This Workshop will bring together electoral assistance providers, experts in the area of elections and political inclusion, as well as International IDEA's regional and HQ-based staff working on electoral processes, with the aim to:

a) Identify the specific challenges faced by different marginalized groups in their participation in electoral processes;

b) Share lessons learnt and good practices that can be implemented by EMBs at different stages of the electoral cycle in order to increase participation of marginalized groups in elections;

c) Identify gaps and areas for improvement regarding the current situation and practices on political inclusion of marginalized groups;

d) Formulate recommendations towards addressing these challenges, and suggest strategies that EMBs and electoral assistance providers can adopt in order to enhance marginalized groups’ participation in electoral processes.

This annotated agenda aims to provide participants with guidelines and key questions in preparation to the Workshop.
09:30 – 10:00 Opening remarks and introduction of participants
Keboitse Machangana – Director of Global Programmes, International IDEA

Session 1: Lessons learnt from International IDEA’s initiatives in electoral processes and political inclusion of marginalized groups

International IDEA has identified the support to inclusive democratic institutions and processes as an important strategic objective, recognizing that full and equal political participation and representation are vital elements for achieving sustainable democracy. This session will take stock of International IDEA’s work to promote electoral participation of marginalized groups (e.g. youth, ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTI people) and women in different regions, and will identify the lessons learnt from these initiatives. The following key questions will be addressed:

- What specific challenges are different marginalized groups facing in their participation in electoral processes?
- What mechanisms have been applied to support EMBs in enhancing participation of marginalized groups in electoral processes?
- What factors affect the approaches that EMBs take to support inclusion of different marginalized groups?
- What are the lessons that International IDEA has learned in working with EMBs on initiatives to support the electoral participation of marginalized groups?

10:00 – 11:15 Moderator:
Nathalie Ebead – Head of Democracy Assessment, Analysis and Advisory (DAAA) Unit, International IDEA

Introducers:
Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu – Senior Programme Manager (Democracy and Gender/DAAA Unit), International IDEA
Mette Bakken – Programme Officer, International IDEA Africa and West Asia
Gregory Kehailia – Senior Programme Manager (Electoral Support), International IDEA Myanmar
Gabriel de la Cruz Soler – Executive Director, No Tengo Miedo

11:15 – 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 – 12:00 Session 1 continued: Open discussion and recommendations

12:00 – 13:15 Lunch break

Session 2: Legal framework and regulatory mechanisms aiming to enhance participation of marginalized groups in electoral processes

Electoral processes and the right to equal political participation may be regulated at different levels, including through constitutions, electoral laws, regulations, directives, and other legal instruments. Legal mechanisms aiming to enhance electoral participation of marginalized groups may vary from reserved seats, and quotas, to special constituencies, provisions for access to public funds or use of minority languages in voter lists and ballot papers.

This session will explore some of these legal mechanisms by addressing the following questions:

- What types of legal mechanisms have been used to enhance participation of marginalized groups at the various stages of the electoral cycle?
- To what extent are these legal mechanisms effective in increasing participation and representation of marginalized groups as voters, candidates and EMB members?
What are the main challenges related to the effective implementation of these legal mechanisms?

What role can EMBs play as regulatory authorities in enhancing political participation of marginalized groups? In cases where EMBs do not have regulatory powers, what roles can they play in broader legal reform efforts?

13:15 – 14:15  
Moderator:  
Lina Antara – Programme Officer (Diversity/DAAA Unit), International IDEA

Introducers:  
Lusine Badalyan - Senior Election Adviser, OSCE/ODIHR  
Frank McLoughlin – Programme Officer (Electoral Processes), International IDEA

14:15 – 14:30  
Coffee break

Session 3: Barriers and mechanisms to increase the registration of citizens from marginalized groups as voters and candidates

Voter registration is a key prerequisite for the exercise of the right to vote. For various reasons, marginalized groups often face particular challenges in successfully accessing the voter registration process. As a result, they may risk being disenfranchised and excluded from the electoral process. In addition, marginalized groups face different obstacles in the exercise of their right to participate as candidates with reasonable chances to get elected. This session will examine the following questions:

- What are some of the most significant barriers that different marginalized groups face in registering as voters and candidates?
- What are some good practices that have been applied by EMBs or other institutions to encourage members of marginalized communities to register as voters and candidates?
- What role can EMBs and election assistance providers play in promoting the registration of members of marginalized groups as voters and candidates?

14:30 – 15:45  
Moderator:  
Lina Antara – Programme Officer (Diversity/DAAA Unit), International IDEA

Introducers:  
Peter Wolf – Technical Manager (Electoral Processes), International IDEA  
Fernando Burgés - Programme Coordinator, UNPO  
Alice Pop – Resident Representative, NDI Romania

15:45 – 16:00  
Conclusions and wrap-up of Day 1

Wednesday, 23 November 2016

Session 4: Voting operations: polling stations setup and accessibility, voting procedures, and security issues affecting marginalized groups

Marginalized groups often face special challenges that may hinder their access to the polls on Election Day. Disability or literacy status, linguistic, religious or other cultural aspects, the location and set up of polling stations, the design of ballot papers, as well as security issues may limit the exercise of marginalized groups’ right to vote. This session will address the following questions:

- What measures have been taken by EMBs to ensure that persons with disabilities, displaced people, and voters from other marginalized communities can access the polling stations and effectively exercise their right to vote?
How does conflict and electoral violence impact on marginalized groups and what are some important steps that EMBs and election assistance providers have taken in this regard?

What are some of the major challenges that remain?

How can election assistance providers most effectively support EMBs to conduct inclusive voting operations?

09:30 – 10:45

Moderator:
Frank McLoughlin – Programme Officer (Electoral Processes), International IDEA

Introducers:
Martha Stickings - Researcher, Equality and Citizens’ Rights, FRA
Reiner Schmitz - Head of Election Support Unit, IOM

10:45 – 11:00
Coffee break

(Session 4 continued)

11:00 – 12:00

Moderator:
Frank McLoughlin - Programme Officer (Electoral Processes), International IDEA

Introducer:
Sead Alihodzic - Senior Programme Officer (Electoral Processes), International IDEA
Victoria Florinder - Election Conflict Management Advisor, ECES

12:00 – 13:00
Lunch break

Session 5: Voter education and voter information for marginalized groups: needs, challenges and the role of EMBs

Voter education and voter information are essential to ensure that all voters have sufficient understanding of the political and electoral system, the voting procedures and their rights and responsibilities as voters in order to make free and well-informed choices. However, conventional voter education and information initiatives often fail to reach marginalized groups. This sessions will address the following questions:

What are some of the unique challenges facing marginalized groups with regards to voter education and information?

Which voter education and information approaches have been most successful in accessing marginalized groups?

What role can EMBs play in developing voter education and information initiatives for marginalized groups and how can election assistance providers effectively support EMBs in this regard?

13:00 – 14:45

Moderator:
Catalina Uribe Burcher – Programme Officer (Conflict and Security/DAAA Unit), International IDEA

Introducers:
Nikila Shrestha - National Electoral Education and Information Centre Coordinator, UNDP Nepal
François Friederich - Head of Electoral Assistance Division, Council of Europe
Olufunto Akinduro - Head of Elections and Political Processes, EISA

14:45 – 15:00
Coffee break

15:00 – 16:00
Conclusions and recommendations