**GUATEMALA: Building Citizen Confidence and Participation
USAID Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 520-03-A-013
under the CEPPS Leader Agreement No. DGC-A-00-01-00004-00**

Project Dates: April 2003 – January 2004

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Acknowledgements

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I. Summary

Since the UN-sponsored 1996 Peace Accords brought an end to decades of civil war, Guatemalans have faced many challenges in consolidating democracy. A lack of political will has stalled implementation of the Accords, hampering political, economic and social reforms. Allegations of corruption have undermined public confidence in government officials, while political parties are perceived by many as serving as electoral machines rather than vehicles for citizen participation. Furthermore, political violence remains a chronic problem. As successive governments fail to resolve Guatemala's political and social challenges, citizens are withdrawing further from political life and losing confidence in the democratic system.

The 2003 general elections in Guatemala posed a critical test to the country's struggling democracy. During the pre-election period, Guatemalans were concerned about the transparency of the elections administration, citing bias in the courts, the legitimacy of the candidacy of retired General Efrían Ríos Montt and a resurgence of political violence and intimidation. A Constitutional Court ruling permitting Ríos Montt to run as a presidential candidate increased political tensions and raised questions regarding the interpretation of a 1985 constitutional provision that prohibits coup participants from seeking public office. In addition, acts of intimidation carried out by clandestine groups with possible links to both public security forces and organized crime grew. These factors, combined with historically low rates of voter participation, threatened to undermine the legitimacy of the electoral process.

Despite a pre-election period marked by political violence and public anxiety, the first round of elections on November 9, 2003 were characterized by citizen dedication and patience. Election authorities estimate that 58 percent of voters went to the polls – the largest number of voters in decades. However, long lines and confusion about where to vote made it difficult for many citizens to express their political views. Since no candidate obtained an outright majority, a run-off election was held on December 28 in which Oscar Berger of the Grand National Alliance (GANA) and Alvaro Colom of the National Unity of Hope (UNE) competed for the presidency. The second round of elections was less problematic and on January 14, 2004, Berger and the GANA coalition were sworn in as Guatemala's new government having obtained 54 percent of the vote.

To help build citizen confidence in such a difficult setting, the National Democratic Institute (NDI, or the Institute) provided comprehensive technical assistance to Guatemalan civil society groups – *Acción Ciudadana* (Citizen Action - AC), *Centro de Acción Legal de Derechos Humanos* (Human Rights Center for Legal Action - CALDH), *Facultad LatinoAmericana de Ciencias Sociales* (Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences - FLACSO), and *Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Políticos* (Central American Institute for Political Studies – INCEP) – to organize the country's first nationwide election monitoring effort, *Mirador Electoral 2003: Somos tus ojos Guatemala (Election Watch 2003: We are Your Eyes, Guatemala).*

With the support of a coalition of international donors – the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Government of Switzerland – NDI was

able to help *Mirador Electoral* track information on political coercion and violence, monitor the behavior of political parties and candidates, political campaign financing, and the quality of media coverage, and report on the election administration and candidate and voter registration in the pre-election period. NDI provided assistance with developing collaborative strategies, decision-making processes and internal and external communications systems; designing training agendas and manuals, observer forms and tracking databases; and recruiting and training a national network of volunteers to serve as observers.

On election-day, NDI supported *Mirador Electoral* in observing the voting and counting process – to systematically evaluate the quality of the election process through the implementation of Guatemala's first "quick count," an independent projection of election results. In the period between the first round of elections and run-off, the Institute worked with the monitoring groups to analyze the voter registry to determine whether administrative errors had a significant impact on the elections. In providing this assistance, NDI called upon its in-house election advisors for strategic guidance and members of the *Acuerdo de Lima* (Lima Accord), a network of Latin American and Caribbean domestic observation groups co-founded by the Institute, for technical assistance. Day-to-day support was provided by an in-country field representative.

Mirador Electoral's political know-how, combined with NDI's global expertise and technical support, helped ensure the transparency and integrity of the electoral process in Guatemala. By constructing a national network of more than 3,150 observers, the groups created an avenue for citizen participation in the electoral process. Mobilizing citizens to promote accountability, efficiency, non-violence and transparency during the campaign period and on election-day helped build confidence in the electoral process.

At the request of the *Tribunal Supremo Electoral* (Supreme Electoral Tribunal-TSE), which was not able to publish official results until eight days after the elections, *Mirador Electoral* publicly announced its results the day after the first round of elections in November and on the same evening of the run-off elections in December. The quick counts had a 0.5% margin of error.

Through its independent reports, *Mirador Electoral* played an important watchdog role in the election process. The groups' study on the voter registry found incorrect data in approximately 30 percent of the list and identified an inflated Electoral Registry as a possible cause for the historically high voter abstention rate. In response to these findings, the group proposed new mechanisms to implement a national identification document. On January 21, 2004, *Mirador Electoral* presented a compilation of its nine observation reports and recommendations for electoral reform. As a consequence of the voter registry investigation findings, as well as the precision of the quick count results, election authorities solicited *Mirador Electoral's* assistance regarding future electoral reform efforts.

In supporting a broad-based, comprehensive election monitoring effort, NDI prioritized organizational capacity, harmonious working relationships and social diversity within local networks. However, working with a coalition of civic groups interested in implementing separate but complementary monitoring activities required substantial financial resources and coordination efforts. To help address concerns about the

independence of the observation effort, the Institute recommended political diversity in *Mirador Electoral's Consejo Rector* (Board of Directors), made up of five national figures from different sectors. Although the disparate composition of the observation efforts made daily operations challenging, the balance of interests eventually helped to raise *Mirador Electoral's* profile as an independent effort. Further enhancing the credibility of the domestic monitoring effort was the unified support of five international donors in Guatemala.

Today, there is a general consensus among political actors that electoral reform must be implemented before the next elections in 2007. *Mirador Electoral* members, namely *Acción Ciudadana* and FLACSO, are working to develop political consensus among legislators and the TSE and implement a technically sound legal framework for the implementation of electoral reforms and to promote a deeper understanding of reform options to help ensure that decisions are made based on technical analysis and experience. In addition, the nation-wide network of young human rights volunteer activists continue to play an important role in strengthening democracy in their country by helping to monitor violence and implement security activities to take gangs off the streets.

II.   Background

A.   NDI's Preliminary Involvement with Guatemalan Monitoring Groups

In late 2002, NDI received requests for assistance from Guatemalan civic organizations interested in conducting pre-election, election-day and post-election observation, as well as for political party pollwatcher training and voter education.

In October and November, NDI invited members of *Acción Ciudadana* to take part in a study mission to Ecuador to witness the observation efforts of *Participación Ciudadana – Ecuador* (Citizen Participation – Ecuador). The visits were organized for the first and second rounds of the national elections. The trips were funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) as part of NDI's program in support of the *Acuerdo de Lima*. *Acción Ciudadana* is member of this regional network of election observation groups. The trip provided *Acción Ciudadana* with insights into monitoring activities, including the strengths and weaknesses of different organizational models, the transmission of data on election-day and quick counts.

In February 2003 with NED funds, an NDI delegation traveled to Guatemala to assess the political situation leading up to the November general elections and to determine if the Institute could contribute to efforts to strengthen the electoral process. The NDI delegation was comprised of Melissa Estok, Senior Advisor and leading expert on nonpartisan domestic election observation;[1] Deborah Ullmer, Director of Development and

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[1] Nonpartisan domestic election observation, which local groups undertake in an objective manner, stands in contrast to other important types of election observation, including international observation and political party pollwatching. Domestic election monitoring engages citizens, including those from underrepresented sectors and regions, in the electoral process. Volunteer monitors gain a glimpse into a new relationship between government and citizens that encourages political discourse and citizen involvement in the political process, as well as an understanding of the impact they can have on the political and electoral process. They also develop organizational skills useful for active and effective participation in the political life of their country.

former Guatemala program manager; and Nicole Mlade, Senior Program Officer for programs in Latin America and the Caribbean. The delegation held wide-ranging discussions with leaders of political parties and civic groups, presidential candidates, the election authorities, political analysts, and members of the international community. The delegation drew on NDI's experience in Guatemala since 1990 in conducting the assessment.[2]

The delegation identified confidence-building and the promotion of ethical electoral behavior as key needs in the election process. The delegation found a widespread perception, particularly among civic leaders promoting democracy and the peace process, regarding the possible manipulation of the election by the governing party. The FRG party contested these accusations. The delegation also found that characteristics of the Guatemalan legal framework make manipulation possible. While many of the accusations were speculative, concerns of election manipulation threatened to discredit the process and destabilize an already tenuous political environment.

While disillusionment with the political process is not new, the November 2003 elections marked the first time in recent history that Guatemalans raised questions about bias in the administration of the election. The 2003 electoral process provided an opportunity to build confidence and promote responsible behavior and participation by monitoring the political climate and incidences of violence; media coverage of the elections; the manner in which political parties finance and conduct their campaigns; voter registration and the updating of the voter registry; the administration of the elections and election-day itself; and to consider post-election activities, such as promoting electoral reform.

Several civic groups proposed conducting election observation activities, including a coalition – *Grupo Especializado de Instituciones de Investigación y Formación Política* – and *Acción Ciudadana,* which initially decided to jointly pursue a domestic monitoring effort.[3] Both Guatemalan civic groups – established but without experience in election monitoring – and members of the donor community indicated a need for technical assistance to conduct these initiatives. After developing their joint proposal, the civic groups invited NDI to return to Guatemala to offer feedback on their monitoring plans. NDI offered written comments and its manuals on domestic monitoring, media monitoring, monitoring of the voter registration process, and conducting quick counts. In March, Estok returned to Guatemala to meet with the groups to review their observation strategy. The groups expressed their desire to partner with the Institute in implementing their proposed domestic monitoring program.

Estok and Ullmer traveled to Guatemala in late May to begin advising the joint domestic monitoring effort. After months of negotiations, the *Grupo Especializado – Acción Ciudadana* coalition fell apart due to trust issues and disagreements over division of labor.

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[2] Please see Appendix A for more information about NDI's work in Guatemala since 1990 and its experience supporting domestic monitoring efforts and civil society initiatives in the region.
[3] The *Grupo Especializado* included: the Association for Research and Social Studies (ASIES), the Manuel Colom Argueta Foundation for Democracy (FDMCA), the Central American Institute for Political Studies (INCEP), the Institute for Political Leadership (INGEP), the Rafael Landivar University, the Institute for Research and Political Self-Training (INIAP), and the Institute of Political and Social Research (IIPS) of the University of San Carlos of Guatemala.

B.   Recommendations for Creating a New Domestic Monitoring Effort

A few of the civic groups and donors involved in this initial effort asked NDI to help build consensus around the establishment of a new comprehensive, nation-wide election observation initiative. Since there were several aspects of the Guatemalan electoral process that merited attention, the fact that several organizations were interested in election observation work was a positive development.

Within this context, NDI recommended the establishment of an umbrella group or formal coalition with well-established civic organizations from different sectors to implement separate, but complementary, activities to promote citizen confidence and participation in the electoral process. This organizational model, although not optimal for keeping costs down and promoting sustainability, was selected given Guatemala's fractured civil society. Donors also expressed their concern about funding several local election monitoring efforts, based on experience from prior elections, which did not result in election-day reports, nor recommendations for electoral reform. Additionally, dividing projects among groups is often preferable to sharing projects, which can become complicated when decisions have to be made, especially in a high-pressure election environment.[4]

Box A, Organizational Model Recommended by NDI
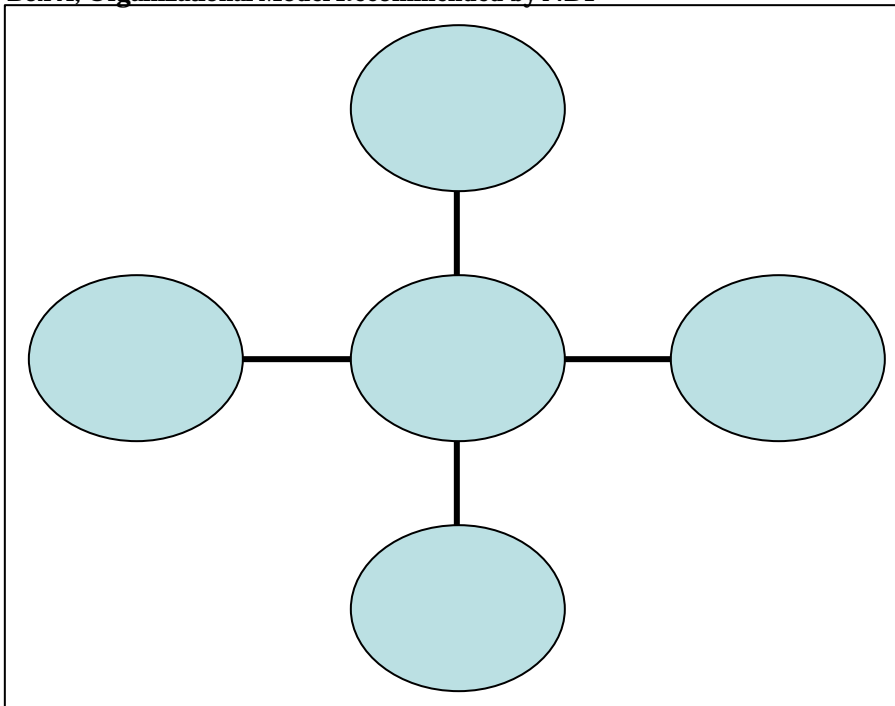
Having worked in Guatemala since 1990 in the areas of international election observation, voter education, public democracy surveys and political party reform, NDI proposed providing comprehensive technical assistance to four well-established civic groups – *Acción Ciudadana*, *Centro de Acción Legal de Derechos Humanos* (Human Rights Center for Legal

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[4] Please see Appendix B for Options for Organizing a Nonpartisan Domestic Observation Efforts.

Action - CALDH), *Facultad LatinoAmericana de Ciencias Sociales* (Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences - FLACSO), and *Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Políticos* (Central American Institute for Political Studies - INCEP).

C.   Technical Approach

Over the past 20 years, NDI has assisted civic organizations in more than 55 countries to organize pre-election, election-day and post-election observation efforts. These experiences have demonstrated that nonpartisan citizen observation helps to guarantee the integrity of election processes and strengthen civil society's capacity to promote participation, engage in policy advocacy and foster government accountability during and beyond the election cycle. Drawing on its global experience working with domestic monitoring groups as well as with members of the *Acuerdo de Lima* (Lima Accord), NDI developed the following approach to program implementation.

Field Office

In early June, NDI opened an office in Guatemala City to provide technical assistance and help coordinate *Mirador Electoral* activities. Day-to-day management and support was provided through an experienced field representative, Deborah Ullmer.[5] Ms. Ullmer advised the groups on all aspects of the program; organized visits of specialists in key aspects of the observation efforts; monitored political events; maintained relations with political and civic groups, electoral authorities, and the international community; conducted international fundraising efforts; reported on the progress of the program to donors; and met administrative and financial reporting needs. NDI sought to minimize costs by establishing the office in Ms. Ullmer's residence.

Washington, D.C.

The Institute's Washington-based staff – Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Director Gerardo Le Chevallier, Deputy Director Matt Dippell, and Program Assistant Paulina Ojeda – maintained ongoing dialogue with the Carter Center, Organization of American States (OAS), USAID, the Guatemalan Human Rights Organization, NISGUA and other democracy and human rights groups to ensure that these organizations were aware of program activities and were given the opportunity to coordinate activities. This close coordination helped promote joint actions during critical moments of the electoral process.

In-House Expertise

The Institute provided technical assistance through in-house experts in the various areas of civic education, policy advocacy and citizen organizing, and political reform and democratic transitions. The technical team was led by Melissa Estok, who specializes in election monitoring and civil society development, and Dr. Neil Nevitte, Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto, Canada, and a specialist on elections.[6] Estok and Nevitte have worked extensively on election processes and have provided direct

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[5] Please see Appendix D for Guatemala Team biographies.
[6] Idem.

assistance to domestic election observer groups in more than fifteen countries, including the Dominican Republic (*Participación Ciudadana, Citizen Participation*), Jamaica (Citizen Action for Free and Fair Elections), Mexico (*Alianza Cívica, Civic Alliance*)*,* Nicaragua (*Etica y Transparencia, Ethics and Transparency*) and Peru (*Transparencia*).

Acuerdo de Lima

An integral component of NDI's technical assistance is providing opportunities for horizontal exchange with members of the *Acuerdo de Lima* network. This network was formed to facilitate an exchange of lessons learned from civic education and advocacy efforts conducted in the last two decades by groups in more than 10 countries. The technical team assembled for Guatemala consisted of Rafael Roncagliolo (*Transparencia,* Peru), who specializes in election monitoring, and board and media relations; and Jalh Dulanto (*Transparencia,* Peru) and Claudia Morales (*Participacion Ciudadana,* Dominican Republic), who specialize in designing quick count headquarters, and developing volunteer tracking databases and quick count software.

In addition, NDI engaged Luis Alberto Cordero, a media expert from the *Oscar Arias Foundation* in Costa Rica and former member of CAPEL, who provided an introduction to the importance of domestic monitoring to the newly selected members of M*irador Electoral's Consejo Rector* (Board of Directors) and facilitated a media message strategy session. To lay the groundwork for an effective volunteer election observer network, Mario Medal (*Etica y Transparencia*, Nicaragua) facilitated planning sessions with network coordinators.

Learning from other civic groups in the region exposed *Mirador Electoral* to different methodologies for monitoring elections and gave them a chance to ask questions about implementation, the impact of the political environment on a monitoring initiative and how civic groups were able to transition to different monitoring activities following elections.

D. International Support

In April, USAID provided a $500,000 grant through the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) mechanism[7] to NDI to provide direct technical assistance to groups interested in participating in a domestic monitoring effort. Two months later, SIDA and NORAD provided to NDI $400,000 and $98,000, respectively, for further technical assistance and to issue additional sub-grants to the participating monitoring groups. To help complete funding for the first round of elections, the Swiss Government contributed $20,000 in August and CIDA $28,127 in September to the monitoring organizations.

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[7] The Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS), which is comprised of three equal partners—NDI, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)—was formed to respond to a Request for Application for the award of a competitive cooperative agreement from the USAID Global Bureau's Center for Democracy and Governance in 1995. In 2000, the Consortium won a second award through 2005. The CEPPS mechanism funds a variety of democracy programs, including pre-election assessments, election administration, political party development, voter education, domestic and international observation, post-election training and technical leadership.

To continue providing technical assistance for the second round of elections, USAID provided an additional $100,000, SIDA $88,400, and NORAD $31,240. The entire election effort totaled $1,265,767. Of this amount, approximately $900,700 was provided to the monitoring groups through sub-grants.

While not all donors provided funds through NDI, a basket-funding approach was established. This approach helped NDI work with the sub-grantees to develop budgets that matched planned activities, and prevent, although not completely avoid, the sub-grantees from competing against each other for resources. In addition, this approach allowed the international community to promote a united position against political violence and intimidation and in support of election authorities and monitors working to advance a peaceful and transparent electoral process.

As part of its management approach, NDI was committed to communicating frequently with the donors. Successful coordination was accomplished through weekly meetings to review programmatic progress, discuss concerns regarding the electoral process, and strategies to resolve issues affecting the domestic monitoring effort, such as accreditation, access to the election authorities and voter registry lists and funding.   In addition, NDI scheduled briefings with its elections advisors each time a technical assistance visit took place. These meetings served to highlight potential pitfalls and discuss options for either modifying program activities or alerting the international community to these dangers prior to their having an impact on the credibility of the electoral process.

E.   Financial Controls

NDI maintains comprehensive systems to ensure effective control of all financial aspects of its programs. These systems help NDI maintain rigorous control over all aspects of program management and make certain that potential problems are identified before they impact program implementation.

The Institute's sub-grants managers Vijaya Chandarpal and Sherri Kurtz were responsible for oversight of grants, cooperative agreements and contracts funded by the U.S. Government, foreign governments, and various private sources. These tasks included the preparation of internal and external financial reports, budget review and monitoring, grant compliance review, and assisting program staff in various financial management issues. In addition, NDI accounting staff conducted a pre-award review, including a review of internal accounting systems and budgets, and also provided fund management training to educate the monitoring groups on donor accountability requirements and ensure accurate and timely financial reporting.

III. Program Activities

A. Goal and Objectives

NDI's proposed program aimed to promote citizen confidence and participation in the electoral process. With this goal in mind, the program was designed with the following objectives and results:

- **Objective 1: Help ensure the transparency and integrity of the electoral process through election monitoring activities during the pre-election, election-day and post-election periods.**

  ➢ Result 1: Nonpartisan monitoring activities throughout the pre-election period and on election-day raise public awareness and increase access to information about the electoral process.

- **Objective 2: Increase the participation of citizens – particularly from underrepresented sectors – in the electoral process through the creation of a national network of volunteer election monitors.**

  ➢ Result 2: Volunteer election monitors promote the integrity of the election process through election-day monitoring activities.

- **Objective 3: Develop a national citizen network that can promote accountability and address long-term issues identified as important by Guatemalans, especially those from underrepresented sectors.**

  ➢ Result 3: The monitoring groups develop a national network capable of promoting democracy between elections.

B. Planning and Training Activities

1) Organizational Development

As mentioned in the background section, the first activities NDI conducted were consultations with Guatemalan civic leaders and international donors, which led to the formation of a new coalition to implement the domestic monitoring effort – *Mirador Electoral 2003: Somos tus ojos Guatemala.* NDI conducted interviews with several organizations, based on recommendations from representatives of the international community, civil society and major political parties.

NDI ultimately proposed to work with four organizations to implement a comprehensive domestic monitoring effort – *Acción Ciudadana*, a citizen watchdog group working to strengthen citizen participation and transparency of political reforms; CALDH, a human rights monitoring organization; FLACSO, a Latin American think tank dedicated to social analysis; and INCEP, a Central American political party training institute affiliated

with the Christian Democrat party.[8] In selecting these organizations, NDI prioritized organizational capacity, harmonious working relationships and social diversity within local networks, among other factors. It is important to note, however, that different actors in Guatemala expressed varying degrees of concern about the independence of groups. Only one of the groups was viewed as nonpartisan (FLACSO); two groups had a reputation for favoring the opposition (CALDH and INCEP); and the fourth was perceived as supporting the ruling party (AC). The balance of partisan interests eventually helped establish the coalition's reputation for impartiality.

In these consultations, NDI presented methodologies for monitoring political violence and intimidation, observing voting and counting processes, and outlined different organizational options. While NDI offered information about how domestic election observation efforts have been organized in other parts of the world, the Institute did not presume to know the best model for Guatemala and emphasized the need for the groups to determine the most effective way to organize their effort, including division of labor and assigning of key personnel, decision-making processes, leadership, project planning and outreach strategies.

Division of Labor and Key Personnel

Each of the monitoring groups agreed to take the lead on implementing different pre-election, election-day and post-election monitoring activities: tracking human rights issues, including political coercion and violence (CALDH); monitoring the behavior of political parties and candidates (INCEP); reporting on administration of the elections and voter and candidate registration activities (FLACSO); and observing the voting, counting, and tabulation processes and implementing quick counts (*Acción Ciudadana*). INCEP also volunteered to coordinate internal and external communication strategies and sub-contracted *Asociación Doces,* an organization dedicated to promoting responsible media reporting, to help advance unbiased media coverage of the campaigns and electoral process. As part of its USAID-supported transparency program, *Acción Ciudadana* also monitored campaign finance.

Each group designated two program coordinators to serve on the coordinating committee and to handle project management, budget oversight, and public relations. NDI recommended that the groups recruit an Executive Secretary to facilitate communications between *Consejo Rector* members and coordinators, keep a calendar of observation activities, and assist with logistics for public events, among other things. However, the groups did not agree on a person to staff the secretariat and instead, requested that NDI serve as the coordinator of the monitoring coalition and liaison with the international community. (See Box C for *Miador Electoral's* Organizational Chart).

In this capacity, NDI's Guatemala Director Deborah Ullmer implemented the following types of activities:

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[8] See Appendix C for background information on the participating monitoring groups.

- Chairing leadership and coordinating weekly meetings;
- Facilitating communication among participating groups;
- Coordinating technical assistance;
- Managing sub-grants to each of the groups, and monitoring their projects and budgets;
- Liaising with donors and international observers;
- Maintaining relationships with the TSE, political parties and the media; and
- Providing on-going feedback on monitoring reports and activities.

As the groups were organizing themselves, rumors circulated about the intention of some election coordinators to participate in the electoral race. In response, the coordinating committee signed a Memorandum of Understanding, pledging to maintain a neutral stance throughout the election monitoring program.

Leadership

To consolidate the decision-making body of the organization, NDI recommended that this role be ascribed to a board of directors designed to bolster the independence and competence of the effort. Based on this recommendation, the groups invited five well-known, respected individuals to participate in an advisory committee. To ensure that board members represented the various ethnic, religious, geographic, and social sectors of Guatemalan society, the groups agreed that these individuals would not be members of the boards of any of the participating organizations, nor party activists. Each group nominated well-known figures and arrived at a consensus on individuals to invite.

The following individuals agreed to serve as members of the *Consejo Rector of Mirador Electoral*: **Manuela Alvarado**, former congressional representative for the New Guatemalan Democratic Front (FDNG) in Quetzaltenango; **Roberto Ardón**, Executive Director of the Commission for Agriculture, Commerce, Industry and Finance (CACIF); **Anabella Giracca**, Director of the Mayan Education (EDUMAYA) program at the University of Rafael Landivar; **Felix Castillo Milla**, former chief magistrate of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE); and **Mario Molina**, Bishop Emeritus of the Episcopal Conference.[9]

Consejo Rector Members

The first board meeting was held on July 11. NDI called on Luis Alberto Cordero (Costa Rica), who was already in Guatemala assisting with media strategies, to provide a brief presentation on the history and importance of domestic election monitoring in Latin America. Since only three members of the *Consejo Rector* were able to attend this meeting, a second introductory meeting was held on July 22 to discuss their participation.

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[9] See Appendix E for *Consejo Rector* biographies.

The *Consejo Rector* was conceived as the public face and voice of the monitoring effort. However, given that this group was formed later in the organizing phase of the project, members were reluctant to represent the effort without having been part of the development of the observation organization. While *Consejo* members participated in public events, including the inauguration of *Mirador Electoral* and press conferences, they refrained from commenting on monitoring reports. Instead, *Consejo* members spoke on the contribution of the national network of young volunteers with regard to promoting participation and the importance of building confidence in the electoral process.

In September, Ms. Estok and Mr. Roncagliolo met with the *Consejo Rector* members to evaluate their participation, deepen their understanding of the observation methodologies and begin developing an election information management system for election-day. With NDI's encouragement, *Mirador's Consejo Rector* took on more responsibility in internal decision-making processes. Throughout the monitoring process, the *Consejo Rector* members were involved in the following types of activities:

- Participating in training sessions and motivating observers;
- Participating in analysis of electoral process;
- Making pre-election statements;
- Serving as observers on election-day;
- Making post-election statements; and
- Signing off on the final election observation report.

Decision-Making Processes

The monitoring groups conducted weekly meetings to discuss issues such as the content, tone, and timing of their public reports and media statements. The weekly meetings included the directors and project coordinators (eight persons) and NDI. Each of the groups hosted the meetings on a rotating basis. In addition, the groups held regular meetings with the *Consejo Rector* to discuss their involvement in upcoming activities. These meetings were usually scheduled a week or two before and immediately following public events.

Decisions were reached by consensus. In those cases when discussions resulted in an impasse, special meetings were convened until the issue was resolved. Many of these special meetings were convened around the issue of reporting.

Reporting

When nonpartisan monitoring groups issue accurate and timely public statements and reports that contain an analysis of statistics and data, this could lead to changes in policies and behaviors that promote a more democratic process. The groups had difficulty generating the first few monitoring reports, because within the *Mirador Electoral* coalition there were different viewpoints about the purpose of the monitoring reports. Some members wanted to simply state the facts as they knew them and let the public decide what to do with the information. Others wanted to employ the data to support particular conclusions about the electoral process. For example, following the public launching of *Mirador Electoral* on July 28, different actors in Guatemala criticized the coalition for

presenting a biased report, which was largely based on one negative event and did not take into consideration the other positive aspects of the electoral process.

NDI was also concerned that inadequate discussion among the groups before the release of reports would cause a loss of credibility and impact. To help boost *Mirador Electoral's* reputation as an impartial observation effort, NDI worked with the groups to develop a reporting calendar, based on anticipated technical reports, so that the organizations could incorporate a balance of statistical data and analysis, and recommendations to improve the process.

Box C: *Mirador Electoral* Organizational Chart
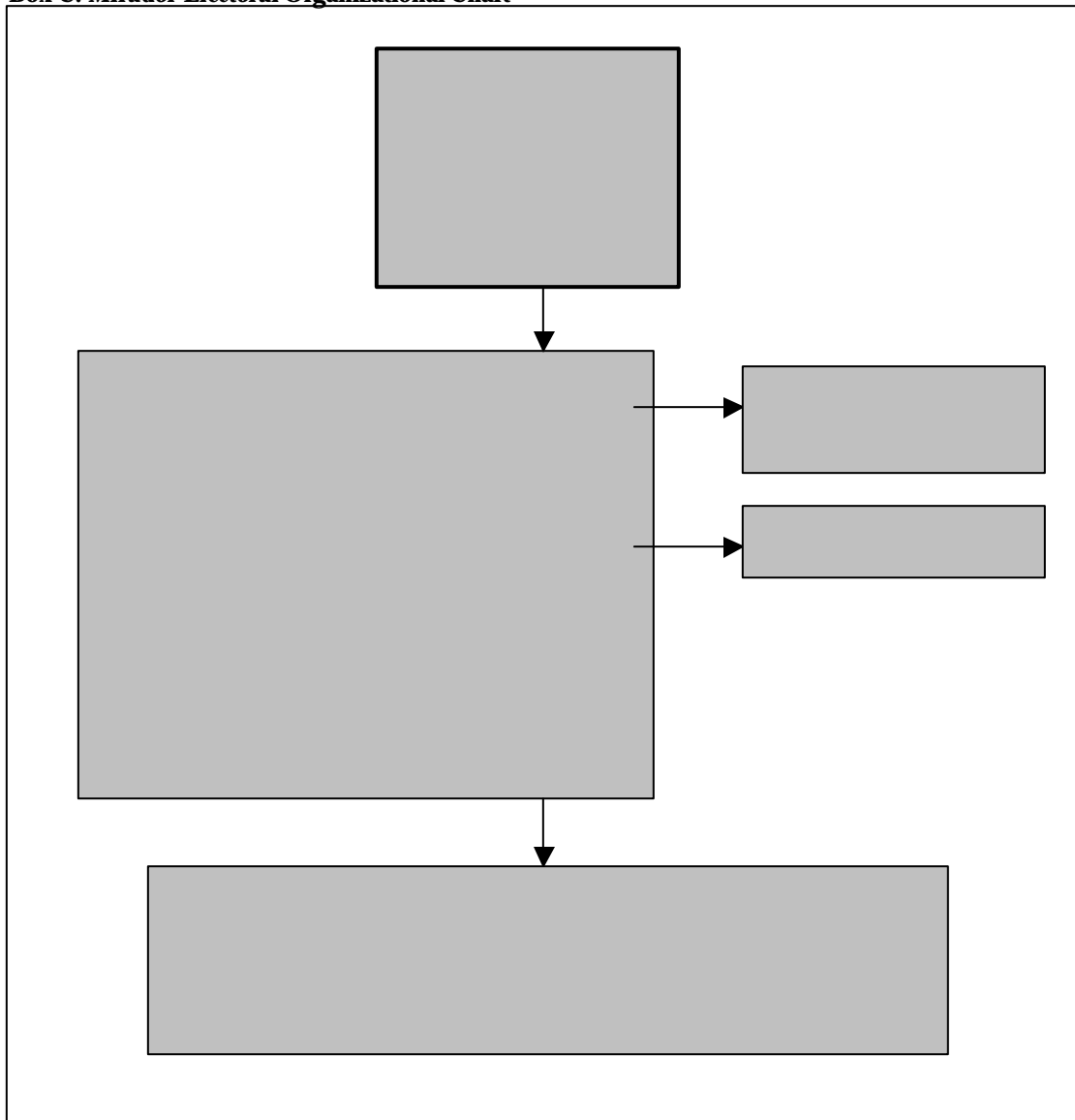
2)   Planning Monitoring Activities

Once decisions on organizational development issues for the joint monitoring effort were established, NDI helped the groups develop work plans for each of the monitoring

areas. This planning approach involved working backwards from the date of the election and included three key steps: creating a list of important events, activities, and milestones; plotting activities on a timeline; and reviewing the workload according to the time needed to implement the activities. This technical assistance also involved recommendations on refining budget projections for specific activities, and advising on staffing needs, qualifications and relevant experience to conduct the day-to-day operations of election monitoring.

Building a Volunteer Network

To lay the groundwork for an effective volunteer election observer network, Mario Medal from *Etica y Transparencia* (Nicaragua) facilitated planning sessions with staff from *Acción Ciudadana* and CALDH, the two organizations charged with building the network. NDI provided staff with comparative methodologies for recruiting volunteers, and building alliances with other institutions and sectors to strengthen their volunteer base. NDI also helped staff members prioritize their workload, and answered questions about their role on election-day, what tasks volunteers could undertake, and how to deal with time constraints, logistical difficulties, and funding limitations. Throughout the planning process, NDI advisors Estok and Nevitte provided regular feedback on progress, with recommendations on how to modify plans as necessary.

One of the first recommendations NDI makes to civic groups preparing for an election observation is to ensure that domestic observers can obtain accreditation in a timely fashion in order to access the polling sites on election-day. While Guatemalan observation regulations were generally favorable to the rights of national election observers, NDI recommended that the monitoring groups establish an agreement with the electoral authorities to facilitate the accreditation process, which required photos. Accordingly, the groups maintained on-going communication with the TSE, which helped expedite the tedious process.

NDI advisors also attended volunteer training activities, helped train election monitors and advised *Acción Ciudadana* and CALDH on developing joint strategies for recruiting and deployment of volunteers; establishing a volunteer code of conduct; developing the content and design of observer checklists and training manuals for the Guatemalan context; developing volunteer tracking databases; and establishing communication mechanisms from the departments and municipalities to the headquarters in Guatemala City.

While *Acción Ciudadana* and CALDH chose to develop separate networks, the organizations agreed to publicly speak about one national network so as to not confuse potential volunteers and to not compete against each other. On election-day, the networks complemented each other – *Acción Ciudadana* volunteers collected information regarding the environment inside the polling stations, including the impartiality of the voting station officials and conditions for a free and secret vote, while CALDH volunteers collected information regarding the environment outside the polling stations, including citizens' access to the polls. This division of labor proved critical during the first round of elections when AC and CALDH volunteers were able to corroborate reports on citizens being turned away from polling stations before the scheduled close of the polls at 6:00 p.m. This led to *Mirador*

Electoral's coordinating committee calling on the TSE to extend the voting period to help ensure greater participation.

Acción Ciudadana aimed to build a national network of a minimum of 2,200 citizens by developing alliances with grassroots organizations in Guatemala's 22 departments. Volunteer recruiters would present the election monitoring effort at local meetings and sign memorandums of understanding with local organizations. Once alliances were formally established, *Acción Ciudadana* would create departmental commissions, made up of representatives of the different organizations and local civic leaders. These commissions, in turn, would select 22 departmental coordinators and help make a public call for volunteer observers.[10]

While *Acción Ciudadana* established some key alliances, they ran out of the time needed to implement two-day training workshops for the 22 departmental coordinators and the 2,200 observers on the fundamentals of election observation, the electoral system and the methodology and implementation of a quick count. Tabulating projected results of an election requires a vast and well-trained network of volunteers. To advance the quick count training process, NDI worked with staff to decentralize volunteer recruitment to departmental coordinators, establish a "train-the-trainers" pyramid structure and focus the training agenda on key aspects of the monitoring process.

For its part, CALDH worked with a youth group – *Movimiento Jóvenes por la Paz y La Democracia* – to recruit 684 young volunteers as human rights monitors, one coordinator per department and two volunteers for each of Guatemala's 331 municipalities. CALDH began working with this youth movement in 1999 to build a culture of democracy in the country. Against this background, CALDH proposed working with youth to contribute to the national volunteer network by promoting nonviolent behavior throughout the pre-election period.

Given initial apprehensions of widespread violence and intimidation, there was concern that the youth did not have sufficient experience in human rights monitoring. To help address this issue, volunteers were instructed to establish contact with local human rights ombudsman offices, electoral authorities and political party representatives to introduce themselves and establish on-going communication. The monitoring groups also consulted with donors regarding security tips for the volunteers.

In addition to security issues, NDI wanted to help ensure that qualitative human rights information be analyzed in a more systematic way. NDI worked with CALDH to refine its observer forms to incorporate questions that required the volunteers to provide more precise information and steer away from opinions.[11]

3) Technical Infrastructure

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[10] Please see Appendix F for *Acción Ciudadana's* volunteer network diagram.
[11] Please see Appendix G for a sample of NDI's feedback on the Human Rights Observation Forms.

As volunteer observers were being recruited and trained, NDI quick count expert Nevitte met with *Acción Ciudadana's* technical staff. They discussed developing a statistically accurate sample of the polling stations in Guatemala to implement a successful quick count. During a quick count, observers watch the voting and counting processes at specifically selected polling stations, record key information on standardized forms and report their findings to a central data collection center. This information is then used to evaluate the overall quality of election-day processes and to project, or verify, official election results based on precise analysis of polling station data.

Estok and Nevitte were joined by quick count veterans Jalh Dulanto (former volunteer and software expert of *Transparencia,* Peru) and Claudia Morales (former volunteer and database expert of *Participación Ciudadana,* Dominican Republic) to help set up a data collection center, or *cueva* as it was known. NDI guided *Acción Ciudadana's* staff on designing physical spaces for the reporting and analysis of the observations, including a telephone bank, a computer input hub, an observer tracking area, and a results tabulation center, among other areas that had to be designed. NDI also discussed how to install proper equipment (computers, servers, phone lines, backup generators), train volunteers to check on other volunteers, give tours of the center to visitors, enter data and maintain security.

Acción Ciudadana had to build teams of statisticians, volunteer trainers, and computer experts to develop the reporting and communication systems used on election-day. NDI provided these teams with a model training plan for volunteers who would staff the telephones and computers on election-day; assistance with designing software for use in processing observer reports and for illustrating quick count results; help in creating a database containing information on sample polling stations and contact information for observers and departmental coordinators; and strategies for managing telephone/computer operators, including operating policies and motivational techniques.

The Institute also worked with CALDH to design a tracking database to for human rights observations. In addition, NDI advised on developing a communications system for a rapid transmission of information regarding allegations of violence or intimidation on election-day, particularly in conflict areas.

4.   Election-Day Preparations

Election Preparation Retreats

On October 17 and December 27, *Mirador Electoral's Consejo Rector* and coordinating groups held retreats to review their "game plan" for election-day. During the first retreat, board member Padre Mario Molina proposed different scenarios for election-day observation. In addition, NDI presented options for balancing qualitative and quantitative observation, based on the data collected from the human rights monitoring and quick count forms. The second retreat focused on reviewing lessons learned from observing and reporting during the first round of elections. The day-long retreats were moderated by board

member Anabella Giracca. NDI's technical advisory team served as observers at the retreats, providing advice only when asked.[12]

The retreats helped prepare members for the politically and time sensitive task of presenting findings on election-day. Rafael Roncagliolo provided advice about the pressure board members would face on election-day; the political and technical implications of conducting a quick count; strategies for the release of information on election-day; managing relations with electoral authorities, the media, political parties, international observers and donors; and maintaining a credible and impartial reputation.[13] Per NDI's recommendation, members developed protocols for managing quick count data.

Given that political violence threatened to disrupt the first round of elections, *Mirador Electoral* members discussed security for observers and developed crisis communication strategies to confront any situation that required immediate, coordinated action or affected the integrity or reputation of the observation. As part of this plan, a phone tree was created to pass on information quickly and systematically in case of an emergency, based on roles and responsibilities agreed upon at the retreat – from general coordination and quick count presentation to liaisons for donors, international observers, public institutions and the TSE.

Election-Day Simulation

As election-day neared, NDI helped *Mirador Electoral* coordinators implement an election-day simulation. During the simulation, the monitoring groups practiced capturing, analyzing and presenting observation information: *Acción Ciudadana* simulated the quick count, CALDH simulated human rights monitoring, and INCEP simulated media monitoring. Against NDI's recommendation, the groups established two data centers, one to collect quick count information at the *cueva*, and the other to collect human rights information at CALDH's headquarters. This slowed *Mirador Electoral's* analysis and reporting processes on election-day.

On October 26, all volunteers were asked to report to their polling stations, pretend that they had observed an election, find a phone nearby, and call in forms that were completed using fictitious information, or blank in the case of the human rights forms.[14] Volunteers were on hand in the data centers to answer the observer calls and enter the simulated data into computers. The simulation tested the observers, phone lines, software and monitoring groups' capacities to analyze data and develop reports.

By this time, Acción Ciudadana had only recruited, trained and accredited 1,708 observers. Approximately 62 percent of *Acción Ciudadana's* volunteer observers reported on the simulated election observation. As a result of this exercise, NDI's quick count experts

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[12] NDI's core technical assistance team for Guatemala included: NDI's Latin American Regional Director Gerardo Le Chevallier; Senior Election Advisers Melissa Estok and Dr. Neil Nevitte; and Peruvian media expert Rafael Roncagliolo.

[13] Prior to the retreats, NDI provided detailed information on the quick count methodology to *Mirador Electoral* coordinating committee and board of directors.

[14] NDI recommends that the simulation be held on the same day as the elections. In Guatemala's case, this was a Sunday.

recommended three simultaneous plans to improve data recovery and report, including: a) moving observers, b) calling on other nationals to assist, and c) incorporating international observers. In response, *Acción Ciudadana* redesigned its volunteer training strategies, reviewed the content of the observer forms, and made critical changes to the software and data entry forms. The monitoring group also revisited its strategy to obtain information on election-day by compiling a more detailed list of its volunteer network at the local levels.

While CALDH had recruited, trained and accredited 803 volunteer observers by this time, they too had received only 65 percent of their reports during the exercise. NDI recommended changes to the human rights monitoring forms to help facilitate the rapid transmission, systematizing and reporting of these reports on election-day.

Through the simulation, the monitoring groups learned that when observers were unable to report, the data analysis centers would have to be able to contact regional coordinators and have them find the observers and report the missing information. NDI trained staff and volunteers on setting up emergency and data recovery operations for election-day. Telephone banks were set up within the data centers to receive emergency calls from departmental coordinators and to investigate reports of violence. A second phone bank was also used in *Acción Ciudadana's* data center to recover missing data from a specific area of the country, and to investigate problems with observer identity codes.

5.   Public Awareness

While a domestic election monitoring group's reputation as a credible and impartial observer is a tribute to the success of the work of its volunteer network and its leadership, it is not enough to sustain and broaden political and financial support. A comprehensive communications plan is key to an effective monitoring program.

Brand Name and Logo

The groups wanted to portray a united position in their observation work, but also maintain their already established identities. By creating a universal observation name, logo and slogan – *Mirador Electoral 2003: Somos tus ojos Guatemala* – that represented a common goal for which these organizations came together, the monitoring groups made it easy for people to identify their work.

Internal Communications

Before the monitoring groups began speaking publicly about its efforts, it was imperative that representatives be able to accurately describe what *Mirador Electoral* was trying to achieve. NDI helped the monitoring groups develop stronger, more focused messages for election monitoring issues. The Institute also assisted the groups with

determining more efficient mechanisms for consultation within the observation effort and with others in drafting monitoring reports.

Outreach Strategy

To boost *Mirador Electoral's* reputation as an impartial observation effort, NDI helped the groups identify key constituencies with which the groups would need to develop constructive relations. These constituencies included the *Tribunal Supremo Electoral* (Supreme Electoral Tribunal – TSE), political parties, the media, the *Procuraría de Derechos Humanos* (the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office, PDH), the Organization of American States (OAS), the European Union, other national and international observation groups, and representatives of the donor community. For example, *Mirador Electoral* coordinated monitoring efforts with the private sector umbrella group Commission for Agriculture, Commerce, Industry and Finance (CACIF), which deployed 80 observers. This coordination included sharing training materials, meeting with its board members, drafting a joint statement and holding a press conference, along with the OAS, denouncing the Election Holiday law as unconstitutional because it violated fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of speech. In addition, the Permanent Forum of Political Parties organized by the OAS, invited *Mirador Electoral* to meet with the political party leaders on a monthly basis to share information.

Media Relations

Another key component of the communications plan was a media strategy geared toward promoting a deeper understanding of the important role of national observers. The media helps to raise awareness about the methodologies used to monitor the elections, attract volunteers to work on the project and answer any public criticism leveled at the group. NDI's political and media advisor Rafael Roncagliolo conducted media training sessions with *Mirador Electoral's* leadership and coordinators. Roncagliolo shared tips for defining messages and presenting findings to the public with INCEP, the group responsible for coordinating communications and media relations.

NDI encouraged the monitoring groups to creatively exploit opportunities for free or low-cost publicity. *Mirador Electoral* promoted ongoing media coverage of monitoring activities by:

- Drafting news releases about important findings;
- Organizing press conferences tied to monitoring activities;
- Organizing public events, such as training programs with international election experts;
- Calling key reporters to keep them abreast of what has happened and to request stories about the monitoring reports;
- Continuously placing spokespeople on radio and TV talk shows where representatives spoke about the findings; and
- Regularly visiting editorial boards to showcase the monitoring program and its results.

To help measure *Mirador Electoral's* performance, strategy and external communications and to provide an opportunity to benchmark performance and target

improvements, NDI called on public relations advisors from Burson-Marsteller to implement an independent perceptions audit. According to baseline analysis collected in September:[15]

- Most of the interviewees in Guatemala City had information about the electoral process from Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) activities, public forums and political campaigns. While only 20 percent had heard about *Mirador Electoral's* activities, there were high expectations in terms of how the national effort should implement its monitoring activities: with clarity, honesty, efficiency, transparency, responsibility, neutrality and support from the international community.
- In the interior of the country, the information people held regarding the elections was related to the candidates, public forums or violent acts. In contrast to those living in the capital, many in the interior expressed their concern about fraud as a "done deal" and confusion about observation efforts.
- Among journalists, only 17 percent were familiar with *Mirador Electoral.*

Training was also an important component of the groups' work with the media and other key constituencies. Members of the media rarely know what a quick count is, yet they are uniquely placed to promote, or undermine, confidence in the methodology. In presentations organized by NDI, Nevitte and Dulanto explained the quick count methodology to journalists, including leaders from leading print outlets *Prensa Libre* and *El Periodico,* and television, *Guatevision*; TSE commissioners, political party pollwatchers and candidates, and representatives from the international community. Training tools included a power point presentation containing flow charts that demonstrated communications within the data analysis center and the comprehensive observation process, and a reference card on NDI's quick count methodology.[16]

Public Awareness Tools

INCEP developed a brochure to help explain the methodologies used to monitor the electoral process. In addition, INCEP designed a website to attract individuals concerned about the political and human rights situation in Guatemala and were interested in raising awareness or participating as an election observer. The website (http://www.miradorelectoral2003.org) included monitoring reports, press releases, statements by prominent international supporters, and articles mentioning the monitoring efforts.

With assistance from Burson-Marsteller, the monitoring groups developed media kits containing observer methodologies and contact information for departmental coordinators, and an election guide for international media representatives, containing background information on the 1999 elections, political parties contesting the elections, and *Mirador Electoral's* observation methodology and contact information.

C. Election Monitoring Activities

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[15] The audit included 110 telephone interviews in Guatemala City, 110 interviews in the interior (approximately four interviews per department) and 20 interviews with journalists. The audit was conducted by Burson-Marsteller, an international polling firm, with guidance from FLACSO and NDI.
[16] Please see Appendices H and I for a copy of the observation flow chart and quick count reference card.

1.   Pre-election

Based on the priorities delineated by the groups, NDI provided technical assistance to the Guatemalan civic monitoring groups to help them address various pre-election issues that affected public confidence in the Guatemalan elections, including:

- Promoting non-violence and responsible campaigning;
- Ensuring fair and effective administration of the election process;
- Bolstering transparency in political party and campaign financing;
- Advancing unbiased media coverage of the campaigns and electoral process; and
- Encouraging citizen participation.

Political Violence and Intimidation

Political violence in Guatemala remains a chronic problem. Efforts to investigate and punish past human rights abuses have made little progress. There was concern that acts of intimidation were carried out by clandestine groups with possible links to both public security forces and organized crime. Adding to public anxiety was the alleged resurgence of the paramilitary Citizen Self-Defense Patrols (*Patrullas de Autodefensa Civiles* - PACs), which many Guatemalans hold responsible for human rights abuses that took place during the country's civil war.

CALDH Volunteer "eyes"

Given this background, a key element of *Mirador Electoral's* pre-election work included tracking information on political coercion, intimidation and violence throughout the country. A network of young observers organized by CALDH served as a mechanism to begin to break silence and impunity. In the post-election period, CALDH presented a summary of the human rights monitoring reports and specific cases for investigation to the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office for verification and follow-through.

Election Administration

Many Guatemalans noted that the 2003 elections mark the first time in recent history that citizens raised questions about the impartiality of election authorities. Speculation on bias within the TSE has surrounded the candidacy of former President Efraín Ríos Montt. The July Constitutional Court ruling that overturned a widely-supported Supreme Court decision to ban former coup participant Ríos Montt from running for president increased political tensions and raised questions as to the application of a constitutional provision established in 1985 that prohibits coup participants from seeking public office. He was blocked from seeking the presidency in 1990 and 1995 under a 1985 constitutional amendment that bars anyone who seizes power illegally from seeking election.

To increase transparency in the administration of elections, FLACSO monitored the TSE's jurisdictional and administrative functions. This effort included tracking the registration of candidates and selection and training of polling site officials.

Adding to the uncertain pre-electoral climate was confusion by voters about where to vote. In an effort to bring the polls closer to the voters, the TSE decentralized polling centers in 16 major municipalities, representing nearly 50% of the vote. In past elections, voters had to return to the municipalities where they were registered. In remote areas, it took some voters up to two days to reach the capital municipalities where the polls were located. Unfortunately, polls were not decentralized in the more remote areas. However, citizens who live in the 16 largest municipalities were now be allowed to vote closer to home, provided that they took the time to update their residential information at the TSE. Unfortunately, the TSE did not launch an adequate public information campaign about this process and therefore, many citizens did not take advantage of this opportunity. To help boost participation on election-day, the TSE incorporated three types of *mesas* at voting centers in these 16 municipalities, for those voters who updated their information, those who did not and mixed *mesas.*

To examine the adequacy of the voter registry and implications of the TSE's actions, FLACSO conducted Guatemala's first Two-Way Voter Registry Investigation to identify inaccurate names and citizens who are deceased, changed their name or moved. In the first case, or a "list-to-people" test, the exercise seeks to ensure that every name on the voters' list corresponds to an eligible voter, and that the voter's data, such as the address, is correct. This was done by identifying and then locating a representative sample of people whose names are selected from the voters' list. In the second case, or a "people-to-list" test, the objective is to determine if there are people who are eligible to vote and who appear to have attempted to register to vote, but do not appear on the voters' list. In this case, a random sample was drawn of eligible individuals and compared to the voters' list.

NDI worked with FLACSO to develop a questionnaire that verified the accuracy of the information on the preliminary voters' list by selecting a statistically significant sample of names and then determining through interviews and other field research if the information is correct. The Institute also helped FLACSO compare the preliminary voters list from previous elections with the current list to identify statistical anomalies, such as extreme changes in the number of registrants for one political party or in one region; and determine whether registry errors had a significant impact on the elections. The study was completed on December 13, 2003.

According to a sample of more than 775 cases, including 282 cases of citizens who updated their voter information, FLACSO determined that approximately 30 percent of registry contained incorrect data, such as addresses and identification numbers. The group also determined that the special polls or *mesas* employed by the TSE in the first round of elections helped compensate for problems in the voter registry.

In a preliminary study published by FLACSO and *Mirador* in October 2003, former TSE magistrate César Conde Rada analyzed the origin, scope, limitations, and weaknesses of

Guatemala's voters' registry.[17] He made reference to an audit by IIDH/CAPEL and to a TSE internal evaluation conducted before the 1999 elections that estimated 8.93 percent critical inconsistencies in the registry. Conde Rada stressed the need to modernize the Guatemalan voter registration system. FLACSO's reports on the voter registry found incorrect data in approximately 30 percent of the list, and identified an inflated registry as a possible cause for the historically high voter abstention rate.

Misuse of Government Resources and Campaign Financing

Another issue affecting public confidence in the electoral process was the concern that vague and poorly enforced campaign finance laws would undermine the integrity of the elections by permitting unethical practices by the competing parties. Many of the reforms outlined in the Peace Accords remain pending, including reforms to the Political Party and Electoral law and campaign finance system, which is one of the least regulated in the Western Hemisphere. There was also concern among citizens that donor anonymity opened the door to illicit funding that may include drug money.

Acción Ciudadana monitored campaign expenditures to help increase public access to information and transparency.[18] The organization solicited campaign finance information from the 14 political parties contesting the elections through interviews and a questionnaire. This information was checked against their analysis of political advertising in the print and electronic media, expenditures that can be readily quantified.   Information was also compared with the National Center for Economic Investigations' (CIEN) analysis regarding use of state resources. In their media monitoring study, *Acción Ciudadana* found that Q216.7 million (or approximately US $27 million) was spent on political advertising for the first round of elections, with seven of the parties spending 89 percent of the total.

In tandem with monitoring campaign finance, INCEP monitored political party and candidate conduct to promote an ethical campaign. The group issued statements periodically regarding compliance with the OAS-sponsored political party accord. In addition, INCEP organized local candidate debates to promote an issue-oriented campaign.

Media Bias

Many analysts also questioned whether Guatemalan citizens would receive accurate and unbiased information needed to make educated decisions about candidates. Concerns were also raised about whether parties would have fair treatment by the media in terms of access and the tone of coverage. Some observers criticize the Guatemalan media as sensationalist and prone to factual errors. There was also concern that the irresponsible behavior of media outlets built expectations of irregularities in the electoral process.

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[17] César A. Conde Rada, The Voters Registry in Guatemala: History and Current Situation, FLACSO –
Guatemala and Mirador Electoral 2003, October 2003.

[18] The campaign finance portion of the election monitoring program was implemented by *Acción Ciudadana's* Citizen Observation for Access to Information (*Observatorio Ciudadano para el Libre Acceso a la Información)* program supported by USAID.

To help deter bias in media coverage and access, INCEP worked with a local group of journalists – *Asociación DOSES* – to measure the volume and tone of reporting that candidates and parties receive in the print and electronic media. This information allowed the local observer groups to compare the way both private and public media cover the candidates during the course of the campaign.

DOSES noted that election coverage by the media was poor and biased. For example, nine days before the November 9 elections, the media dedicated only ten percent of their space and time to election-related news. While the FRG obtained the most number of mentions, on television (26.8 percent), on radio (25.9 percent) and in print media (19.7 percent), the references were mostly negative. Prior to the second round of elections, the print media demonstrated a clear bias in favor of GANA's candidate Oscar Berger.

Participation in the Elections

Voter turnout in Guatemala has been historically low. Guatemala comes in last place in Latin America in terms of electoral participation and has one of the lowest participation rates in the world. Many citizens – particularly indigenous people – are disillusioned with the political process and feel that their votes, like the Peace Accords, will not lead to significant changes in their lives. They lack confidence in public institutions, such as the security or justice systems, thus increasing disenchantment with political processes and further discouraging participation.

To promote youth participation, CALDH organized a two-day national training event for more than 700 young human rights election observers. The event, held in Antigua in mid-October, began with roundtable discussions on citizen participation, including youth, women, indigenous and disabled participation in the elections. The first day culminated in a peace march and concert at the central park, which included *Sobrevivencia*, an indigenous (Mam) rock band that has been traveling throughout Guatemala to promote youth participation. The following day, NDI team members worked with CALDH to refine election-day human rights observation forms and communication plans, based on observations made by some observers and coordinators. The event was captured in a 7-minute documentary produced by Burson-Marsteller and featured on CNN in Spanish during the campaign period.

Election Monitoring Reports

INCEP drew on information collected by the observers to publish periodic reports on the pre-election environment and shortcomings, and to present recommendations to political leaders and electoral authorities. Through its independent reports, *Mirador Electoral* played an important watchdog role that had a decisive impact on the credibility of the election process as a whole.

2.   Election-Day

National Network

CALDH and *Accíon Ciudadana* organized election-day observation efforts to comment systematically on the overall quality of the election process.

CALDH fielded 930 young observers from 298 out of the 331 municipalities who collected information regarding:

- voter access to the polls, including public transportation, and voting station facilities for persons with disabilities and the elderly;
- the presence of voter information in indigenous languages;
- the environment inside the polling stations, including acts of intimidation and violence; and
- conditions for a free and secret vote.

During the first round of elections, CALDH observers reported problems in twenty municipalities. Anomalies included voters not appearing on the voters' list; losing parties not accepting the results and intimidation directed at election officials. Observers also noted that various polling stations closed even when there were citizens still waiting in line to cast their vote. In the second round of elections, few anomalies were observed.

Accíon Ciudadana fielded 2,200 observers from the 331 municipalities who collected information regarding:

- the opening of the polls;
- the presence of ballots;
- the environment inside the polling stations;
- the impartiality of the voting station officials;
- the presence of political party representatives;
- conditions for a free and secret vote; and
- tabulated election results.

NDI assisted *Accíon Ciudadana* with drawing a statistically accurate random sample of polling sites and accurately presenting the data.

Analysis and Reporting

Following the tabulation of the results, NDI's technical advisory team compiled a projected election return from the information gathered from polling stations across the country. This information was analyzed by the *Consejo Rector* of *Mirador Electoral.* Election-day reports were presented to the public through press conferences and at an information kiosk set up the Tikal Futura building where the TSE transmitted data on election-day.

In a country that has a history of low voter turnout, voters complained that election officials were not prepared to handle the huge turnout. According to *Mirador Electoral* observer reports on the first round of elections, up to 580 voters turned out at some polls, which are limited to 600 voters by law. Unfortunately, those who had updated their voter

information seemed to be most affected, often waiting up to three or more hours in line. In addition, there were reports of problems with the indelible ink at several polling centers.

As a result of administrative delays, cramped voting sites and long lines of voters, isolated disruptions at polling stations occurred. For example, authorities had to stop the voting process in four centers after voters upset over the long wait burned ballot boxes in Cuyotenango in the department of Suchitepequez, Quezada in Jutiapa, la Gomera in Escuintla and El Quetzal in San Marcos. Two women were also trampled to death in Nebaj, Quiché after crowds tried to push and shove their way into a polling center, election observers confirmed.

Election administration in the second round improved with information kiosks equipped to help guide voters and more informed election officials. Observers did not report interruptions in the voting process, nor did voters have to wait in long lines.

However, irregularities related to the voter registry list impeded some citizens from exercising their vote. Based on *Mirador's* investigation of the voters' list, there were an estimated 44,200 to 57,400 persons who turned out to the polls but could not vote. See Program Activities for more information about the Two-Way Voter Registry Investigation.

Election Results

The November 9 general elections reinvigorated Guatemala's political system after years of declining participation following the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996. Guatemalans turned out to vote in unprecedented numbers in a closely watched election. Despite concerns of widespread violence, the elections were largely peaceful, albeit frustrating for some voters unable to cast their ballots. Voter turnout was heavy early on in the process, which at times overwhelmed polling centers.

Guatemalans voted for a new president and vice-president, 158 members of the single-chamber congress, 20 members of the Central American Parliament, and 331 municipal governments. Oscar Berger, former mayor of Guatemala City, garnered 34.33 percent of the votes; and Alvaro Colom, who held numerous government posts, obtained 26.36 percent. Efraín Ríos Montt, president of Congress and leader of the governing FRG, came in distant third, with 19.31 percent. Since none of the presidential candidates received more than 50 percent of the vote, a run-off election was held.

On December 28, Oscar Berger of the Grand National Alliance (GANA) and Alvaro Colom of the National Unity of Hope (UNE) competed for the presidency. While participation dropped by 10 percent in the second round of elections, the rate was higher compared to past elections. Berger was elected as Guatemala's new president with 54 percent of the vote.

At the request of the TSE, which was not able to publish official results until eight days after the first round of elections, *Mirador Electoral* publicly announced its results on the morning of November 10. During the second round of elections, 99 percent of *Acción Ciudadana* observers reported their results soon after the polls closed. This allowed *Mirador*

to present its results to the TSE three hours after the polls closed. The quick counts had a +/- 1% margin of error.

3.   Post-Election

After the installation of the new government on January 14, NDI worked with the monitoring groups to organize evaluation sessions with departmental coordinators. These events provided feedback on the observation efforts and developed recommendations for improving the elections.

On January 21, 2004, *Mirador Electoral*, which collected unique and systematic information on the strengths and weaknesses of the electoral process, presented a compilation of nine observation reports, as well as recommendations to the TSE. In turn, the TSE solicited assistance regarding future electoral reform efforts.

Mirador Electoral completed activities under this grant on January 31, 2004. To conclude NDI's technical assistance to the program, NDI held final evaluation meetings with *Mirador Electoral* members to reflect on the lessons learned from the pre-election and election-day monitoring processes. NDI's Guatemala Resident Representative Deborah Ullmer also met with *Mirador Electoral* members and donor representatives to evaluate its election monitoring activities and technical assistance, and to review recommendations for electoral and political reform in Guatemala.

In addition, NDI reviewed submissions of financial records and final reports by the groups, and processed final drawdowns. NDI also met with sister organizations, the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), to discuss implementing follow-on activities on election law reform programs with Guatemalan partners.

IV.   Results and Accomplishments

The following is an internal evaluation of the performance of the program to build confidence and participation in the electoral process.

Objective 1: Help ensure the transparency and integrity of the electoral process through election monitoring activities during the pre-election, election-day and post-election periods.

Raising Public Awareness and Access to Information

- *Mirador Electoral* issued six pre-election reports and four election-day press statements on the highlights or shortcomings of the electoral process, and recommended changes to bolster confidence and participation in the process. These timely reports and news releases helped influence the behavior of the media and election authorities. For example:

  o In the pre-election period, *Mirador* helped diminish the perception of electoral fraud generated by some media outlets and opposition parties

during the months of July and August. For example, as a result of discussions with *Mirador Electoral* members, leading figures such as Nobel Peace Laureate Rigoberta Menchú, who earlier attacked the process as fraudulent based on Ríos Montt's candidacy, began articulating a new message encouraging citizens to vote with their conscience.

o *Mirador Electoral* was one of the first observer missions to issue a press release denouncing the Election Holiday law as unconstitutional because it violated fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of speech. Two days later, on November 2, the OAS asked *Mirador* to join in a public conference to express concern about the repercussions that this law, if signed by President Portillo, could have had on the elections.

o On November 9, early in the voting process, the groups alerted the TSE to problems with the indelible ink. Toward the end of the process, the groups called on the TSE to extend the voting to help ensure greater participation.

o Based on observations by the monitoring groups, the TSE has agreed to investigate anomalies in the 2003 elections in an effort to improve the electoral process, beginning with the voters' registry. In a January 21 meeting in which *Mirador Electoral's* presented its final election observation report, the TSE solicited the local groups' assistance with recommendations for changes to the Political Party and Election Law.

- Since *Mirador Electoral's* launching in late July, public awareness about Guatemala's first coordinated domestic observation initiative has grown.

o In a *Prensa Libre* editorial on October 20, *Mirador Electoral* was cited as "an example of civic activism that should be replicated by all youth in Guatemala."

o From October through December, the groups' observation reports and activities have been highlighted or mentioned close to 80 times in major newspapers. This is almost twice the amount of press coverage reported during the previous quarter.

o The groups also received numerous letters from around the world expressing concern about the human rights situation and the need to investigate cases of political violence.[19]

Monitoring the Pre-Election Period

- The monitoring groups implemented Guatemala's first two-way investigation of the voter registry. The results of this investigation were shared with the TSE and

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[19] Mirador Electoral 2003 received correspondence from Austrailia, Belgium, China, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Northern Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

subsequently published. The investigation concluded that the phenomenon of electoral abstention rate, which has long been studied, could be affected by an inflated voters' registry.

- To bolster transparency in political party financing, the groups monitored campaign expenditures by attempting to access party information and measuring advertisements in the media. Through press releases, interviews with the media, and three reports, the monitoring groups publicized data on the amounts and sources of funding for parties and candidates, or reported on their inability to access that information. These are the first reports of this kind to be published in Guatemala.

- The monitoring groups collected information regarding allegations of intimidation or coercion during the campaign period and on election-day. This information was presented to election officials and the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office on November 21.

Verifying the Official Results

- The monitoring groups implemented a technically sound quick count with a 0.5% difference from the official results. By 2:00 a.m. on November 10, the monitoring groups had quantitative information based on a sample of 9.6% of the total polling stations, or 987 polls. Two hours after the polls closed on December 28, at 8:00 p.m., the groups presented their results to the TSE. Election officials, local analysts, political parties and the media drew on this information to inform their reports.

  o The TSE recognized *Mirador's* quick count in a press conference on the evening of the elections and asked the group to publicly announce its results.

  o Local political analysts referred to the success of Guatemala's first quick count effort in a public opinion article. "Coordinated by *Acción Ciudadana*, approximately 2,000 observers were deployed in 331 municipalities…In the morning, during the first observation exercise, 99 percent of the observers submitted reports on the quality of the elections, breaking the record established by [the national election observation group] in the Dominican Republic."

  o Presidential candidate Oscar Berger of GANA publicly requested that *Mirador* continue its monitoring efforts and implement a quick count for the second round of elections.

Technical Assistance

- NDI provided the participating groups with the tools to analyze the voter registry, collect information on political violence, and monitor voting and counting processes in a systematic, objective and rapid manner. These tools included observer forms, manuals, databases and software. NDI also provided examples on the format and content of the election monitoring training seminars.

Objective 2: Increase the participation of citizens – particularly from underrepresented sectors – in the electoral process through the creation of a national network of volunteer election monitors.

- More than 3,100 nonpartisan election observers and volunteers from Guatemala's 22 departments and 331 municipalities were recruited, trained and deployed to polling stations on election-day.

- Ninety-nine percent of the 2,230 observers monitoring the quality of the election-day process submitted reports on the opening of the polls, the impartiality of the voting station officials, the presence of political party representatives; and conditions for a free and secret vote. Approximately 100 civic organizations participated in the observation network.

- Volunteer observers monitoring the human rights situation submitted 2,000 qualitative reports of the pre-election and election-day processes for analysis and investigation. Of the 903 human right observers and volunteers, 45percent are young women and approximately 40 percent represent Guatemala's indigenous communities.

Objective 3: Develop a national citizen network that can promote accountability and address long-term issues identified as important by Guatemalans, especially from underrepresented sectors.

- According to one journalist, [*Mirador Electoral*] is "a well done initiative, particularly given the complex environment of the electoral process. [The effort] also motivated voters and planted a seed for the future, particularly for the youth who participated in the observer network."

- While *Mirador Electoral* is no longer active as a coalition, the nation-wide network of young human rights volunteer activists continue to play an important role in strengthening democracy in their country by helping to monitor violence and implement security activities to take gangs off the streets.

V.   Evaluation

While *Mirador Electoral's* efforts had a positive impact on building confidence and participation in the 2003 general elections in Guatemala, there were also challenges and important lessons learned during the implementation of this program.

- *Time Factor* – Following the collapse of the first domestic election observation coalition, NDI was tasked with the creation of a new joint effort and to ensure that once formed, the coalition's influence in the electoral process would be optimized. After having lost at least three months in negotiations with the first group of organizations, NDI was left with six months to organize a new effort, plan activities,

and then implement election monitoring activities in time for the November 9 elections. While NDI had limited time to provide technical assistance, the Institute was able to help *Mirador Electoral* implement their planned activities and accomplish their objectives.

- *Coalition Organization* – In supporting a broad-based, comprehensive election monitoring initiative, NDI prioritized organizational capacity, harmonious working relationships and social diversity within local networks. The Institute also sought political diversity in *Mirador Electoral's* Board to help address concerns about the independence of the observation effort. However, working with a coalition of civic groups interested in implementing separate, but complementary monitoring activities, required additional financial resources and coordination efforts. Although the disparate composition of the observation efforts made daily operations challenging, the balance of interests and experience (technical versus political) eventually helped to establish *Mirador's* credibility.

- *NDI's Role* – NDI served in both technical assistance and coordinator roles for the domestic monitoring effort. In providing technical assistance, NDI was clear that decisions were ultimately to be taken by *Mirador Electoral* members and that the Institute would provide the necessary comparative and technical information to help the members make their decisions, such as in the case of the voter registry study. However, serving as a coordinator of the domestic monitoring effort sometimes undermined NDI's ability to effectively provide feedback on technical aspects, such as monitoring reports and presentations, and to closely monitor sub-grant budgets. Although not optimal, NDI was able to fulfill both roles because an experienced team of organizational and technical experts provided guidance and advice to both the monitoring groups and NDI Resident Director, who served as the coordinator.

- *Trust Factor* – The biggest challenge NDI faced in working with a coalition of NGOs was building relationships of trust among and between the groups and the Institute, particularly in a country where four decades of internal armed conflict have polarized society and generated distrust among citizens. Since any coalition's success rests upon a common vision and shared values, a lack of trust among the groups ultimately hindered the groups' ability to continue jointly engaging in electoral reform efforts after the elections. Nevertheless, *Acción Ciudadana* and FLACSO, are working to develop political consensus among legislators and the TSE and implement a technically sound legal framework for the implementation of electoral reforms and to promote a deeper understanding of reform options to help ensure that decisions are made based on technical analysis and experience.

- *Fundraising* – NDI attracted and coordinated financial support from government funding agencies, including Canada, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland and the United States. This group of supporters represents perhaps the broadest range of international assistance the Institute has ever garnered for similar efforts. This meant that a major portion of the NDI Resident Director's time had to be spent on building and maintaining relationships, and providing regular oral and written briefings to the donors. By broadening financial support, however, NDI was able to

promote a united position within the international community in support of domestic election monitoring in Guatemala. In addition, the cohesive support of the donors further enhanced the credibility of *Mirador Electoral.*

NDI was proud to have worked with a professional and dedicated group of civic leaders committed to strengthening democracy in Guatemala. NDI will continue to work with members of *Mirador Electoral,* by calling on them to share their experiences with organizations participating in similar initiatives throughout Latin America.

APPENDIX A

NDI'S Experience in Guatemala

International Observation

In 1990, NDI conducted four international observation missions and established a three-month field office to monitor the Guatemalan electoral process. The NDI delegation commended election authorities for conducting a peaceful and efficient balloting and counting process, but expressed concern with the politically-motivated violence during the campaign period that inhibited free and open debate and discouraged political participation, especially that of women and indigenous groups. In its conclusions, the delegation recommended that Guatemalans seek ways to broaden citizen participation in the political process to strengthen the country's democracy and ensure human rights as stated in the Central American peace accords.[20]

Civic Education and Party Pollwatcher Training

In 1995, NDI worked with two Guatemalan civic groups – the Institute for Democracy and Development (IDE) and the Institute for Political Research and Training (INIAP) – to coordinate a training program for grassroots voter education and political party pollwatchers. The civic groups produced thousands of training manuals, posters and pamphlets that were distributed throughout the country and used at training seminars. In all, NDI trained a core group of 641 people who represented 30 political parties and civic committees in 21 departments. The program eventually reached several thousand additional pollwatchers and voter education "promoters" in Guatemala.

Focus Groups

Following the 1995 elections, NDI conducted a series of focus groups on popular political perceptions aimed at helping Guatemalan civic and political leaders increase citizen participation between elections. A report of the findings concluded that Guatemalan citizens lack faith in their political party leaders and that parties have one of the most negative images of any institution in society. Citizens characterized the parties, especially party leaders, as corrupt and misleading.[21] This report contributed to the development of a political party renewal program to address the issues that emerged.

Political Party Renewal

In February 1999, NDI inaugurated its long-term regional training initiative – the Political Leadership Program – to help renew citizen confidence in political parties by developing the capabilities of emerging political leaders to promote modern, transparent and responsive political parties. The program began with an intensive, two-week leadership

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[20] The 1990 Guatemala Elections: A Pre-Election Report, National Democratic Institute

[21] *Perspectivas sobre el Rol de los Partidos Políticos y los Comites Cívicos en Guatemala,* NDI and Römer and Associates, January 1997.

development training, which included seven emerging young leaders of Guatemala's major political parties. As part of their commitments to strengthening their political parties and to sharing the skills gained at the inaugural seminar with colleagues in their parties, participants proposed party-strengthening projects. In turn, NDI assisted the participants and their political parties as they implemented the projects and provided additional training and resource materials. Many of the participants' proposals reflected a key aspect of the Peace Accords: broadening political participation of indigenous people.

As a result of the NDI-supported follow-on projects, the Political Leadership Program fostered ongoing reform efforts with five major political parties and movements across the ideological spectrum in Guatemala. In addition, the young leaders that took part in the inaugural 1999 class shared concepts of party renewal and new party-building techniques with approximately 950 party leaders, activists, and candidates in their home countries. However, given the collapsing political party system and lack of political will to increase party efficiency, internal democracy and responsiveness – key aspects of the Leadership Program – NDI suspended the program. The young leaders were unable to implement their party renewal project due to the disarray and fragmentation within their parties.

Domestic Election Observation Study Missions

NDI invited key representatives of the Guatemalan civic group *Acción Ciudadana* – Executive Director Manfredo Marroquín and Volunteer Coordinator Roberto Estrada – to study the election monitoring efforts of the Ecuadorian group *Participación Ciudadana – Ecuador* during the first and second round of the country's 2002 national elections. *Acción Ciudadana* studied various aspects of *Participación Ciudadana – Ecuador*'s monitoring effort, including the transmission of data on election-day and the quick count, a statistical analysis of election results. *Acción Ciudadana* participated in the Ecuadorian elections as part of an exchange of information and experiences through the *Acuerdo de Lima*, an NDI-supported regional network comprising 17 election monitoring organizations committed to promoting democracy and accountability in countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

NDI's Global Experience in Domestic Monitoring

Over the past 20 years, NDI has assisted citizen organizations in more than 55 countries to organize domestic monitoring efforts. In Latin America and the Caribbean, NDI has worked with numerous domestic election monitoring groups in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including most recently in Ecuador (*Participación Ciudadana – Ecuador*), Jamaica (Citizen Action for Free and Fair Elections – CAFFE), Mexico (*Alianza Cívica),* the Dominican Republic *(Participación Ciudadana*), Chile (*Participa*), Nicaragua (*Etica y Transparencia*), Guyana (Electoral Assistance Bureau), Peru (*Transparencia*), Paraguay (*SAKA*), and Venezuela (*Queremos Elegir* and *Escuela de Vecinos*). The experiences of these and other groups have demonstrated that nonpartisan domestic election monitoring helps to ensure the integrity of election processes and strengthens civil society's capacity to promote participation, engage in policy advocacy and foster government accountability during and well beyond the election cycle.

NDI has published a number of election monitoring materials that are based on the Institute's global experience working with domestic monitoring groups. These practical "how-to" manuals include the NDI handbooks, *How Domestic Organizations Monitor Elections: An A to Z Guide* and *Media Monitoring to Promote Democratic Elections*; and, most recently, *Building Confidence in the Voter Registration Process,* a monitoring guide for political parties and civic organizations. In addition, NDI has just completed a new handbook entitled *The Quick Count: A Citizens' Tool for Governmental Accountability,* which provides guidance for organizing election day monitoring operations. Various manuals are available in English, Spanish, French and Arabic.

NDI's Civic Network and the *Acuerdo de Lima*

Civic groups that once played key roles in peaceful democratic transitions in the hemisphere are now working to consolidate democratic gains by serving as a link between citizens and institutions, including legislatures, political parties and local governments. To help prepare civic groups for this new role, NDI developed the Civic Network in 1996 to provide access to "how to" democracy development materials and to facilitate an exchange of ideas, activities and experiences among civic groups in the region.

In 1995 NDI hosted a summit meeting in Paraguay with leading Latin American election monitoring groups. During this summit, participants from more than 10 nations shared lessons learned regarding election monitoring and discussed the challenges of conducting democracy consolidation activities between elections, including civic education and anti-corruption initiatives. At the conclusion of the event, the participants recommended establishing a permanent mechanism to facilitate the exchange of expertise and information between the organizations. The Civic Network has played this role by establishing a library with more than 1,000 documents available to Civic Network members.

Since the program's inception in 1996, the Network has grown to include more than 45 organizations in 14 countries. NDI has nearly completed the most time-consuming and costly task associated with developing the Network -- the cataloguing of the thousands of relevant documents. In addition, NDI has developed a computerized database to manage this information and facilitate the process of responding to requests for materials; conducted periodic mailings of training materials and reports to Network participants; translated relevant training documents from English to Spanish; designed an Internet website for the program in English and Spanish; and implemented an e-mail system to provide updates and information to Network participants.

In September 2000, the Peruvian civic group *Transparencia* hosted a meeting of election observation groups in Lima, which included many of the civic network participants. The goal of the gathering was to discuss ways the groups could work together. Ideas discussed included forming a solidarity network to share experiences and to support fellow civic organizations. The groups also explored establishing a regional association of election observation groups and exchanging expertise on ways of working with political parties to become more effective and accountable.

The conference concluded with the signing of the Lima Agreement, which established an informal regional network that would monitor elections and exchange information on new areas of democratic development, including: campaign finance reform and strengthening political parties. The network has temporarily adopted the name *Acuerdo de Lima*, in reference to the agreement signed during the first meeting. Additional meetings have since taken place in Nicaragua, Chile and Mexico. Members have also assisted domestic monitoring efforts by serving as international observers in the 2000 Nicaraguan Municipal elections, the 2001 Peruvian Presidential elections and the 2003 Guatemalan elections.

APPENDIX B

Options for Organizing a Nonpartisan Domestic Observation Effort

Unless a single organization will be undertaking all aspects of the observation program, ultimately the groups will have to determine a way to divide the distinct projects among them. Dividing projects among groups is often preferable to sharing projects, which can become complicated when decisions have to be made, especially in a high-pressure election environment. It is particularly difficult to share a "quick count," which requires a great deal of trust within the organization that is conducting it to ensure that results are kept private until they have stabilized and until the group has decided to release them. In divvying up projects, the groups might consider how best to utilize their existing strengths and how to maximize resources. For example, a group that intends to create a national network of volunteers to conduct election-day observation activities may be the most appropriate organization to audit the voter registry, which also relies on a national network.

No matter how the observation effort is organized, collaboration among the civic groups is key to maximizing resources and ensuring that organizations do not contradict each other publicly in their findings, which could damage an electoral process. Sustainability is also important. In organizing the effort, the groups might look for ways to engage the structures and networks of hundreds of activists developed during the elections period to promote democratic strengthening after the elections and to observe future elections.

A variety of organizational structures have been used in the dozens of countries where observation activities have taken place. Variations of these approaches could be relevant, depending on the context. The NDI delegation encourages civic groups to decide for themselves how to organize the observation effort. Some of the ways to organize an effort include the following:

- *Umbrella Group – Formal Coalition.* The groups could decide to form a new umbrella organization that includes all those interested in election observation. The umbrella group could be run by a steering committee comprised of member group leaders. One member organization could be identified to receive and administer all funds; or, more commonly, the funds could be channeled from donors directly to individual member organizations on a project-by-project basis. The work could be divided according to project or theme depending on the capacity and interest of the member groups, and certain projects could be conducted jointly with the participation of several or all of the member groups. For example, one member group might take

Developed by Melissa Estok

full responsibility for a series of papers on campaign finance and another for auditing the voter registry, while all members could work together on an anti-violence campaign.

This arrangement would provide a mechanism for the groups to come together and design the shape of a comprehensive election observation program. Once funding issues are ironed out, the umbrella arrangement would promote cooperation and help to avoid duplication of efforts. It would allow for the consistent sharing of information and outside technical assistance.

While inter-organizational teams could direct joint projects such as an anti-violence campaign, individual members would not lose their autonomy on projects that are more appropriately managed by one group, such as a "quick count." Typically, the umbrella group's name could be publicized with each project along with the member group or groups involved in that particular project. This allows for the public to identify with a large and very credible force working to strengthen the electoral process. It should be noted that forming an umbrella organization requires extensive cooperation between groups.

- *Group of Friends – Loose Coalition.* Groups involved in election-related work can set up a "Group of Friends" to meet regularly, share information and coordinate efforts when possible. This model is based on the relationships formed in many countries by members of the donor community to cooperate in providing election-related assistance. Participating groups could receive separate funds directly from the donor community. If more than one group is interested in a similar project, the groups could meet to try to resolve the issue. If they cannot, then they could each write a proposal and the donors could weigh in on which group is more qualified.

  One disadvantage to this approach is that nonpartisan election observation is not identified under one name, which can be an unfortunate loss in countries where it is important to set an example for working together. For example, in Nicaragua it was seen as extremely important to show that ex-Contras and Sandinistas could work together to strengthen the electoral process, so prominent members of both groups, as well as of the main human rights organizations, think tanks and religious groups, participated in *Etica y Transparencia*'s 1996 election observation. Another disadvantage is that without the formation of an umbrella organization, groups will find it more challenging to build a national network that bridges political and regional divides in a country and that can take on important issues between elections.

- *Separate Projects.* If interested groups do not come together in the ways described above, then donors may consider funding separate proposals. Donors would likely evaluate each of the proposals in an attempt to discern each one's strengths and whether these strengths make certain organizations the best candidates for certain projects. If groups present comprehensive proposals, the donors may have to fund different parts of the proposals because of funding limitations. It is important to note that it is not unusual for groups to work separately on different projects or even

on the same types of projects – groups sometimes even issue competing statements on election-day.

Even within the rubric of election-day observation, there is space for more than one approach and focus. One organization may be set up to deploy mobile teams, to provide an important deterrent effect and collect detailed information on the political climate as well as polling station procedures. This type of observation requires forms and questionnaires designed especially for observation and interviewing voters and candidates. This approach may also call for targeted coverage based on history of conflict or low voter turnout. Another organization may be better suited to build a larger network that could help to audit the voter list during the run-up to elections and run a quick count on election-day. Ideally this would be a group with some experience in election observation and the demonstrated capability to organize large amounts of people in relatively short period of time.

While often ideal, a formal coalition is simply not feasible in many places for reasons ranging from differences between the organizations' goals and approaches, to histories that prevent them from working together. As previously mentioned, it is both common and legitimate for groups to conduct separate projects or undertake parallel efforts. In Mexico in 1994, numerous organizations observed the elections as a coalition, whereas in Peru that same year, two organizations independently undertook election-day observation efforts.

Developed by Melissa Estok

APPENDIX C

BACKGROUN INFORMATION ON PARTICIPATING MONITORING GROUPS

The following organizations participated in Guatemala's first nationwide election observation effort.

Acción Ciudadana was formed in 1996 as a citizen watchdog group to strengthen citizen participation and transparency of political reforms. The organization fosters public debate on national legislation initiatives and helps build relations between congressional members and representatives of diverse community organizations. Based on this experience, *Acción Ciudadana* proposed to monitor campaign finance. In addition, given its participation as an observer of Ecuador's domestic election monitoring effort, *Acción Ciudadana* was an ideal group to build a national network of volunteer observers to promote participation and ethical behavior in the electoral process.

Centro de Acción Legal para los Derechos Humanos (CALDH) is a human rights monitoring organization created in 1989 in the United States, with an office based in Guatemala since 1994. CALDH initially compiled, investigated and provided legal assistance on reports of human rights violations. Since the Peace Accords, CALDH has broadened its mission to include programs aimed at strengthening Guatemala's democracy, particularly through civic education on rights of indigenous and other minority groups and strengthening local governments.

Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) was established in 1957 in Santiago, Chile as a regional think tank dedicated to social analysis. The FLASCO office in Guatemala was created in 1986 and serves as the Central American hub. The group mainly publishes policy analysis in the areas of peace consolidation, civil-military relations, ethnic identity and human rights issues, and economic progress. Given FLACSO's experience in electoral law issue and long standing relationship with a few TSE members, the organization proposed to monitor and report on whether TSE decisions were in keeping with the legal framework. In addition, FLACSO relied on its statistical analysts to implement a study on the voter registry.

Instituto Centroamericano de Estudios Políticos (INCEP) was established in 1991 as a Christian Democratic political party training institute affiliated with the Foundation of Political Studies in Central America (FUNCEP) and with the assistance of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation. INCEP focuses mainly on publishing political analysis and strengthening political parties. Drawing on its strong relations with many of the major political parties in Guatemala, INCEP proposed to monitor political party and candidate behavior.

GUATEMALA TEAM

Field Staff

Deborah Ullmer, who served as NDI's Director of Development and worked with the Latin America team, has a decade of experience in democracy development and political affairs. She has managed NDI's political party reform programs in Guatemala, and directed a regional political party training program. She also served as NDI field director in Guyana for more than two years, organizing electoral and parliamentary strengthening programs. In Guyana, Ms. Ullmer provided technical assistance to the Election Assistance Bureau, a domestic election monitoring group that organized an audit of the voter registry, civic education programs, media monitoring, and a quick count of election results. In addition, Ms. Ullmer has served as an election observer for the OAS and organized an NDI/Carter Center international observation mission in the Dominican Republic, coordinating efforts with the domestic monitoring group *Participación Ciudadana.* Ms. Ullmer also has experience in international and local fundraising. Prior to joining NDI, Ms. Ullmer served for three years as a legislative assistant for Congressman David Hobson (R-OH). She speaks Spanish fluently.

Washington, D.C. Strategic Guidance and Support Staff

Gerardo Le Chevallier is Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean for the National Democratic Institute, where he directs the organization's design, development, implementation and evaluation of programs in the Americas. He has conducted in-country training and assessments in more than 40 countries. In recent years, he has also acted as a field director in Paraguay, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Haiti for NDI. During his political career in El Salvador, Mr. Le Chevallier served in various positions within the government. He was elected as a Deputy in the Salvadoran Legislative Assembly and in the Central American Parliament, and as member of the National Committee of the Christian Democratic Party. He was appointed Secretary of Information for Presidents José Napoleón Duarte and Álvaro Magaña and as Director of the Tourism Institute by the *Junta Revolucionaria de Gobierno.* Mr. Le Chevallier is recognized as one of the key negotiators in the Salvadoran Peace Accords that ended the 12-year civil war. He also led advocacy efforts for the Christian Democratic Party in the United States and Europe during the war. Mr. Le Chevallier received his MBA from the *Hautes Etudes Commerciales* in France; he has also received a Doctor Honoris Causa from the *Universidad del Pacífico* in Paraguay as well as from the *Centre National de Formation des Journalistes Haïtiens* in Haiti.

Matthew Dippell is Deputy Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean for NDI, where he helps to direct the Institute's design, implementation and evaluation of programs in the Americas, including the management of a $5 million annual budget and 60 staff members in multiple regional field offices. Since 1994, he has sought to safeguard elections, strengthen legislatures, assist public interest "watchdog" groups, build representative political parties and establish civilian control of the military in such countries as Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and

Venezuela. Mr. Dippell also serves as the Institute's in-house advisor on political debates and is the NDI liaison to the U.S. Commission on Presidential Debates. Before joining NDI, Mr. Dippell served as director of research at the Shipbuilders Council of America, a trade association, and as legislative assistant for foreign affairs and health care policy for U.S. Congressman Sid Morrison. He also served with the economics section of the U.S. Embassy in Managua, Nicaragua. Mr. Dippell received a master's degree in international relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University and an undergraduate degree in political science and Latin American studies at California State University, Long Beach. He also studied Spanish and Latin American politics at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City, Mexico. Mr. Dippell speaks fluent English and Spanish and is a U.S. citizen.

Paulina Ojeda is a Program Assistant for the Ecuador, Guatemala and Civic Network programs. Before coming to NDI, Paulina worked for the Heinz Family Philanthropies and the Pan-American Health Organization. Paulina has completed fieldwork in primary health care education and environmental/communication programs as part of her internships with CARE International and the Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs in Ecuador, where she is originally from. She also lived part of her childhood in Bolivia and Honduras.

Technical Assistance Members

Melissa Estok, specializes in election monitoring and civil society development. She is co-author of *The Quick Count: A Citizen's Tool for Electoral Accountability,* recently published by NDI. Ms. Estok has ten years of experience working on democracy assistance projects as a resident technical advisor to election monitoring groups in Yemen, Bangladesh, Peru and Nicaragua, and providing direct assistance to civic organizations and political parties in countries including Russia, Mexico, Haiti, Venezuela and Jamaica. Ms. Estok also has worked for USAID and other organizations to evaluate election-related assistance and to design programs that promote the political participation of women.   Before becoming involved with democracy assistance, Ms. Estok was a trainer for the U.S. Peace Corps and spent four years as a volunteer community organizer in Honduras. Ms. Estok has a M.A. in Psychology and a B.A. in International Relations and Spanish.

Neil Nevitte, Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto, Canada, is a specialist on elections. He has also taught political science at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and at the University of Michigan. He has published sixteen books including: *Value Change and Governance* (2002), *Unsteady State* (2000), *The Decline of Deference* (1996), and *The Challenge of Direct Democracy*. He has also contributed 60 chapters in other books and published more than a fifty articles in such professional journals as: *Electoral Studies, Political Methodology, Public Opinion Quarterly, The European Journal of Political Research*, *Party Politics*, and the *Journal of Democracy*. Over the last 15 years, Dr. Nevitte has worked for a variety of international organizations on election matters and has provided direct assistance to domestic election observer groups in more than fifteen countries, including Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Senegal and Venezuela. In most of these countries he has served as the primary technical advisor to civic groups conducting "quick counts," which are independent estimates of election results calculated based on a statistically accurate sample of votes.

Accounting Staff

Sherri Kurtz Sherri Kurtz is the Subgrants Manager at NDI. Prior to joining NDI, Sherri worked for six years at the Big Four accounting firm of Deloitte and Touche where she specialized in providing auditing and consulting services to not-for-profit and commercial organizations. In addition to managing audit services, she assisted clients in understanding and implementing new accounting pronouncements, recommended changes to her clients' internal control structures to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and provided training and guidance to her colleagues in relation to A-133 audits, internal control testing, and professional ethics and independence. Upon graduation from college, Sherri contributed to the accounting department for four years at Manna, Inc., where she was the Chief Accountant. Sherri received her B.S. in Business Administration, with a minor in Socio-economic Development, and is a Certified Public Accountant and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Vijaya Chandarpal is the Senior Subgrants Administrator for NDI's Latin America & the Caribbean, Central & Eastern Europe, Middle East & North Africa regions and DC Functional teams. Vijaya has nine years of experience working in USAID-funded non-profit organizations and with foreign NGO's. Vijaya has provided on-site subgrants management training to NDI subgrantees in Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia, Mozambique, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Nigeria, Guatemala and Ecuador and performed on-site closeouts for subgrantees in Capetown and Durban. Prior to joining NDI in June 1999, Vijaya worked at ACDI-VOCA as the Project Accounting Manager where she performed field office audits and training of financial staff in Slovakia, Hungary, Albania and Moldova, in addition to managing the field office accounting in Washington DC. Vijaya also worked in the accounting departments for the law firms, Hogan and Hartson in Washington DC, Morrison and Forester in San Francisco and the banking institutions, Norwest Corporation in Minnesota and Chase Manhattan Bank in New York. Vijaya has a background in Business Administration (Guyana) and Financial Management Accounting (University of Minnesota).

APPENDIX E

CONSEJO RECTOR BIOGRAPHIES

The following individuals serve on the Consejo Rector of Mirador Electoral: Manuela Alvarado, former congressional representative for the New Guatemalan Democratic Front (FDNG); Roberto Ardon, Executive Director of the Commission for Agriculture, Commerce, Industry and Finance (CACIF); Anabella Giracca, Director of the Mayan Education (EDUMA Y A) program at the University of Rafael Landivar; Felix Castillo Milia, former chief justice of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE); and Mario Molina, Bishop Emeritus of the Episcopal Conference.

Consejo members are involved in the following program activities:
- Participating in training sessions and motivating observers.
- Participating in analysis of electoral process.
- Making pre-election, election-day and post-election statements.
- Serving as observers on election day.
- Signing off on final election observation report.

Manuela Alvarado Lopez has experience working as coordinator and director for several health and Mayan women rights programs. From 1996 until 1999, Ms. Lopez was a congressional member representing the Democratic Front New Guatemala. She also serves as a founding member of the Political Association of Mayan Women. Her publications include manuals relating to child care and emotional well-being for families, as well as books on gender issues.

Anabella Giracca de Castellanos has worked as director and member of several institutions and programs regarding education and Mayan languages. Currently, she serves as the director of EDUMAYA at the University Rafael Landivar. Licenciada Giracca's publications include children's story- tale books. She is also a columnist for Prensa Libre and co-author of a series of Central American identity books and history of ethnic communities.

Mario Alberto Molina Palma has been a professor for the theology faculty at Rafael Landivar University since 1985. He currently serves as the parish priest at the Santa Maria Goretti Church in Guatemala City, as a member of the Barometer Group and co-founder of the Guatemalan Forum.

Felix Castillo Milla is a lawyer by profession. Licenciado Milla has served as the Secretary General to the Tribunal Supremo Electoral (TSE) in 1962, General Inspector to the TSE, from 1983 until 1986, Chief of the Citizens Register Department at the TSE and former president of the TSE form 1996 until 2002. He also served as an international observer in Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Spain.
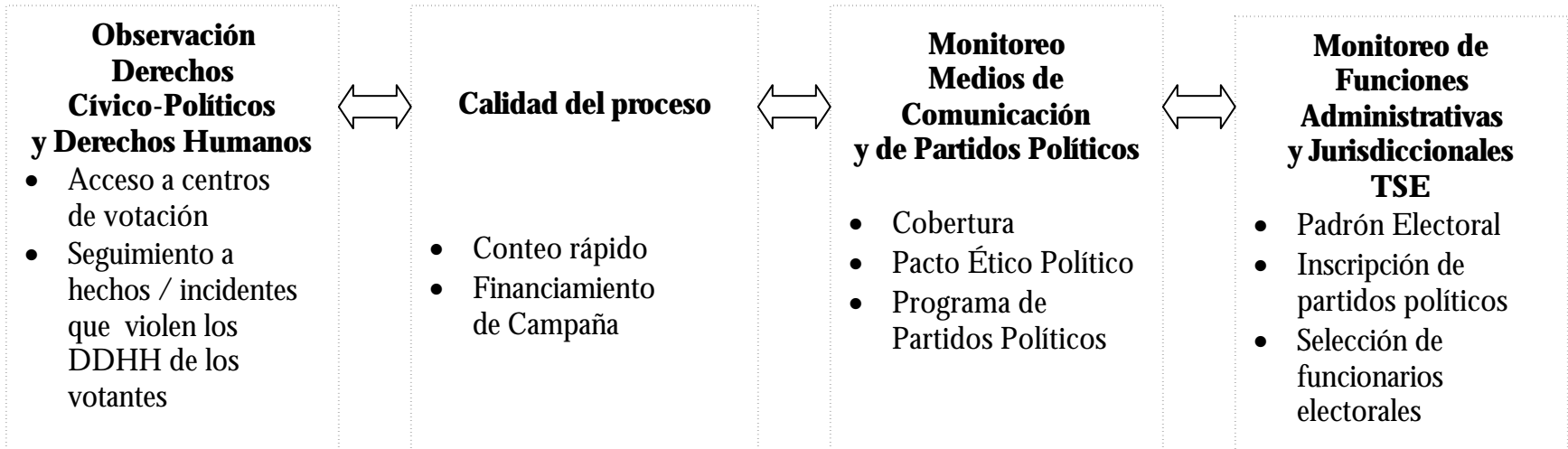
Roberto Ardón is a lawyer graduated from the University Rafael Landivar. Licenciado Ardon is a

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PROCESO INTEGRAL DE OBSERVACIÓN ELECTORAL

3 0 0 0   V O L U N T A R I O S

Observación Derechos Cívico-Políticos y Derechos Humanos	**Calidad del proceso**	**Monitoreo Medios de Comunicación y de Partidos Políticos**	**Monitoreo de Funciones Administrativas y Jurisdiccionales TSE**
• Acceso a centros de votación • Seguimiento a hechos / incidentes que violen los DDHH de los votantes	• Conteo rápido • Financiamiento de Campaña	• Cobertura • Pacto Ético Político • Programa de Partidos Políticos	• Padrón Electoral • Inscripción de partidos políticos • Selección de funcionarios electorales
CALDH	**ACCIÓN CIUDADANA**	**INCEP**	**FLACSO**

Análisis

CONSEJO RECTOR - MIRADOR ELECTORAL 2003

Presentación al TSE y a la Ciudadanía

APPENDIX G

Sample of NDI's Feedback on the Human Rights Observation Forms

FORMULARIO DE OBSERVACION

Fecha

Nombre del Observador
Codigo del observador

Departamento
Municipio

25. ¿Conoce la población la información y los mensajes transmitidos por el TSE?
(Mecanismos y requisitos de empadronamiento, fechas límite de registro de partidos,
comités cívicos y candidatos, cierre del padrón)

COMENTARIO: ESTA ES UNA PREGUNTA DE OPINION. NO PODEMOS SABER
COMO MIDE CADA OBSERVADOR SI LA POBLACION CONOCE O NO
CONOCE Y CUANTO CONOCE DE LA INFORMACION Y DE LOS MENSAJES.
NO DEBERIA INCLUIRSE.

26. ¿Conoce la ciudadanía los lugares de votación?

    A) TODOS
    B) LA MAYORIA
    C) LA MINORIA
    D) NADIE
    E) NO SABE

COMENTARIO: SIN EMBARGO, SEGUIMOS TENIENDO EL PROBLEMA DE
COMO MIDE EL OBSERVADOR EL CONOCIMIENTO DE LA POBLACION DE
LOS LUGARES DE VOTACION.

27. ¿Conoce la ciudadanía las boletas electorales?

    A) TODOS
    B) LA MAYORIA
    C) LA MINORIA
    D) NADIE
    E) NO SABE

COMENTARIO: IDEM 26.

28. ¿Se han trasmitido en idiomas indígenas los mensajes del TSE?

A) SI
B) NO

COMENTARIO: SE LE PUEDE PEDIR A LOS OBSERVADORES QUE VEAN LA TV O ESCUCHEN RADIO ENTRE CIERTAS HORAS Y REGISTREN SI HAY O NO HAY MENSAJES EN IDIOMAS INDIGENAS.

29. ¿Han transmitido los partidos políticos sus mensajes en idiomas indígenas?

A) TODOS
B) LA MAYORIA (MAS DE LA MITAD)
C) LA MINORIA (MENOS DE LA MITAD)
D) NINGUNO

COMENTARIO: IDEM 28.

30. ¿Han presentado los partidos políticos, comités cívicos o candidatos (as) sus planes de trabajo en su municipio?

A) TODOS
B) LA MAYORIA (MAS DE LA MITAD)
C) LA MINORIA (MENOS DE LA MITAD)
D) NINGUNO

COMENTARIO: SE LE DEBE PEDIR A LOS OBSERVADORES QUE VERIFIQUEN LA INFORMACION CON LA DEPENDENCIA DEL ESTADO CORRESPONDIENTE.

31. ¿Los medios de comunicación han influido u orientado a la ciudadanía para preferir a un determinado partido político, comité cívico o candidato (a) ?

COMENTARIO: ESTA ES UNA PREGUNTA DE OPINION. NO PODEMOS SABER COMO MIDE CADA OBSERVADOR SI LOS MEDIOS DE COMUNICACION INFLUYERON O NO EN LA CIUDADANIA. NO DEBERIA INCLUIRSE O DEBERIA SER REFORMULADA.

32. ¿La población ha comprendido el mensaje de los partidos políticos, comités cívicos o candidatos (as)?

COMENTARIO: IDEM 31.

33. ¿Ha tenido impacto en la ciudadanía la publicación de los resultados de las encuestas?
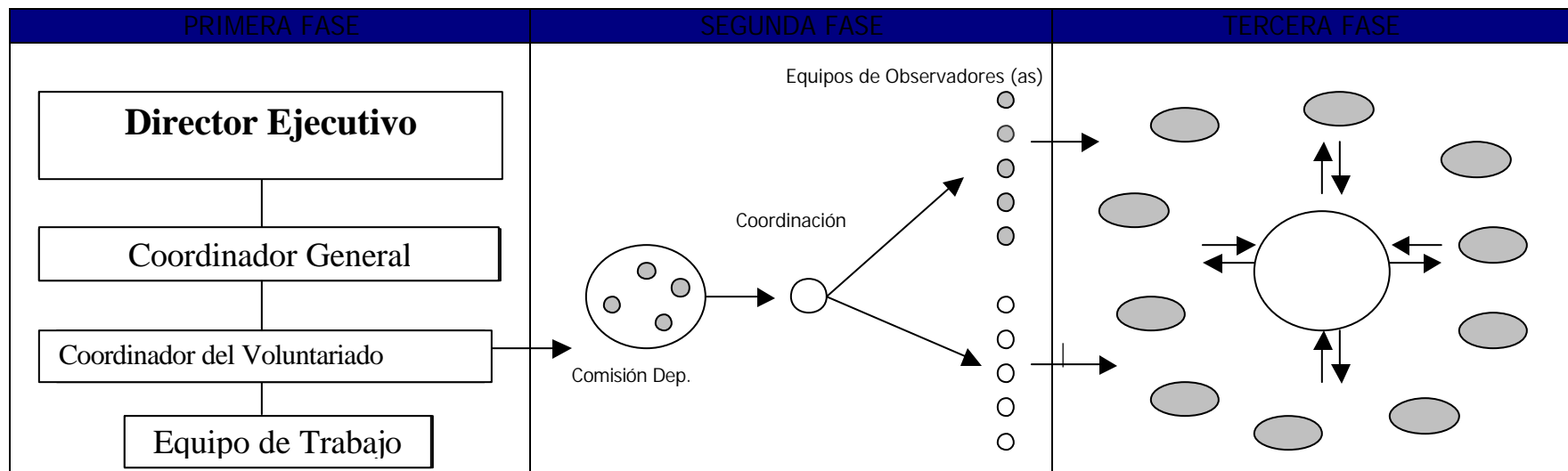
COMENTARIO: IDEM 32.

PROYECTO MIRADOR ELECTORAL 2003.
Observando por Guatemala

RED NACIONAL
DE OBSERVACIÓN ELECTORAL

ACCIÓN CIUDADANA

PRIMERA FASE	SEGUNDA FASE	TERCERA FASE

Director Ejecutivo

Coordinador General

Coordinador del Voluntariado

Equipo de Trabajo

Equipos de Observadores (as)

Coordinación

Comisión Dep.

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[22] Un Equipo de 100 Observadores

Integración del Equipo Central	Integración de las Comisiones Departamentales Convocatoria de los Observadores Voluntarios(as)[22]	Integración de la Red Nacional 22 Equipos Departamentales

EL CONTEO RÁPIDO

EN RESUMEN

¿Qué es el Conteo Rápido?

- Una metodología de observación que provee información rápida, sistemática y confiable sobre:
  - El conteo de votos
  - La calidad del proceso electoral

¿Qué datos existen sobre esta metodología?

- Ha sido muy bien desarrollada (en más de 30 países)
- Se apoya en principios científicos establecidos
- Es complementaria a otros esfuerzos de observación electoral.

¿En qué países se ha conducido un conteo rápido?

Los organizadores del Philippine National Citizen Movement for Free Elections, NAMFREL son ampliamente reconocidos como los pioneros del conteo rápido, o tabulación paralela de votos (PVT por sus siglas en inglés), en democracias emergentes.

El conteo rápido también se ha conducido en Albania, Bangladesh, Belorusia, Bulgaria, Burundi, Camboya, Chile, Croacia, República Dominicana, Ecuador, Gorgia, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Kosovo, Malawi, México, Montenegro, Nicaragua, Panamá, Perú, Romania, República Federal de Yugoslavia, Eslovakia, Ukrania.

La metodología ha evolucionado en los últimos años, utilizando tecnología de punta para el proceso del conteo rápido.

¿De quién y de qué depende el conteo rápido?

- De observadores de la sociedad civil comprometidos a un papel no partidario
- De un liderazgo político
- De la competencia técnica demostrable
- De la transparencia de la metodología
- De la capacidad de organización
- De la coordinación y el apoyo de cooperantes nacionales e internacionales y otros esfuerzos electorales

¿Por qué hacer un conteo rápido?

- Provee a los ciudadanos interesados, especialmente a jóvenes, una vía para la participación democrática
- Ofrece a los observadores independientes la oportunidad de estimar una administración justa de las elecciones.
- Proporciona a la sociedad civil una "voz" creíble en ambientes políticos inciertos.
- Construye la capacidad de la sociedad civil en su habilidad para participar en fiscalizaciones.

¿Qué tan grande es la muestra para el conteo rápido?

La muestra del conteo rápido varía en tamaño, y el tamaño se basa en factores tales como historia de votaciones y características de la población (heterogeneidad y homogeneidad). La muestra que se obtiene permite un margen de error de +/- 1%

En términos prácticos los pasos básicos son directos:

- La muestra tomada al azar se obtiene de puestos de votación
- Los observadores son incorporados, capacitados y se asignan a puntos de muestra seleccionados al azar.
- En el día de las elecciones, los observadores normalmente recogen datos cualitativos y de voto por la mañana y por la tarde lo hacen desde sus puntos de muestra asignados.
- Posteriormente, los observadores comunican esos datos a una locación central de recolección de datos.
- Los datos son totalizados, analizados y después de que los datos se han "estabilizado" se presentan al liderazgo político del grupo de observación.

¿Cómo asegurar un conteo rápido confiable?

- Una muestra diseñada científicamente
- Instrumentos de medición confiables
- Incorporación y entrenamiento de observadores
- Red de comunicación efectiva
- Manejo de datos y análisis: componentes claves
- Protocolos de liderazgo
- Aprendizaje basado en experiencias

Más información sobre el Conteo Rápido en:
www.ndi.org