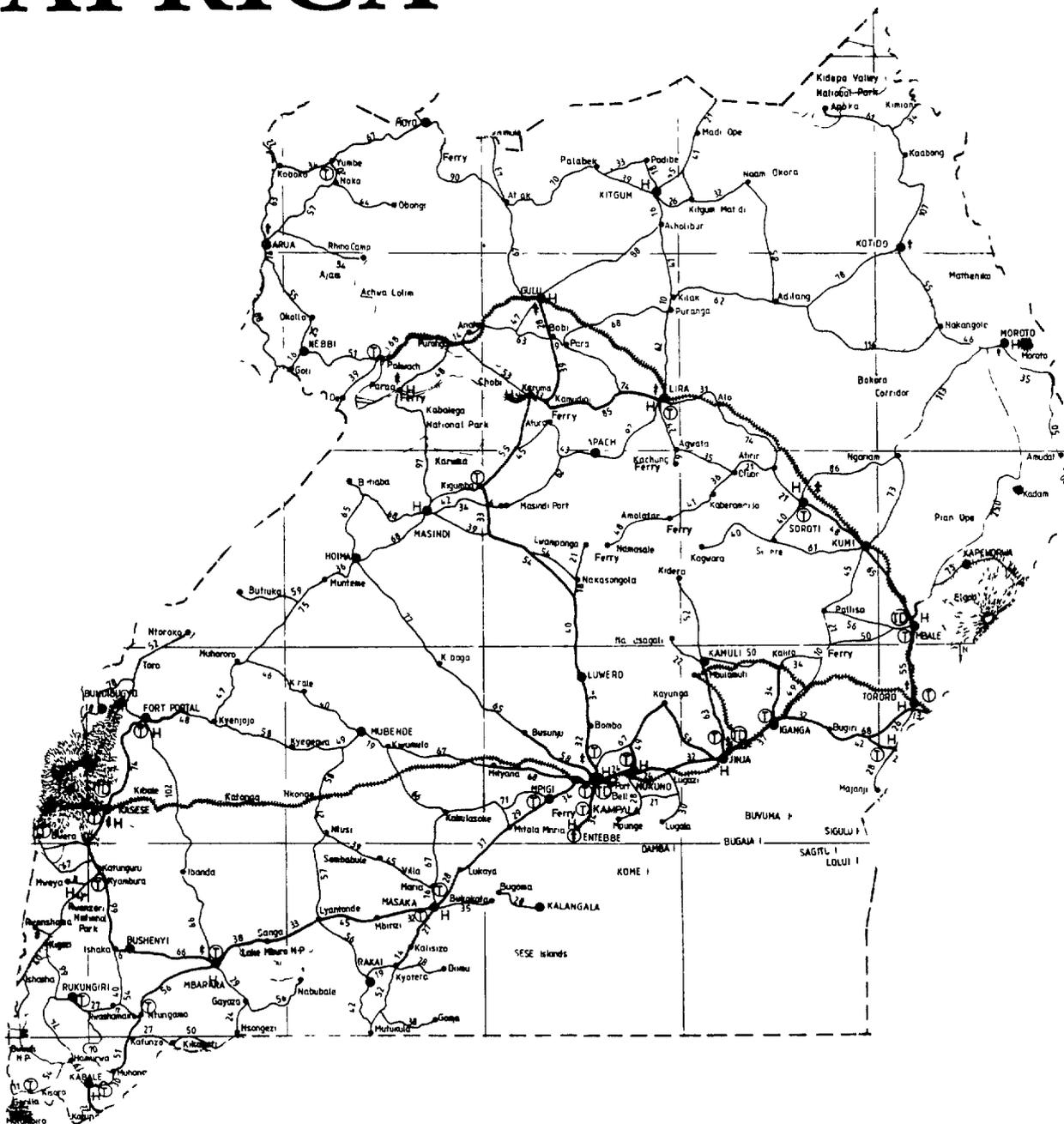


ELECTIONS AFRICA



ELECTION MONITORING TRAINING MANUAL

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION for CIVIC EDUCATION and
ELECTION MONITORING (NOCEM)

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2	6
INTRODUCTION TO POLL MONITORING	6
CHAPTER 3	11
ELECTORAL PROCESS TERMS OF REFERENCE	11
CHAPTER 4	14
DEFINITION OF FAIR AND FREE ELECTIONS	14
CONDITIONS	14
CHAPTER 5	16
PRE-ELECTION PERIOD	16
CHAPTER 6	19
ELECTION DAY	19
CHAPTER 7	27
PARALLEL VOTE COUNT	27
CHAPTER 8	34
ESTABLISHING A NON-PARTISAN MONITORING GROUP	34
APPENDICES	
MONITOR ELECTION DAY CHECKLIST	1
EVALUATION	13

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

An Agenda for Action

In recent years, a revolution has swept through Africa, a revolution in which citizens have demanded the opportunity to participate in decisions about who governs them. If democratic systems are to survive and flourish in Africa, citizens must be convinced that choosing their governments through free and fair competitive elections is the best route to economic, social and political development. To ensure the continuance of democracy in Africa, a number of challenges must be met:

1. **Promoting effective citizen participation in the political process.** Leaders, civic groups and democratic development institutions must work to create a sense of effective citizen participation in the political process between local populations and to strengthen their confidence in the effectiveness of open, pluralistic processes for choosing government.
2. **Introducing the idea of a competitive political environment.** Africa has long-established democratic traditions and tendencies that were suppressed by colonialism and many post-colonial governments. Now, supporters of democratization are introducing the concept of competition into traditional political cultures that often rely on consensus for decision-making. Competitive politics is an integral part of a democracy. Political parties and candidates are more willing to compromise when they

experience first hand the need to work collaboratively to achieve elected office.

3. **Ensuring the sustainability of democratic structures and processes.** Supporters of African democratization efforts are also concerned with how one sustains democratic advances, once achieved. Sustainability involves assuring that the electoral process is institutionalized, that a civic base exists in support of a rational, constitutional means of choosing leadership, and that mechanisms are in place to assure continued support during the consolidation phase of democratization.

Citizen Monitors

To keep the democracy train on track, citizens must be involved in all aspects of the political process, not just as voters, party members or candidates but in a fourth role -- as election monitors. A democratic system requires public confidence to survive. Citizen election monitors, whether they are non-partisan or political party representatives, play an essential role in establishing and safeguarding public confidence in an election process.

The challenges to gaining public confidence are real. African experience with legislated or de facto one-party states led to decades of non-competitive elections characterized by *reported* high voter turnout and 100 percent of the votes cast in favor of the ruling party or the incumbent president. The consequences of so many years of non-competitive elections are obvious:

- political cynicism
- lack of interest in politics and elections
- lack of voter experience
- low voter turnout
- lack of personnel trained in the administration of elections
- lack of equipment (ballot boxes, polling booths)
- lack of administrative mechanisms (reliable census, updated electoral lists, widespread identification system)
- lack of reliable and effective means of distributing electoral documents.

The greatest challenge for leadership is to restore confidence in the fairness of the electoral process in order to legitimize the outcomes, no matter who wins. Incumbent and interim governments throughout Africa have turned to international observers to enhance public confidence.

However, in many elections it has been the presence of local, citizen monitors that has made the difference. The involvement of citizen monitors, working with international monitoring groups, makes possible the presence of local language speakers at the polls. These private groups and civic organizations can play a determinant role in the process of restoring confidence before the international observers move in, and after they leave. Citizen monitoring groups present the best framework for people of differing points of view to learn tolerance and mutual understanding by working together on a non-partisan basis for common objectives.

The legitimization of elections will require long and thorough monitoring efforts by domestic organizations. Observers should be present during

- candidate filing
- voter registration
- the campaign period
- on election day balloting and counting processes

Finally, the reporting by monitors/observers on the fairness of an election can make the election process more or less credible in the eyes of the national and international community.

The future of democracy on the continent depends on the existence and the strength of non-partisan domestic organizations through which Africans will express their commitment. The existence of strong domestic monitoring organizations will provide greater transparency.

AAI Supports Citizen Monitors

The African-American Institute (AAI) is a private, voluntary, non-governmental organization that was founded in 1953 to foster development in Africa, principally through strengthening people and improving the development of democratic institutions and processes.

AAI has always viewed its work as paving the way for the respect for individual rights, ethnic diversity, and the rule of law as requirements for sustainable economic growth and development.

AAI has organized seminars, conferences, workshops, publications and forums on all aspects of democratic institution building. AAI, its officials, staff and country representatives have participated in and organized civic education and election monitoring efforts throughout Africa. AAI has active country representation in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The AAI approach is to enhance indigenous capacity in all aspects of its work on the African continent. Inherent in this commitment relative to civic education and election monitoring is to develop a program cooperatively with local groups or organizations so that there remains an institutional presence once the immediacy has passed.

Election Monitoring Training Manual

The AAI Election Monitoring Training Manual is designed to train trainers of election monitors. When used in conjunction with a country's election law, the Manual provides a complete course in election monitoring. The Manual is divided into eight chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the context of citizen election monitoring.

Chapter 2 describes what election monitors do.

Chapter 3 presents a Terms of Reference for a democratic electoral process.

Chapter 4 discusses the standard for a free and fair election.

Chapter 5 discusses monitoring before election day.

Chapter 6 focusses on monitoring voting and vote counting on election day.

Chapter 7 describes the organization of a parallel vote count.

Chapter 8 discusses how to convene a non-partisan monitoring group.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO POLL MONITORING

What is election monitoring?

Election monitoring is the process of observing an election to ensure that it is carried out in a free and fair manner in accordance with the election law.

Why are election monitors important?

(Answers to be solicited from participants)

Sample answers:

- The presence of monitors provides a sense of confidence to the public.
- Indigenous monitors can give wider coverage of polling sites, more comprehensive reporting.
- Understanding of the culture, language and local conditions and a better perception of subtleties
- Able to sustain a monitoring presence in the community before, during and after the election
- Post election influence on public opinion
- Civic educational role (quote examples from experiences in other countries)

TYPES OF MONITORS

Different groups monitor elections for different purposes. Monitors generally are **partisan** or **non-partisan**.

Partisan

Who are partisan monitors?

Partisan monitors are those who monitor the election on behalf of a candidate(s).

What is their role?

- Partisan monitors represent their party or candidate in ensuring that the election process proceeds according to law.
- Partisan monitors can be involved in the campaign for a candidate.
- They can provide information on behalf of candidates that may be used as part of a challenge to electoral results.
- In some electoral systems, it is a requirement that a candidate representative countersign the tally sheet (proces verbal) when the vote count is complete at a polling station.

Non-partisan

Non-partisan monitors work to ensure a transparent and open electoral process. Their role is to give citizens confidence that the election process is carried out in a free and fair manner, according to law.

Who are non-partisan monitors?

A non-partisan monitor can be any citizen who wants to volunteer to help ensure that an election is free and fair. Non-partisan monitors often are members of local NGO's, non-political organizations, civic, professional, religious, and student groups.

Establishing neutrality

Non-partisan monitors need the confidence of ordinary citizens to play their role effectively. To gain that confidence, non-partisan monitors agree to refrain from certain actions that might call their neutrality into question. In many countries, non-partisan monitoring groups adopt a Code of Conduct for the election. In order to be considered non-partisan, monitors agree that:

- Non-partisan means that the monitor will not work for the advancement or defeat of a particular candidate or philosophy.
- All monitors must pledge to remain neutral and non-partisan for the period leading up to an election and until the results are officially announced.
- The non-partisan monitor will not express a point of view regarding the outcome of the election.
- The non-partisan monitor cannot wear or display material or paraphenelia identified with a candidate.

Responsibilities of a non-partisan monitor

- To know and understand the rules and regulations governing the election.
- To introduce herself/himself to officials.
- To report all complaints and irregularities to the monitoring coordinator.

Rights and roles of non-partisan monitors

- The monitor has a right to cast a secret ballot expressing his or her will.
- Non-partisan monitors observe the election process beginning with voter registration, through the campaign, on election day and through the vote count.
- Monitors check to see that each step of the process is free from fraud or intimidation and in accord with the law.
- If monitors witness events that are counter to the law or that compromise the fairness of an election, they report these events to the monitoring coordinator so that it may be reported to the proper authorities and public.
- Non-partisan monitoring groups generally release a statement on the conduct of an election, including recommendations for avoiding irregularities and improving the process.

Role of International Observers

International observers are non-partisan. They are often representatives of international organizations, e.g., UN, OAU, or Non-governmental organizations. (e.g., AAI, GERDDES, NDI, IRI, IFES, RCHRD organizations from countries with close links with the nation conducting elections).

- The international observer does not presume to interfere in the internal affairs of the host nation. The observer's role is principally to display to citizens that there is strong international support for peaceful democratic elections and to serve as neutral witnesses in order to raise confidence in the overall electoral process.
- The observations of the collective observers will form the basis for conclusions regarding the conduct of the elections. The observer must therefore try to document all observations, and in all instances attempt to distinguish fact from subjective judgments.

- To accomplish this task the international observer will meet with the election officials, candidates or their representatives, journalists, and representatives of other institutions that are playing a role in the country's electoral process.
- Observers must not make any comments to the media regarding their personal observations until after the delegation statement has been presented.
- Each observer should prepare a short report on her/his observations. These reports are usually included in the delegation's final report.

CHAPTER 3

ELECTORAL PROCESS TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. **Electoral Law:** The Electoral Law confirms a nation's legal process for election procedures. It is the legal basis for citizen participation in an election. It must establish rules and procedures by which individuals and political parties may participate in an election. Similarly, it should establish rules and procedures governing a confirmed authority charged with the responsibility to conduct such elections. Such a law must address eligibility, qualifications, timing, monitoring and the challenge process. All citizens and parties must have a direct or indirect means of influencing the establishment of such rules. Electoral Law is usually the product of a legislative body and has been codified with relevant existing laws and is thereby subject to interpretation by the nation's judicial system.
2. **Election Commission:** A body appointed usually by an executive branch of government to establish reasonable rules for the conduct of an election. Such a commission is thought to be independent once its membership is appointed. The various political parties may or may not have representation on such a commission. Rules established by an Election Commission must be compatible with established law. Such a commission would normally make rules that aid in the voting process and should be the primary source of citizen education about the voting process. It is requisite that an electoral commission view as its mission to ensure honesty and free and fair competition.

3. **Appeal Process:** An independent judiciary or like body must have the means of interpreting election rules and procedures in direct relationship to existing law.
4. **Undue Influence:** The government in power must not flagrantly use state resources in perpetuating its continuance to the detriment of opposing political parties or philosophies. Equal access to media outlets and freedom of expression must be apparent.
5. **Pre-Election Procedures:**
 - a. **Voters Register:** A conventionally organized list of eligible voters should be prepared in sufficient time to be gotten by individuals, parties and citizens groups. However, where no list is established, uniform standards of participation must be administered recognizing universally accepted forms of identification.
 - b. **Voter Conduct and Procedures:** Rules pertaining to voter conduct concerning the exercise of the franchise should be established before the election and be generally available to the citizenry.
 - c. **Ballots:** Ballots must be uniform and standardized and protected against fraud. There must exist a means of accounting for all ballots. Ballots should be available for examination by representatives of candidates and independent groups before the election.
 - d. **Candidates:** The rules affecting the selection of candidates must be standardized and publicized in advance.
 - e. **Electioneering and Campaign Rules:** Rules affecting the conduct of candidates, parties and individuals must be uniform and standardized. Such rules and practices must be generally administered in a free and fair manner.

6. **Vote Tabulation and Announcement of Results:** The Commission must have plans to tabulate vote results in a public forum open to representatives of candidates, the media and certain citizens groups. A timely announcement of the results or the trend is imperative to developing confidence in the legitimacy of the outcome. Where computerized tabulation is a factor, inspection of the computer program before and after tabulation by qualified personnel must be performed.

CHAPTER 4

DEFINITION OF FAIR AND FREE ELECTIONS

Under what circumstance can an election be considered Free and Fair?

"An election atmosphere free of intimidation, bribery, violence, coercion and actions intended to subvert the will of the people."

Election procedures that guarantee the secrecy of the ballot, the accuracy of the counting, and a timely announcement of the results.

CONDITIONS THAT DECIDE AN ELECTION'S TRANSPARENCY OR FAIRNESS

1. Candidates Filing

- All candidates must be free to file a declaration of qualification during the two days designated by the Commissioner
- Non-partisan observers/monitors should be present during the registration of candidates

2. Campaign

- Fairness of press coverage of campaigns and activities of the various candidates
- Freedom of candidates to campaign without intimidation
- Whether or not there are attempts to buy votes

- Adequacy of public education about the election and issues
- Freedom from executive or powerful group influence
- Fair access to state resources, e.g., personnel, funds, supplies, equipment, or organizational support

3. **Registration**

- Were citizens given a fair opportunity to register?
- Condition of Voter Register - is it complete? Does it contain the names of the majority of the electorate?
- Is the Voter Register logically arranged? Is it consistent? Is it available to the parties and citizens?

4. **Election Day**

- Presence of election officials and authorized agents
- Requisite materials provided
- Is the procedure being followed?
- Provision for processing exceptions and irregularities
- General environment at polling station and vicinity
- Known and scheduled hours of operation

5. **Tabulation and Announcement of Results**

- Is the procedure being followed?
- Integrity and security of counting and recording process
- Presence of representatives of candidates, and civic organizations

CHAPTER 5

OBSERVING THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

To have a free and fair election, what takes place before an election is often more important than what happens on election day. It is important for election monitors to be active well before the voting begins.

For the purposes of this manual, the pre-election period begins with voter registration. This presumes the existence of an electoral law or code. The electoral code forms the "rules of the game" for an election, and it is important for monitors to comment early if the code is inadequate or patently unfair in any way.

Monitoring the pre-election period is less exact than election day. The rules for the pre-election period are more general and the types of fraud or intimidation that may occur are more subtle. In observing the preparations for an election, a monitoring group should consider the following questions. **If the answer to any is negative, the monitoring group should report irregularities to the proper authorities and consider making recommendations and issuing a pre-election report.**

Registration

Monitoring the registration process is an important pre-election organizing tool. Here is where the non-partisan monitoring group begins to create credibility and can play a useful role in pointing out ambiguities in election administration. Registration is an opportunity to test fairness, simplification, elements of intimidation, illegalities and complaints. The groups findings should be shared with the electoral commission officials.

Civic Education

- Were there voter education programs? If so, were they sufficient to inform the citizenry on the electoral process?
- Were there non-partisan bodies and mechanisms established to investigate complaints regarding the electoral process?
- Were eligible voters adequately informed about the importance of the elections? Were they adequately informed of the technical aspects of where and how to cast their ballots? Were there any changes in the list of polling sites before the election?
- Were voters informed as to the identities, ideologies, and platforms of the candidates?
- Were there complaints of eligible voters not being able to register?
- Were preparations for elections adequate in the areas visited?

The Campaign

- Did the campaign period provide an adequate opportunity for the candidates to express their respective messages to prospective voters? How did the candidates communicate their messages (e.g., media, rallies, posters, etc.)?
- During the campaign, were candidates or other individuals arrested, detained, physically attacked or intimidated in incidents the appeared designed to influence on the outcome? If yes, by whom?
- What complaints were presented regarding the campaign? Were the laws governing the conduct of the campaign enforced?
- During the campaign, were there incidents of intimidation by the police, military or government officials designed to affect the election?
- Were campaign finance issues a factor in the campaign?
- Were candidates focused on the need to have representatives in the polling places to ensure the neutrality of the electoral administration?

Role of the Media

- Did the competing candidates obtain adequate and relatively equal access to the media?
- Was the media censored during the campaign? Were journalists intimidated in any way?
- Did the public media provide adequate and balanced coverage of the campaign?

CHAPTER 6

FOCUS ON ELECTION DAY

So far we have considered in general terms Poll Monitoring: the roles of non-partisan monitors (indigenous and international observers); conditions that decide fairness of the Poll; and what the non-partisan observer should be sensitive to and look for throughout the electoral process (from pre-election preparations through to the declaration of results, and evaluation of the electoral process).

Now we will focus on Polling Day, the critical day in the electoral process.

What Does the Election Monitor Do on Polling Day?

On this critical day, the observer/monitor ensures that he/she arrives at the polling site before the designated time for the commencement of voting. It is important to introduce oneself with appropriate credentials to the Electoral Officers and authorized agents at the site, and proceed to observe the general conditions of the election process. The monitor should bring to the attention of the Presiding Officer any irregularities observed.

A. At the Polling Stations Before Voting Starts

1. Is the polling station identifiable?

- Whether the station is easily identifiable and accessible to all voters including illiterate and disabled persons

2. Campaign Material

- Is there campaign or propaganda materials inside the station or within the prescribed parameters of the station?

3. Authorized personnel present

- Poll Officials designated by the Electoral Commission
- Agents of the Candidates
- Candidates
- Media Personnel
- Monitors and other authorized civic groups' representatives

4. Requisite Election Materials

- Whether some are missing, destroyed, substituted or tampered with in any way
- The Ballot Box: Whether each box provided for the station is properly stamped or identified. Whether each box is open and exhibited as prescribed by the Electoral Commission before voting begins.

- List of Registered Voters
 - a. Does it have the proper identification stamp of the Electoral Commission?
 - b. Is it intact, or is it marked or tampered with in any way?
 - c. Is it logically arranged, allowing for quick identification of voters?
- The Official Ballots: Whether they are sealed, intact and properly identified, or whether any have been marked or missing
- Provision for secrecy of vote: Whether adequate provision has been made to ensure secret voting
- Provision for casting ballot in the open
- Materials for marking ballot
- Forms for counting ballots, and for recording results
- Provision for sealing ballot boxes
- Provision for securing stamps and seals

B. During Voting

1. Procedures

- Whether prescribed procedures are adequately and consistently followed in terms of:
 - Identification of voters on the certified list
 - Issuance of ballot paper to voters

- Instructions to voters
- Assistance for disabled or other special category of voters
- Application of indelible voters
- Marking of ballots should occur by inking the finger or thumbprint after depositing the ballot, as detailed by CA law
- The observance of the secrecy of the ballot
- Handling of complaints
- Allowing electoral agents and other authorized personnel to observe the process throughout

2. Irregularities

- Voting not starting or ending at the prescribed times
- Campaigning, influencing, or intimidation of voters
- Impersonation, multiple voting
- Voting by people not included on the list, or not properly authorized according to CA regulations
- Purposefully preventing registered voters from voting, or hindering or slowing down the process, by election officials or others
- Unauthorized marking of ballots by election officials

3. General Atmosphere at the Station

- Number of voters waiting to vote, average waiting time
- Is voting progressing in an organized manner?
- Is the environment calm or intimidating, i.e., undue presence of Police, Military or pressure groups?

C. After Balloting

1. Vote Counting/Tabulation

- Place and time of tabulation
- Are authorized officials, candidate representatives, candidates and monitors present?
- Counting Procedures - are the specified procedures followed (eg., regular processing of spoiled ballots)?
- Procedure for challenging ballots
- Requests for recount of votes
- Closing and sealing of Ballot Boxes
- Whether all agents are present to witness
- Whether the proper official seal is used to seal each ballot as prescribed
- Whether the procedure for packing and sealing ballot papers and relevant election materials is followed
- Whether the correct figures are read and recorded

- Whether the number of ballot papers (both valid and spoiled) correspond to the number of voters who actually cast the ballots, as indicated in the record of voters

D. Transfer of Ballot Boxes to Designated Centers

- Whether ballot boxes are transferred intact accompanied by the election officers as well as authorized agents and monitors

E. Tabulation/Vote Counting

- Where and when will the tabulation take place?
- Are representatives of candidates present?
- Procedure for processing spoiled ballots
- Procedure for challenging spoiled ballots

F. Declaration of Results

- Whether the prescribed procedure is followed
- Whether the official form for declaration of results is signed by the authorized election officers
- Whether results are declared promptly, delayed or withheld
- Whether the correct results are declared

G. Administration of the Elections

- Did election officials at the polling sites act in an impartial manner? Did they understand the electoral procedures?

- Were the candidates aware of the procedures for filing complaints? Were complaints investigated and resolved expeditiously and in an impartial manner?
- Were the voter registration lists accurate? Were any voters disenfranchised because their names did not appear on the list?
- Was any special procedure made to permit or help late registration (e.g., court orders)? Did procedure function properly?
- Were there adequate safeguards to prevent widespread irregularities in the balloting process? Were voters able to cast a secret ballot? Was there any intimidation of voters by security forces, candidates, or local leaders?
- Was the vote counting process in individual polling stations conducted in conformity with the electoral code? Were there adequate safeguards to prevent widespread irregularities during the counting process? Were disputes in the counting process resolved in a impartial manner? Were there suspicious delays in the preparation or release of election returns?
- Were poll watchers designated by candidates and civic groups permitted access to all polling sites during the election as well as the counting? Were the provisions governing accreditation and access to the polling sites adequate to ensure confidence in the process?

H. The Results

- Were the official results reported in accordance with the electoral law?
- Were the officially proclaimed results of the districts monitored a true reflection of the results recorded at the various polling stations during the vote counting process?

- Did the candidates accept the final election results? If not, were challenges filed in accordance with the electoral law? What was the outcome of such challenges?

I. Evaluation of the Process

- Did citizens view the election as a useful mechanism to express their views?
- Did the electoral process contribute to strengthening of the democratic process?
- What role did indigenous monitors and international observers play in the process?
- What electoral assistance is needed (e.g., strengthening the media, the judicial system, the election process, civic education, etc.)?
- How can the electoral system be further improved to ensure transparent future elections?

CHAPTER 7

Parallel Vote Count

Monitoring the counting of votes and the reporting of results are as important as monitoring the voting itself. There are many types of fraud or administrative errors that can occur between vote counting at the polling station or counting center and the official announcement of the results at the national level.

In Chapter 6, we discussed what an election monitor should look for during the vote count at the polling station or counting center. But what happens to the results as they travel up the line to the election administration headquarters? In an effort to assure voters that the official results accurately reflect the vote totals of the individual polling stations, non-partisan monitoring groups can mount a **parallel vote count (PVC)**. A parallel vote count or parallel vote tabulation is a comprehensive and intensive method of monitoring the tabulation of results.

To conduct a PVC, a non-partisan monitoring group compiles the results from a *randomly selected, representative sample* of polling stations to track national voting trends and voter turnout.

The benefits of a non-partisan PVC include:

- increasing voter confidence in the vote counting process;
- deterring vote-counting fraud by increasing the prospect that it will be detected;
- revealing manipulated vote totals; and
- providing incentive for the public and participants to accept the results.

For a PVC to be effective:

1. Monitors must be viewed as independent and honest by a large segment of the population.
2. The aims and mechanics of the parallel vote count operation must be made public and should be based on a system that is publicly perceived as capable of providing accurate data.
3. Monitors must conduct the operation in a public manner, with an attendant press and public relations strategy.

Organizing a Parallel Vote Count

Mounting a PVC effort may appear complex and to require considerable time and resources, but in truth such operations are relatively simple to carry out. There are four requirements for organizing a successful PVC:

1. **Sufficient work force**
2. **Tight coordination**
3. **Good communications**
4. **Technical expertise in statistics and computers**

Following is an outline of the necessary general steps for organizing a PVC:

Step 1. Plan of Action

A PVC requires a plan of action established well in advance of the election. The plan should establish various functional groups, provide for the recruitment of volunteers and set forth a timetable and budget for setting up the operation.

The functional teams should include: data processing; statistical analysis, volunteer training, logistics, publicity, and general administration. Recruiting volunteers with relevant expertise (including specialists in demography, statistics, computers and communication networks) is crucial for the success of the operation. Identifying the appropriate persons to coordinate the overall operation also is essential.

A site must be chosen as PVC headquarters for election night. All vote totals from the polling stations in the sample will be reported by PVC volunteers to headquarters. A plan should be made and announced for how and when the PVC results will be announced. Announcements may be planned at timed intervals or after a certain percentage of the polling stations have reported.

Step 2. Choosing the Sample

To obtain a representative sample, the monitoring group generally uses randomly selected polling stations from all of the electoral districts or electoral areas. The size of the sample will depend on the size of the PVC team, but the sample may be as large as 10 percent of eligible voters. However, as an alternative to random selection, the PVC team may use other factors in choosing the sample. These factors might include administrative region, demographic characteristics (e.g., urban, semi-urban, rural), socioeconomic status, ethnicity and gender.

Step 3. Technical Factors

Computers

The PVC team must be able to obtain use of a personal computer and include at least one member with computer skills. The computer spreadsheet should be designed to keep a running tally of:

- Region
- Number of polling stations from each region reporting
- Percent of sample polling stations reporting
- Number of votes for each candidate
- Percent of spoiled ballots
- Percent of eligible voters who voted

If feasible, computers should be distributed to different locations throughout the country to speed up the processing of results. From the regional sites, information can be transmitted to the PVC headquarters by modem, computer disk, fax or by telephone. Data should be entered accurately and checked carefully before it goes to headquarters.

Communications

The PVC team must plan to meet the challenge of communicating results on election night. Establishing a telephone network, either to relay results verbally or through facsimile machines, requires the existence of a dependable telecommunications system. The team should anticipate election night telephone congestion or possibly intentional disruption. Alternatives to reliance on the telephone include two-way radio communications, which require the installation of considerable infrastructure, and/or the physical delivery of results to regional and national headquarters, which slows the operation considerably.

Step 4. Recruiting and Training the PVC Team

While some members of a non-partisan election monitoring team can collect results for the parallel vote count, other volunteers must be recruited and trained to work exclusively on the PVC. These volunteers include those who

will collect results from polling stations in the sample and report them to regional coordinators who would be responsible for collecting results from their areas and transmitting them to the PVC headquarters. The training should stress that accurate information needs to be collected and must be transmitted as swiftly as possible.

Step 5. Public Relations

The PVC team should expect that its efforts will generate considerable public interest. The team should designate a spokesperson who will explain its purpose and method of operation to government, election officials, the media and candidates at the earliest opportunity. The cooperation of election officials is often necessary to ensure that a parallel vote count is practically feasible. For example, a special regulation may be required to permit PVC volunteers to be inside polling sites during the vote counting process or to obtain an official tally sheet. If such permission is not forthcoming, arrangements may have to be made with one or more candidates whose agents have access to the polling sites.

The PVC team should expect to meet some suspicion or hostility from the election administration and government when the idea of a parallel vote tabulation is first presented. Election officials may view such an effort as intruding on their responsibilities and as a potential source of confusion to voters. A serious attempt must be made to convince election officials, and also in most instances the ruling party, that setting up of a credible parallel vote tabulation is in everyone's interest. If the results of the PVC reflect the official results, it will show that the vote counting process was free from manipulation. If the PVC results differ significantly, both the PVC team and election officials can investigate the cause.

Occasionally, election officials have sought to limit the effectiveness of the PVC by:

- restricting access to the polling site during the counting process
- requiring that polling site results be verified by a designated official before inclusion in the PVC , or

- prohibiting release of information from the PVC until consultations have taken place with the election officials or until the official results are released.

In several instances, proposed restrictions have been withdrawn once the benefits of the proposed operation were understood by all concerned. However, if restrictions remain in place, the PVC team must then decide whether it can achieve its objectives.

To enhance the credibility of a parallel vote tabulation and to overcome suspicions that it is serving the partisan purposes of a particular party or individual, religious personalities and prominent international observers may be involved directly in certain aspects of the operation. For example, the list of polling sites included in a sample may be deposited before an election with a prominent religious figure to avoid allegations that the sample was drawn after the polls opened. Similarly, international observers may be invited to monitor the receipt of polling site results at the central headquarters of the parallel vote tabulation operation to ensure that all the information is recorded accurately and without delay.

Step 6. Deploying the PVC Team

The sample should be selected as close to election day as possible to avoid the potential for selective fraud or manipulation. As soon as the sample has been figured out, PVC volunteers should be assigned and deployed to their polling stations. When they arrive at their polling station, volunteers should find the best available means of communicating results and, if feasible, test it.

Step 7. Compiling the PVC Results

PVC team members should be present for the entire vote counting process. They should record the votes as they are announced. If possible, as soon as the vote counting is finished, the PVC volunteer should seek a copy of the tally sheet to make a comparison. He should then transmit the results as quickly as possible to PVC headquarters. As the results come in from the polling stations, they should be entered accurately into the computer.

Step 8. Announcing the PVC Results

The PVC team should announce results on election night according to the publicized plan unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

CHAPTER 8

ESTABLISHING A NON-PARTISAN MONITORING GROUP

The establishment of an indigenous or national non-partisan monitoring group during the election process with a commitment to free and transparent elections not only provides added voter confidence, but aids in the verification of the purity of the process. Ultimately, it is the citizen who will judge the significance and validity of the election process, through participation at the polls and acceptance of the results.

In organizing a non-partisan monitoring group, the following is suggested:

- Broad-based meeting of groups and citizens with significant credibility and following (churches and religious leadership, human rights organizations, law societies, universities, student organizations, etc.)
- These groups and individuals should be generally perceived as having no known political allegiances. Individual participants do not have to give up their citizenship rights as voters to participate in a non-partisan monitoring effort, but should be prepared to forego overt expressions of preference.

Working through existing organizational structures

An effort should be made to include in the initial meetings individuals with personal or institutional contacts throughout the country and who can arrange meetings with key individuals and organizations.

Election or appointment of leaders/spokesperson

Such an ad hoc or umbrella group must have a well-respected spokesperson or chair. The selection of prominent individuals from the community can create an important legitimacy and credibility to the group and reduce possible suspicions and uncertainty about the group's intentions.

These leaders must be well informed on the election procedures and committed to cooperating with electoral officials, political party leaders and other organizations involved in the electoral process.

Method of operation

The groups mission should be to deliver an accurate and impartial account of the election process using recognized standards for its evaluation in accordance with the established electoral law. The limitations of the group's role in offering a critique of the electoral process should be understood. The group is informed on the process and is prepared to comment on the procedural administration of the process. The group's credibility is derived from the integrity of its individual participants.

Though such a group may be credentialed by the electoral commission, it has no official standing.

Training trainers

Immediately the group and its leadership must prepare to train and recruit in preparation for the election. Ideally trainers should be individuals who are not only versed in the electoral process, but who have had some experience in establishing, organizing, or administering training exercises (e.g., teachers, ministers, supervisors, salespersons, etc.).

Code of Conduct

A statement setting forth a clear code of conduct that candidates and parties generally agree to is a priority. Such a document should be unambiguous and discussed in advance with party and election officials. An effort should be made to publicize the code of conduct in community journals and media outlets.

MONITOR ELECTION DAY CHECKLIST

Polling Station #1

Name/no of polling station _____
Electoral District _____
Date of visit _____ Time of arrival _____
Time of Departure _____
Number of voters registered? _____ (as per voter register)
Number who had already voted? _____
Number of voters queued up to vote? _____
Average minutes per voter to vote? _____

Election Material in stock:

Ballots? _____ Voting Booth Screen? _____
Reporting Forms? _____ Indelible Ink? _____
Registration Book? _____ Ballot Box seals? _____
Others? _____

Other observers/monitors present:

(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
(4) _____

Which officials were present at the polling station? _____

1

Polling Station #2

Name/no of polling station _____
Electoral District _____
Date of visit _____ Time of arrival _____
Time of Departure _____
Number of voters registered? _____ (as per voter register)
Number who had already voted? _____
Number of voters queued up to vote? _____
Average minutes per voter to vote? _____

Election Material in stock:

Ballots? _____ Voting Booth Screen? _____
Reporting Forms? _____ Indelible Ink? _____
Registration Book? _____ Ballot Box seals? _____
Others? _____

Other observers/monitors present:

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____

Which officials were present at the polling station? _____

3

Polling Station #3

Name/no of polling station _____

Electoral District _____

Date of visit _____ Time of arrival _____

Time of Departure _____

Number of voters registered? _____ (as per voter register)

Number who had already voted? _____

Number of voters queued up to vote? _____

Election Material in stock:

Ballots? _____ Voting Booth Screen? _____

Reporting Forms? _____ Indelible Ink? _____

Registration Book? _____ Ballot Box seals? _____

Others? _____

Other observers/monitors present:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

Which officials were present at the polling station? _____

What assistance/instructions was provided to voters as they enter the polling station or booth (for those who do not understand the process)?

Alleged Incidents: Intimidation?

Any arrests?

How were these investigated?

A

Who was informed?

Closing of the polling station and counting of the ballots:

Name of Polling Station at Closing _____
What time did the polling station close? _____ If earlier than the
mandated time, what reason was given? _____

Was anyone waiting in line to vote when the polling station closed?
(How many?)

If so, were those people allowed to vote?

Who was present for the counting of the ballots?

Were monitors and observers permitted to witness the counting?

Were the election law procedures for counting of the votes followed? _____

Requisite information recorded prior to opening the ballot box?

Counting procedures followed?

Procedures followed for the recording and posting of the results?

How were the results and ballot boxes transported to the administrative headquarters? _____

How were disputes/ re-count resolved?

9

43

Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

EVALUATION

I. PREPARATION

A. Arrangements:

What is your evaluation of the travel, accommodations and logistical arrangements?

B. Training Materials:

How informative were the training materials?

Recommendations on the above:

II. PROGRAM

A. Were the objectives of the training clearly stated?

Were the objectives met?

B. Was the material presented clearly?

C. Was the format of the training effective?

D. Were questions answered clearly?

Recommendations on the above:

III. OUTCOME

A. Do you feel prepared to monitor an election?

B. Do you feel prepared to train others to monitor an election?

IV. Additional Comments
