapacidad en Honduras – FENAPAPEDISH</i>)
August 25	Armida de López Contreras (<i>Unión Cívica Democrática – UCD</i>) Leo Valladares (Executive Director, <i>Asociación para una Ciudadanía Participativa – ACI-PARTICIPA</i>) Lucas Aguilera (<i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano – PDC</i>) Tania McClements (First Secretary Development – Embassy of Canada) Héctor Santos (Embassy of Canada) Cesar Ham (INA)
August 26	TSE Magistrates (Breakfast Meeting) Exit Briefing with USAID/DG Exit Briefing with Mr. Simon Henshaw, Chargé d’Affairs – US Embassy
August 27	Doris Gutierrez (Central District Councilor)