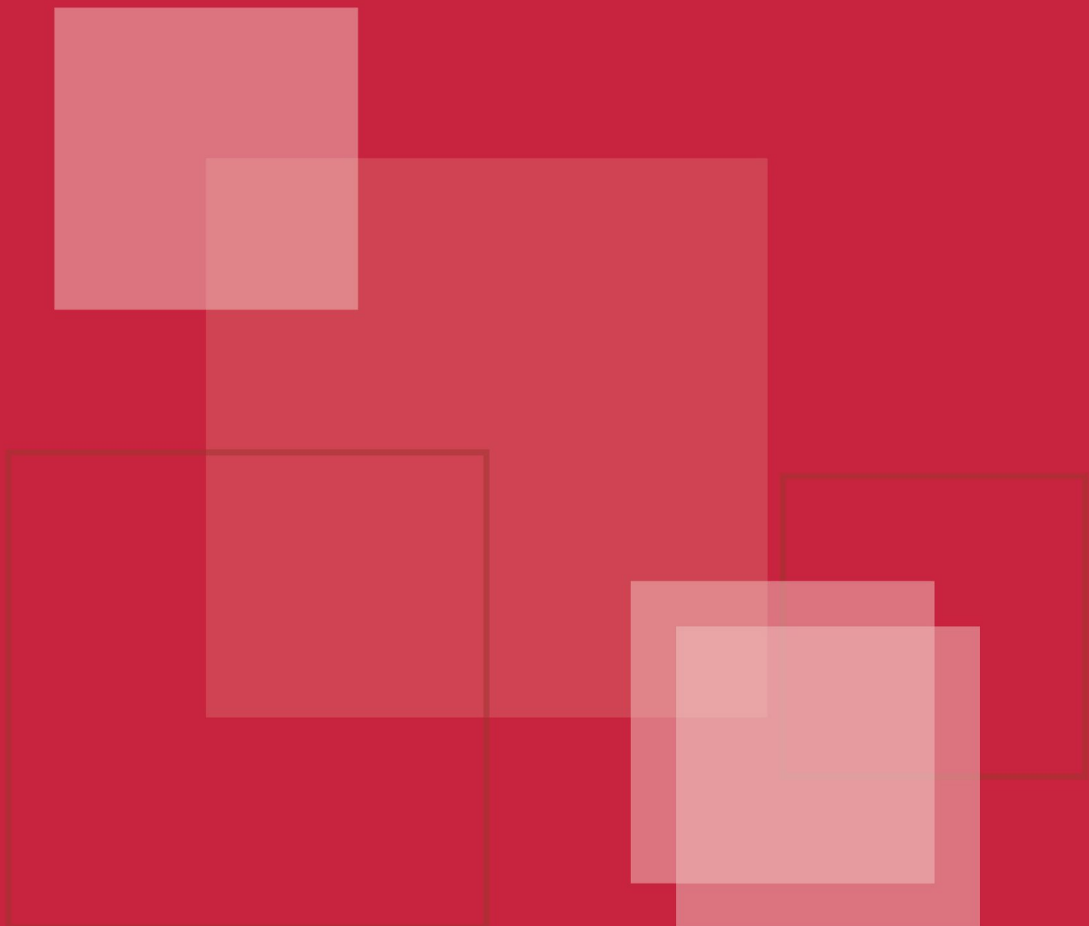




Financing of electoral processes: An investment for inclusive and sustainable democracy

Africa Regional Conference, Windhoek, Namibia, 7–8 June 2018





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Summary



Electoral management bodies (EMBs) in Africa generally have broad constitutional mandates to oversee electoral processes and the management of elections. However, in many cases, the establishment of EMBs has not been matched by sufficient or timely commitment of resources needed for the fulfilment of their mandates. The topic of financing elections has therefore become a pressing issue among African election practitioners.

On 7–8 June 2018 the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) co-organized a conference with the title **Financing of Electoral Processes: An Investment for Inclusive and Sustainable Democracy** in Windhoek, Namibia. The conference also aimed to contribute to discussions taking place within the broader theme ‘Inclusive Democracy for Sustainable Development’, which was adopted by Namibia as the current Chair of the International IDEA Council of Member States.

The event was convened as a platform for the collation of information, sharing of experience and exchange of knowledge on this subject among African EMBs specifically. The opening session also served as the Namibian launch of International IDEA’s new biennial publication, *The Global State of Democracy* (GSoD). The publication was launched by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia, Professor Peter Katjavivi; the Chair of the ECN, Advocate Notemba Tjipueja; and International IDEA’s Director for the Africa and West Asia Regional Programme, Adebayo Olukoshi.

The conference was attended by electoral authorities from Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Rwanda, Tunisia, Zambia and the host country, Namibia. All seven of International IDEA’s Member States in Africa participated. Partner organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Centre for Africa, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Electoral Commissioners’ Forum also attended, as did national stakeholders including government ministries, researchers, the media and political parties.

The topics of the conference were as follows:

1. Financing for EMBs and critical investments in electoral processes;
2. Electoral systems, sequencing/timing of elections and the resource implications for managing electoral processes;
3. Inclusiveness of electoral processes to promote gender equality and the participation of the marginalized and disadvantaged;
4. Sustainable use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in electoral processes;
5. Electoral risk management as an investment for sustainable democracy; and
6. Electoral justice systems as an investment for accountability and sustainable democracy.

Consensus was reached on the following:

- Although EMBs have the specific mandate to manage electoral processes, collaboration with other key stakeholders in the country is required. In their efforts to safeguard the integrity of electoral democracy and enhance ownership of processes and electoral results, EMBs' partners therefore include government ministries and departments, national parliaments and non-state actors.
- Methods of financing electoral processes have a bearing on their efficiency and integrity. National budgets should commit to providing predictable and sufficient funding for EMBs to implement their constitutional mandates effectively. This has proved particularly problematic in those African countries transitioning from conflict that have previously relied on international support. If elections can't be absorbed by the national budgets, there may be value in exploring options, such as special taxes, to ensure enough funds to support the whole electoral management cycle. However, finding efficiencies is also important, recognizing that electoral processes compete for funding with other national priorities such as health and education.
- African countries are experiencing transitions in the management and conduct of public affairs generally. There are public demands for increased oversight of public funds used by government and quasi-governmental institutions such as EMBs. Therefore, public funding for electoral processes and elections should be accompanied by strong, transparent oversight systems including both internal and external audit of EMBs. This will enhance integrity of the institutions, as well as trust and confidence on the part of citizens.
- Electoral processes provide a unique and precious opportunity to engage sectors of the population who otherwise find themselves on the margins of society and politics. Creative and innovative ways to guarantee political rights might not be an obvious election budget item. Therefore, it is important to nurture a conceptual shift in the discourse on elections financing—not to be



viewed as a *cost* for an event but rather as an *investment* in societal cohesion. A national budget that funds strong electoral outreach programmes can be seen as an indicator of commitment to inclusive and participatory democracy.

- EMBs in Africa experience recurrent challenges with the timely disbursements of funds. Delays can increase election management costs (such as procurement costs for electoral materials) and can jeopardize electoral preparedness. EMBs and policymakers should therefore consider advocating for the adoption of clearly defined electoral and budget cycles to improve planning and preparedness for variations in financial support, especially between election and non-election years. Many participants spoke of the advantages, for these purposes, of moving to fixed election dates.
- Electoral procurement is a highly risky element of electoral management. The risks include choosing the wrong suppliers, complex procurement rules that cause knock-on delays to electoral preparedness, mismatch between specifications and needs, and missed opportunities for reducing costs. The risks for mistakes in procurement are greater when relevant laws, procedures, or key staffing are not in place at the time when procurement needs to begin: often more than a year before the materials are needed. Local (domestic) procurement of electoral materials can bring dividends of cost saving, time saving, better understanding of local needs, and support to the local economy. However, to secure the benefits of local (as opposed to international) procurement, EMBs need to build strong mechanisms to support transparent tender processes and eliminate opportunities for cronyism and corruption.
- ICT can enhance the timely and transparent dissemination of election results. This can potentially mitigate against electoral related conflict; if there are delays in communicating results this can damage trust in EMBs. In addition, marginalized groups such as absentee voters and people with disabilities can be meaningfully included in electoral processes through the use of ICTs.
- ICTs have enabled EMBs to enhance their efficiency in important areas such as voter registration, vote counting and voting itself. While the benefits are significant, global experiences point to challenges and drawbacks that need to be addressed where EMBs decide to use ICTs. As development of ICT systems is fast-moving and dynamic sector, it is important for EMBs to learn from their peers in other countries to avoid pitfalls, unsustainable solutions or unnecessary expense. For example, one lesson learned is that manual systems should be retained as backup during any transition period.

This report presents the main findings from each of the conference sessions. The conference concept note and agenda, as well as a list of participants, are included as annexes.

Session 1. Setting the context: financing of EMBs and investments in electoral processes



Chair	Adebayo Olukoshi, Director of Africa and West Asia Regional Programme, International IDEA
Presentations	Representatives of EMBs in Benin, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Mauritius and South Africa
Rapporteur	Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu, Senior Programme Manager, International IDEA

The EMBs' discussions and experiences exchanges in this session were guided by two key questions: What are the modes and methods of financing electoral processes in the different countries? Which institutions are involved in the budgeting and financing of electoral processes and EMBs?

The presenting EMBs explained that funding for all their activities is allocated from national budgets. The allocations are, at best, based on a needs assessment that covers the full electoral cycle. EMBs are nevertheless in competition for limited resources with other government agencies and other domestic priorities. EMBs have to 'manage' with what has been approved in the national budgets. If funding is insufficient or delayed, this can result in inadequate preparedness for the different electoral processes and ultimately the conduct of elections.

The participants discussed alternative sources of funding to augment what is available from national budgets, possibilities of better utilizing local resources, and local (versus international) procurement of electoral materials in order to reduce better manage funding/cost disparities. Additionally, some participants made the point that the domestic procurement of some materials such as for voter cards and the voters roll had the potential to enhance national ownership. To adopt this approach, it was emphasised that EMBs would need to build mechanisms to support transparent procurement processes and eliminate opportunities for cronyism and corruption.

There was consensus among the panellists that while alternative sources of financing were a possibility, especially for countries emerging from conflict and in fragile transitions, financing of EMBs, electoral processes and elections should remain a responsibility for national governments. Additional resources, if available from international development partners such as UNDP, could be utilised for auxiliary



components such as voter education and related activities. This was the approach adopted in Botswana, for instance.

There was consensus also that funding of electoral processes and elections is an increasingly expensive undertaking for African countries. For instance, for Cabo Verde's EMB the expenditure per voter is between 15 and 36 US dollars (USD) per person. This includes other related processes such as funding of political parties, which are allocated USD 1 per vote. In Mauritius, the yearly update and publication of the electoral register amounts to over half a million dollars (USD 525,000) with a normal election year requiring about USD 2 million. Some felt that it would be helpful to systematically collate and analyse actual expenditures on all electoral processes and elections. The work of the ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions (ECONEC) and the 'Cost of Registration and Elections' project by UNDP and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) were appreciated on this point.

Several participants made the point that higher costs are not necessarily a negative indicator. Higher costs can signify a more participatory process, for example higher voter turnout in jurisdictions where parties 'earn' more for every vote obtained as part of public financing schemes. Similarly, the representative from Cabo Verde made the point that the 'expensive' cost-per-voter in that country reflects deliberate choices, for example that they take out-of-country voting (OCV) seriously. She explained that, because of the way they interpret Cabo Verde identity; they see their national borders in a fluid way that includes Cabo Verdians wherever they reside.

Although EMBs generally have broad constitutional mandates to oversee electoral processes and elections, the political will to establish EMBs, as provided in national constitutions, has not always been matched by a commitment to provide them with sufficient resources. This is the reality in some of the countries despite the existence of legislation which is explicit on providing such adequate financial support. Many EMBs highlighted the challenge of untimely funding disbursements. Delays in disbursement caused a range of knock on problems and jeopardized their electoral preparedness. Several participants made the point that clearly defined electoral and budget cycles are important to allow for improved planning. They also brought up the problem of variations in financial support between election and non-election years. Sometimes, earlier spending on planning and preparation can alleviate the risks that come when all spending happens in the last months before an election.

Session 2. Electoral systems and the timing and sequencing of elections



Chair	Notemba Tjipueja, Chairperson, ECN Namibia
Presentations	Representatives from EMBs in Lesotho, Nigeria, Tunisia and Zambia
Rapporteur	Therese Pearce Laanela, Head of Electoral Processes Programme, International IDEA

The EMBs' discussions and experiences exchanges in this session were guided by two key questions: What makes for well-sequenced electoral processes and good timing of elections? Is there a link to the electoral system?

International IDEA devotes special attention to the proper timing and sequencing of elections in countries that transition from authoritarianism to democratic government, from deep political crises to political stability and from war to peace. Nevertheless, this issue also bears relevance in countries that conduct regular democratic elections. (In 2018, International IDEA will publish a Policy Paper on this topic.)

EMBs presented a number of scenarios unfolding from respective constitutional and legislative provisions regarding the sequencing and timing of elections. The timing and sequencing of elections has implications for the overall financial resources of an EMB and a country, and unplanned elections can take a toll on the budget of the EMB. When the time for holding elections is determined long in advance, the EMBs can better plan and have an overall budget estimate. Furthermore, predictable timing and sequencing of elections can help to safeguard the integrity of electoral processes, results and outcomes.

When the timing and sequencing of elections is relatively fixed, it can facilitate transparent procurement processes and compliance with the procurement requirements. Participants spoke of the pressures and difficulties of planning, and of complying with procurement timelines, when election dates were unknown. They felt that these pressures exposed their institutions to negative scrutiny by the electorate, particularly on cost efficiency, transparency and integrity of procurement processes.



In Zambia prior to 2016, it was the prerogative of the president to make a proclamation on the date for holding elections. However, to ensure that the date for holding elections is known, it is now fixed as the second day of August in an election year. In Lesotho, unplanned elections which came about due to ‘floor crossing’ by members of parliament, exposed the EMB to the challenge of managing elections that were not budgeted for. In Nigeria, in response to the challenges of long-term planning and timely preparation, the EMB in January 2017 established fixed dates for general elections to be the third Saturday of February of an election year for the presidential and National Assembly elections; and two weeks after for Governorship and State Assembly elections.

The timing of elections has implications for the security of electoral materials and the security of the participating electorate and wider citizenry. Participants made the point that when the timing of elections is foreseen, provision for security can be planned and arranged for in advance. As EMBs must collaborate with other government institutions to provide security, this invariably requires financial and human resources planned well in advance.

The harmonization of elections—namely the conduct of presidential, legislative, local council or government elections on the same day—was seen by some participants as an effective way for reducing the expense of elections. In addition, one participant pointed out that the electorate would not suffer from ‘election fatigue’ produced by remaining in a protracted ‘election mode’, as may happen with staggered elections.

Session 3. Investing in ICTs for electoral processes



Chair	Abdul Carimo, Chairperson, CNE Mozambique
Presentations	Representatives of EMBs in Cabo Verde, Ghana and Namibia
Rapporteur	Nicholas Matatu, Programme Officer, International IDEA

The EMBs' discussions and experiences exchanges in this session were guided by three interlinked questions: What are the EMBs' experiences of ICT procurement and costs, the extent/level of effective use of ICT by EMBs, and the effects on electoral processes?

For many EMBs across Africa, the use of ICTs in electoral processes and elections is now an integral part of electoral administration. Biometric registration kits were first introduced in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2005 and are now used in more than half of African countries—making Africa the continent with the most widespread use of this technology. Even before the move to biometric registration, from the late 1990s many African countries were early adopters of scanning technology for voter registration (including scanning for inked finger prints and polaroid pictures).

For EMBs that have committed to the use of ICTs in electoral processes, such as those represented by the session panellists from Cabo Verde, Ghana and Namibia, this has been a learning curve with both challenges and advantages. In view of the several challenges related to the manual based systems which have been used across Africa, these EMBs were motivated to embark on the use of ICTs for operational (administrative) functions as well as for electoral (voting related) processes. For electoral purposes, EMBs have mostly adopted new technologies for voter registration, voter identification, and the transmission of election results. Namibia uses technology also in the voting process.

While there have been many efficiency and accuracy dividends, the financing and procurement of ICT solutions are a continuous source of difficulty for many EMBs. This session highlighted some of the many factors (motivations, gains, costs, opportunities) in deciding whether and how to adopt the use of ICTs in electoral processes.



ICT procurement and public decision-making

EMBs deliberated on the decision-making aspects that are required to determine which technology systems and tools are suitable, in view of the political context. A key decision is whether to source ICTs internationally or domestically. Emphasis was placed on the importance of making decisions that consider country context, including the capacity of an EMB and a nation's infrastructure to sustain or maintain the equipment in the long-term.

Further, participants spoke of the importance of stakeholder consultation for the successful introduction of new ICTs, regardless of the technical merits of a given technological solution. Several interventions emphasized that EMBs should invest time and effort in engaging political parties, media, and civil society to ensure that there is consensus among the major actors. Without this consensus, they warned financial investments in ICT would fail to reap the intended dividends.

Another point of advice was that where equipment is procured outside the country, EMBs should allow time for pilot testing the equipment, preferably early in the electoral cycle, otherwise delays can lead to higher costs. Adequately trained EMB election officials and support personnel are required to operate and maintain systems and devices in the long-term, for EMBs to ensure complete system ownership and avoid indefinite dependency on the suppliers. Extensive feasibility studies must be conducted to avoid exorbitant expenditures on the procurement of ICTs.

Reasons why financing of ICT solutions could be viewed as an investment in democracy were given as (intended gains): overall efficiency, transparency, accountability and voter inclusion. For example, clean, accurate, de-duplicated voter rolls and resulting credibility were the reasons listed for considering biometric voter registration.

Biometric voter registration

In the case of the Namibian EMB, one of the reasons to adopt a biometric voter registration (BVR) system was to achieve a more accurate, credible voter register. Uniquely in Africa, Namibia has adopted ICT also in vote counting and transmission of election results. In the Namibian context, this was seen as important to build public confidence and to avert potential for disputes over results, along with associated risk of electoral violence.

The EMBs of Cabo Verde, Ghana and Namibia also highlighted that the adoption of biometric voter registration prevented the addition of 'ghost voters' and/or deceased persons on the voters' roll. BVR had been useful in detecting duplication and manipulation linked to paper-based voter registration. Further, the electronic voter register was seen to be more durable and more easily updated for each election cycle. From this perspective, the panellists said, BVR has been more efficient in terms of the time spent on voter registration in comparison to the traditional manual approach. This time and cost efficiency must, of course, be set against the cost of the system itself.

In Namibia, electoral officials were able to reach a higher number of potential voters for registration. The EMB was able to register close to 1.2 million voters,

which is half of Namibia's population, within a period of only forty-two days. A successful voter registration exercise is a testament to the well organized and planned voter registration process rather than the inherent potential of technology alone. In a less well organized exercise, the same technology might not achieve the same results.

The Namibian EMB panellist saw in this investment an enormous potential for including marginalized, potential voters left out by reason of geographical distances, lack of access to accurate information and other factors. He pointed out that biometric systems also provide important demographic information including the disaggregated statistics on gender and age that can inform wider development programming.

Investing in ICTs for electoral processes and elections therefore has complementary benefits for relevant government Ministries, especially Home Affairs. If EMBs are able to share information with all key stakeholders, this can potentially reinforce the rationale that elections are not a cost but are an investment for inclusive democratic participation. EMBs shared examples of mutually beneficial exchange of information with Ministries of Home Affairs in the course of voter registration and verification. Conversely, if there is distrust in public institutions, this information sharing could be a deterrent to registering to vote.

Another model presented was that of Cabo Verde, whose Electoral Commissioner highlighted the decreased cost in voter registration due to synergies with the national civil registry; those who reach the legal voting age are automatically added to the voter registry. This is an important experience and model for Africa and beyond. For those jurisdictions where BVR is seen as increasingly unsustainable due to cost, there is a potential for deriving voter registration from civic registration in this way.

ICTs in election management

For the management and administration of elections, the advantages for ICTs seemed to outweigh some of the challenges experienced in introducing and supporting the systems. According to the EMBs in Cabo Verde, Ghana and Namibia, the conduct of elections has been enhanced in terms of transparency, efficiency, credibility of results and accountability to constituencies and political parties. ICTs can potentially assist in the following ways:

- Improved access to information for the public and political parties;
- Enhanced participation and inclusion, especially where ICT solutions are designed to support identifiably marginalized groups;
- Elimination of spoiled ballot papers (in the case of electronic voting);
- Efficiency in the tabulation (eliminating human error) and timely transmission of election results;
- Enhanced transparency in the elections' results, which can serve to mitigate electoral disputes and related conflict;
- Availability of electronic records which can be disseminated to various stakeholders for record keeping;



- Enhanced efficiency when deploying multiple digital voters' registers, reductions in costs of printing voters' registers;
- Enhanced secrecy of the ballot;
- Reduced queueing of voters on election day;
- Obviating mistrust regarding the transport of ballot boxes;
- Better safeguards against repeat voting.

Participants stressed the importance of investing in system security to safeguard against hacking, either internally (within the EMB) or by external actors. A key message was that an EMB should always have a backup plan in case the technology fails; in this regard, EMBs shared experiences on the challenges encountered due to various technical glitches. The Electoral Commission of Namibia summarized this succinctly: 'If you want to test the depth of the river, go one foot at a time—in other words, one ICT solution at a time before embarking on the next'.

The general sense of the panel and ensuing discussion was that, if appropriately chosen and developed, the benefits of ICTs can justify the investment. This implies that EMBs actively address concerns from the public and political parties on the use of ICTs and related transparency issues.

Session 4. The inclusiveness of electoral processes



Chair	Maria Do Rosario Lopes Pereira Goncalves, President, CNE Cabo Verde
Presentations	Representatives of EMBs in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Rwanda
Rapporteur	Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu, Senior Programme Manager, International IDEA

The EMBs' discussions and experiences exchanges in this session were guided by two key questions: Do EMBs have measures/mechanisms in place for inclusive electoral processes in terms of gender equality, youth participation, and access for people with disabilities? What do these measures cost, and what is the 'return on investment' from a democracy perspective?

Equal political participation and representation of vulnerable and marginalized groups is a test of maturity for any democratic process. There are various international and regional instruments that seek to promote the meaningful participation and representation of the disadvantaged in sustainable democratic governance, peace and development. At the national level, the constitutions and electoral laws of various African countries have provisions to guarantee the participation of women, people with disabilities and youth. The latter group constitutes a large, vibrant section of the electorate in many countries across the African continent, whose participation in all aspects of democracy and governance is critical.

For instance, in Botswana the voting age was reduced in 1999 from 21 to 18 and young people make up 60 per cent of the voters. The EMB's youth participation initiatives include the integration of election issues in Botswana's school curriculum; decentralization of the electoral commission itself, to establish regional offices that house democracy clubs; and support for inter-school debating, in collaboration with UNDP. Other initiatives include the nomination of youth ambassadors for advocacy and community outreach, in collaboration with International IDEA.

From a gender perspective, most countries' electoral and political processes are not a level playing field. EMBs acknowledged the reality that women are still disadvantaged in terms of opportunities for political participation and representation. One of the key barriers for women is access to electoral campaign finances.



In Liberia, the EMB has an established gender unit to spearhead the mainstreaming of gender in all the work of the electoral commission. Other initiatives include awareness-raising on market days, namely outreach to women from remote communities when they travel to market towns.

In Rwanda, the social inclusion and participation agenda is driven by recent history and political will at the highest levels. The legal framework in Rwanda has enhanced the participation and representation of women in politics and decision making. The country's constitution and electoral law stipulate gender quotas and quotas for people with disabilities. Currently 51 of the 80 seats in the Chamber of Deputies are held by women. The voting age in Rwanda is 18 years and one can be an MP at the age of 21. In terms of voter registration for young people, the EMB in Rwanda collaborates with the National Registration Agency and shares joint databases with it. For instance, details of citizens who reach the age of 16 and are issued with national identity cards are made available to the EMB for voter registration purposes. Additionally, the EMB provides polling stations designed for people with disabilities, with appropriate information formats.

In Burkina Faso, the EMB has an electoral code that allows for assistance for people with disabilities to vote. In addition, schools have voter education guides, supported by awareness-raising and advocacy activities.

Session 5. Electoral risk management: an investment for sustainable democracy



Chair	Genevieve Boko Nadjo, Vice President, CENA Benin
Presentations	Representatives of EMBs in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tunisia and South Africa
Rapporteur	Nicholas Matatu, Programme Officer, International IDEA

The EMBs' discussions and experiences exchanges in this session were guided by three key questions: What are the numerous risks that occur in electoral processes and in organizing for elections? What are the financial implications of managing these risks or their negative consequences? Do EMBs have comprehensive systems (prevention, mitigation) addressing both internal and external risks to electoral processes?

The session panellists representing EMBs highlighted the importance of continuously tracking risks (internal and external) that occur in electoral processes. The systematic identification of risks contributes to improved institutional understanding and responsiveness; process deficiencies, emerging conflict and impending electoral disputes all have early warning signs.

Several participants reiterated the need to strengthen their internal capacities and institutional cohesion to avoid fragmentation of efforts, exposure to systemic failures due to human errors, as well as hacking of EMBs' systems. The potential risks posed by the increased use of social media and other digital technologies represent an emerging challenge that EMBs are poorly equipped to deal with. As well as securing their systems, accurately updating the public with information must form part of EMBs' credible measures in response. With respect to the security challenges, it was acknowledged that although the management of security sector personnel does not fall under an EMB's mandate, EMBs 'have a part to play in ensuring recruitment and deployment, among other essential measures for securing elections'.

Lessons and experiences from Nigeria's 2015 elections were highlighted, where the EMB's risk identification and tracking activities were assisted by International IDEA and the African Union. The internal risks included lack of inter-departmental collaboration and cohesion across the EMB's departments and teams; capacity to



provide credible and accurate information to citizens; and absolute guarantees of non-partisanship on the part of electoral officials. External risks included political instability and security threats including terrorism, especially in the north-eastern part of the country, and use of money by politicians to influence electoral outcomes. The security of electoral officials and materials, and conducive environments in which electoral processes and elections can take place are crucial factors.

In South Africa there are significant risks associated with the lack of functional systems that guarantee the safety of voting materials during transport to the polling stations. In addition, the EMB has to ensure that the collation and announcement of results is timely in order to mitigate potential risks of violent protests and conflict due to any perceived unsoundness (rigging or miscalculation) of election results.

One of the key internal risks that can undermine the credibility of the institutions, cited by EMBs, is lack of capacity on the part of electoral officials. Investments in continuous capacity building can constitute an effective risk management strategy, particularly as it can contribute to positive changes in organizational culture.

Financial risks should be integrated into risk management frameworks. This means not only putting in place oversight mechanisms, but also being able to foresee external impacts that can adversely impact electoral budgets, for example where EMBs are reliant on foreign suppliers and exposed to exchange rate volatility.

Session 6. Electoral justice systems: an investment for accountability and sustainable democracy



Chair	Courtney Sampson, Provincial Electoral Officer, IEC South Africa
Presentations	Representatives of EMBs in Mozambique, The Gambia, Malawi and Zambia
Rapporteur	Therese Pearce-Laanela, Head of Electoral Processes Programme, International IDEA

The EMBs' discussions and experiences exchanges in this session were guided by two key questions: What means and mechanisms have different countries established to ensure that electoral processes comply with legal frameworks, uphold electoral rights, and prevent or resolve electoral disputes? What are the financial implications of these mechanisms?

Electoral disputes and challenges occur during elections and throughout the electoral cycle. Across Africa, contested election outcomes have led to protracted violent conflicts, unrest and political instability. One of the main reasons for holding elections is to allow different segments of the population to exercise the right to participate in democratic governance processes, as recognized in international, regional and national frameworks that guarantee civil and political rights for all. The importance of investing in credible, nonpartisan, accessible, transparent, accountable and efficient electoral justice systems was underscored in this context. Investments in electoral justice systems are crucial for enhancing public confidence, the integrity of the EMB and overall electoral management processes. Electoral justice systems protect the rights of voters, stakeholders engaging in electoral processes and those that contest in elections.

Institutions of electoral justice are either provided for in national constitutions or specific legislation. While different models have been adopted, what is crucial is the establishment and maintenance of a robust, responsive electoral dispute resolution system: processes that uphold and protect the rights of all aggrieved parties in a non-partisan way, and crucially, in good time. Investing in such a system serves not only to ensure justice and equity but also to mitigate the costs of prolonged electoral conflict. Besides the legislative framework, socio-cultural, political and historical



contexts also have several impacts on the effective functioning of electoral justice systems.

In the Gambia, Revising Courts can be accessed for any issues regarding voter registration. In addition, in processes for the nomination of candidates, all information is publicly displayed after nomination for public scrutiny: with room to legally question anything that is not in conformity with the law.

In Mozambique, the EMB has representatives from the different political parties; its head meets regularly with electoral stakeholders to inform and to consult. The electoral dispute resolution mechanism in Mozambique involves various national stakeholders including civil society organizations (CSOs). In addition, the EMB has put in place a code of conduct that is binding on all electoral actors (as have the EMBs in Malawi and Zambia, respectively).

In Malawi, the EMB has invested in various electoral dispute-resolution mechanisms and structures that work towards mitigating against electoral disputes and conflict, including Multi-Party Liaison Committees (MPLCs). The MPLCs, which serve to prevent as well as to resolve conflict, bring together leaders of political parties at the local level and key influencers in society: notably CSOs, the media, traditional leaders and law enforcement agencies. Another mechanism is the National Election Consultative Forum (NECOF) which is made up of all electoral stakeholders. Through dialogue, this platform pre-empts grievances and complaints and is also useful in providing feedback and assessment on the performance of the EMB. Relevant investments yet to be tested include the development and adoption of a handbook to guidelines and procedures on complaints handling—an initiative stemming from consultations with national stakeholders including the judiciary.

In Zambia, the electoral justice system is embedded in the conventional justice delivery system. In addition, an ad hoc conflict management committee, using the code of conduct for political parties, provides an alternative channel for mediation and dispute resolution. Electoral complaints and disputes are required to be presented promptly, at the level at which the irregularity occurred at the polling station, within 24 hours.

Annex A. Concept note



Introduction

The Africa Regional Conference on Financing of Electoral Processes: An investment for inclusive and sustainable democracy is organized by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance and the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN). As the current Chair of International IDEA's Council of Member States, Namibia has adopted the theme of 'Inclusive Democracy for Sustainable Development' to inform the initiatives that Namibia will lead in supporting the mandate of the Institute within the framework of the Institute's *2018–2022 Strategy*.

International IDEA's work on supporting the integrity and sustainability of electoral institutions and processes focuses on the capacity of electoral management bodies (EMBs) to implement their mandates. The conference is informed by the evident consensus that EMBs are required to effectively manage all the interdependent electoral processes that are building blocks for elections and that the availability of resources to sustain such long-term undertakings is a growing challenge. Cost-effectiveness and sustainability have been highlighted by global evaluations of electoral assistance (e.g. UNDP's Global Project for Electoral Support II).

For the 62 per cent of the world's population that now live within a democratic nation, resources for electoral processes should be considered as a public investment that is necessary to ensure popular control over public decision-making and decision makers through the ballot box. Exercise of that power on a one person, one vote basis also manifests political equality among citizens.

Elections are only one of many interdependent elements of the electoral process and democracy building. The financial and human resources required for electoral processes and the conduct of elections continues to increase. This has prompted International IDEA to consider how elections can be better understood as an outcome of financing these interlinked electoral components, and seen against the cost of failing to so invest on a sustainable basis.

Generally, if the electorate and other stakeholders perceive any electoral process to lack credibility, this is likely to have a detrimental effect on the elections, on the broader democratization process and progress towards the attainment of national development goals. If the public perceives elections as being also extremely expensive,



it can diminish willingness to participate and lead to boycotts by some segments of the population as a form of protest.

The 'return on investment' associated with inclusive electoral processes can be validated in terms of democracy and social stability within a nation. By contrast, countries that underfund investments in their democracy tend to be associated with issues such as:

- ineffective electoral management and administration;
- low levels of voter turnout;
- high levels of election fraud, manipulation and voting irregularities;
- limited freedom for news media to scrutinize the exercise of power; and
- ineffective electoral justice system and lack of access to the mechanisms of resolving electoral disputes.

Purpose of the conference

The conference is convened as a platform for collation of information, sharing of experience and exchange of knowledge among EMBs in Africa. The pivotal responsibility of EMBs to manage and administer electoral processes that can ensure the functioning of electoral democracy cannot be overemphasized. In order to effectively undertake this responsibility, EMBs need sustainable resources for all electoral processes as opposed to just the short-term objective of organizing elections.

In consultation with electoral practitioners across the world, mostly EMBs such as the ECN, and other stakeholders, International IDEA is helping to shift the discourse of *elections as a cost*, to *elections as an investment*.

The Africa Regional Conference will explore the several interlinked aspects of electoral processes that influence democracy building and how it is a cost for any country's democratic and sustainable development to *not* invest in these electoral components. The conference will:

- Shift the existing discourse on elections as a *cost/burden* to one of *investing* in democracy building;
- Identify good practices in managing and investing in the interdependent electoral processes that are building blocks for elections, and corresponding gaps; and
- Define action-oriented recommendations that support the sustainable investment in electoral processes and mandate of EMBs.

The main topics of the conference will include:

- Financing for EMBs and critical investments in electoral processes;
- Electoral systems, sequencing/timing of elections and the resource implications for managing electoral processes;

- Inclusiveness of electoral processes: promotion of promote gender equality and the participation of the marginalized and disadvantaged, as an investment for inclusive and sustainable democracy;
- Sustainable use of ICTs in electoral processes;
- Electoral risk management as an investment for sustainable democracy; and
- Electoral justice systems as an investment for accountability and sustainable democracy.

Expected outcomes

- Greater understanding of financing of electoral processes as an investment for inclusive and sustainable democracy;
- Collation of good practices and lessons on managing and investing in the interdependent electoral processes of the electoral cycle;
- Relevance of EMBs' work to achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and SDG 16 targets by fostering inclusive electoral processes.

The Conference report will capture the substantive deliberations which will inform International IDEA's comparative analysis of global practices on investment in electoral processes. Participants will be expected to contribute to the defining of recommendations.

Conference organization

The ECN will host the conference which is planned for 7–8 June 2018 in Windhoek, Namibia, at Hotel Safari and Conference Centre. The conference sessions will be organized around the topics identified above and will feature substantive presentations, participatory discussions and working groups. The working languages of the conference will be English, French and Portuguese. Each session will have a rapporteur who will work closely with the overall conference rapporteur. The conference will be attended by representatives from EMBs in Africa and other electoral support organizations and practitioners.

Annex B. Agenda

Day 1, Thursday 7 June 2018

09:00– 10:45	OPENING SESSION <i>Director of Ceremonies: Commissioner Barney Karuombe, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN)</i> Welcome and Introductory Remarks by Commissioner Barney Karuombe, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) and singing of the anthems of the African Union and Namibia Statement by Advocate Notemba Tjipueja, Chairperson, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) Statement by Adebayo Olukoshi, Regional Director of Africa and West Asia, International IDEA Launch of <i>The Global State of Democracy</i> and Official Opening Address by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia, Professor Peter Katjavivi
11:00– 12:45	SESSION 1: SETTING THE CONTEXT: FINANCING OF EMBs AND INVESTMENT IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES EMBs' EXPERIENCES: BENIN, BOTSWANA, CABO VERDE, GHANA, MAURITIUS AND SOUTH AFRICA <i>Session Chair: Adebayo Olukoshi Director of Africa and West Asia, International IDEA</i> <i>Session Rapporteur: Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu, Senior Programme Manager, International IDEA</i>
12:45– 13:45	Lunch
13:45– 15:30	SESSION 2: ELECTORAL SYSTEMS, SEQUENCING AND TIMING OF ELECTIONS AND FINANCING EMBs' EXPERIENCES: LESOTHO, NIGERIA, TUNISIA AND ZAMBIA <i>Session Chair: Notemba Tjipueja, Chairperson, ECN Namibia</i> <i>Session Rapporteur: Therese Pearce Laanela, Head of Electoral Processes Programme, International IDEA</i>
15:30– 15:45	Tea/Coffee Break
15:45– 17:15	SESSION 3: ICT IN ELECTORAL PROCESSES EMBs' EXPERIENCES: CABO VERDE, GHANA, KENYA AND NAMIBIA <i>Session Chair: Abdul Carimo, Chairperson, CNE Mozambique</i> <i>Session Rapporteur: Nicholas Matatu, Programme Officer, International IDEA</i>

Day 2, Friday 8 June 2018

09:00– 10:30	<p>SESSION 4: INCLUSIVENESS OF ELECTORAL PROCESSES</p> <p>EMBs' EXPERIENCES: BOTSWANA, BURKINA FASO, LIBERIA AND RWANDA</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Maria Do Rosario Lopes Pereira Goncalves, President, CNE Cabo Verde</i></p> <p><i>Session Rapporteur: Rumbidzai Kandawasvika-Nhundu, Senior Programme Manager, International IDEA</i></p>
10:30– 11:00	<p>Tea/Coffee Break</p>
11:00– 12:30	<p>SESSION 5: ELECTORAL RISK MANAGEMENT: AN INVESTMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRACY</p> <p>PRESENTATIONS ON ERM APPROACHES IN ETHIOPIA, NIGERIA, TUNISIA AND SOUTH AFRICA</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Genevieve Boko Nadjo, Vice President, CENA Benin Session</i></p> <p><i>Rapporteur: Nicholas Matatu, Programme Officer, International IDEA</i></p>
12:30–13:45	<p>Lunch</p>
13:45–15:30	<p>SESSION 6: ELECTORAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS: AN INVESTMENT FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRACY</p> <p>EMBs' PRESENTATIONS: MOZAMBIQUE, THE GAMBIA, MALAWI AND ZAMBIA</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Courtney Sampson, Provincial Electoral Officer, IEC South Africa</i></p> <p><i>Session Rapporteur: Therese Pearce-Laanela, Head of Electoral Processes Programme, International IDEA</i></p>
15:30–16:15	<p>CLOSING SESSION</p> <p>Conclusions and Way Forward, Therese Pearce-Laanela, Head of Electoral Processes Programme, International IDEA</p> <p>Remarks by Adebayo Olukoshi, Regional Director for Africa and West Asia, International IDEA</p> <p>Remarks by the Electoral Commission of Namibia</p>

Annex C. List of participants

NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	COUNTRY
Electoral management bodies and International IDEA Member States based in Africa			
Genevieve Boko (EP. NADJO)	Commission Electorale Nationale Autonome (CENA)	Vice-President	Benin
Doreen Lame SERUMULA	Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	Botswana
Benoit ILBOUDO	Commission Electorale Nationale Independante (CENI)	Commissioner Rapporteur	Burkina Faso
Maria DO ROSARIO LOPES PEREIRA GONCALVES	Comissao Nacional Eleicoes (CNE)	President	Cabo Verde
Demwozie Mammie HERSHO	National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE)	Deputy Chairperson	Ethiopia
Aliou Momarr NJAI	Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	Chairperson	The Gambia
Rebecca Kabukie ADJALO	Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC)	Commissioner	Ghana
Mahapela LEHOHLA	Independence Electoral Commission (IEC)	Chairperson	Lesotho
Limpho Azael MONESE	Independence Electoral Commission (IEC)	Senior Accounting Officer	Lesotho
C .A. Lamin LIGHE	National Electoral Commission (NEC)	Executive Director	Liberia
Killion Gibson Jakobe MGAWI	Malawi Electoral Commission	Commissioner	Malawi
Jane Mayemu ANSAH	Malawi Electoral Commission	Chairperson	Malawi
Dharmajai MULLOO	Electoral Commissioner's Office	Deputy Chief Electoral Officer	Mauritius
Abdul CARIMO	Comissao Nacional Eleicoes (CNE)	Chairperson	Mozambique
Notemba TJIPUEJA	Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN)	Chairperson	Namibia
Barney KARUUOMBE	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Commissioner	Namibia
Heidi JACOBS	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Legal Advisor	Namibia
Vikitoria HANGO	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Media Officer	Namibia
Theo MUJORO	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Director of Operations	Namibia

NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	COUNTRY
Marilyn KATJITUNDU	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Deputy Director	Namibia
Paul ISAAK	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Chief Electoral and Referenda Officer	Namibia
Jesse MUNASHIMWE	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Program Officer	Namibia
Zenia KLAZEN	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Control Administrative Officer, Office of the Chairperson	Namibia
Alberthina NANGOLO	Electoral Commission of Namibia	Commissioner	Namibia
Bolade Michael EYINLA	Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)	Chief Technical Adviser to the Chairperson	Nigeria
Courtney Dale SAMPSON	Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC)	Provincial Electoral Officer, Western Cape	South Africa
Charles MUNYANEZA	Rwanda Electoral Commission	Executive Secretary	Rwanda
Riadh BOUHOUCHE	Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Elections République Tunisienne (ISIE) (President of the State Committee of International Relations)	Commissioner	Tunisia
Emily Muntali SIKAZWE	Electoral Commission of Zambia	Commissioner	Zambia
International IDEA's Africa-based partner organizations			
Hilda Boikhutso MODISANE	ECF-SADC	Coordinator	Botswana
Chinedu Chukwuemeka CHINEDU	ECOWAS/ECONEC	Officer in charge of ECONEC finance and administration	Nigeria
Dieudonné Ngalamulume TSHIYOYO	United Nations Development Programme	Regional Electoral Advisor	Ethiopia
Bruck Yohannes WOLDEMARIAM	Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	Djibouti/ Ethiopia
Locally based national and international stakeholders			
Petro MAGALHAES	Embassy of Brazil in Namibia	Deputy Head of Mission	Namibia
Evelina FORS	Embassy of Finland in Namibia	Intern	Namibia
Michel SHAKU	Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in Namibia		Namibia
Dessi IMBIRI	Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Namibia	Political Affairs	Namibia
Claudia FISCHER	EU Delegation in Namibia		Namibia
Victor SHYPOH	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW)	Director	Namibia
Meundju JAHANILEA	NUDO Political Party	SG	Namibia
JS UGHISHEKWA	RDP Political Party	CC Member	Namibia
Montle MOTSONANE	High Commission of Botswana in Namibia	First Secretary Political	Namibia
K. KANKAM	High Commission of the Republic of Ghana in Namibia	Counsellor	Namibia



NAME	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	COUNTRY
Vinay KUMAR	Indian High Commission in Namibia	Second Secretary	Namibia
Max WEYLANDT	Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)	Researcher	Namibia
I.L.KALIKUATA	Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service (MSYNS)	Director	Namibia
Mister HAGE	UDF Political Party	Secretary-General	Namibia
International IDEA staff			
Rumbidzai KANDAWASVIKA-NHUNDU	Electoral Processes Programme	Senior Programme Manager	Sweden
Adebayo OLUKOSHI	Africa and West Asia Regional Programme	Regional Director	Ethiopia
Therese PEARCE-LAANELA	Electoral Processes Programme	Head of Programme	Sweden
Nicholas MATATU	Africa and West Asia Regional Programme	Programme Officer	Ethiopia
Tendai JÖNSSON	Electoral Processes Programme	Administrative Officer	Sweden

About International IDEA



The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization with the mission to advance democracy worldwide, as a universal human aspiration and enabler of sustainable development. We do this by supporting the building, strengthening and safeguarding of democratic political institutions and processes at all levels. Our vision is a world in which democratic processes, actors and institutions are inclusive and accountable and deliver sustainable development to all.

What do we do?

In our work we focus on three main impact areas: electoral processes; constitution-building processes; and political participation and representation. The themes of gender and inclusion, conflict sensitivity and sustainable development are mainstreamed across all our areas of work.

International IDEA provides analyses of global and regional democratic trends; produces comparative knowledge on good international democratic practices; offers technical assistance and capacity-building on democratic reform to actors engaged in democratic processes; and convenes dialogue on issues relevant to the public debate on democracy and democracy building.

Where do we work?

Our headquarters is located in Stockholm, and we have regional and country offices in Africa, the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. International IDEA is a Permanent Observer to the United Nations and is accredited to European Union institutions.

<<http://idea.int>>

Electoral management bodies (EMBs) in Africa generally have broad constitutional mandates to oversee electoral processes and the management of elections. However, in many cases, the establishment of EMBs has not been matched by sufficient or timely commitment of resources needed for the fulfilment of their mandates. The topic of financing elections has therefore become a pressing issue among African election practitioners.

On 7–8 June 2018 the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) co-organized a conference in Windhoek, Namibia, convened as a platform for the collation of information, sharing of experience and exchange of knowledge on this subject among African EMBs.

This report presents the main findings from each of the conference sessions. The conference concept note and agenda, as well as a list of participants, are included as annexes.