



# ERMTool

ELECTORAL RISK MANAGEMENT TOOL

# Guide to Risk Factors for Elections in the G5 Sahel Region

Factors Internal to the Electoral Process



# **Guide to Risk Factors for Elections in the G5 Sahel Region**

## **Factors Internal to the Electoral Process**

Sead Alihodzic, Maurice Mboula Jean-Claude Didier Enguélégué and  
Idayat Hassan

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International IDEA  
Strömsborg  
SE-103 34 Stockholm  
Sweden  
Telephone: +46 8 698 37 00  
Email: [info@idea.int](mailto:info@idea.int)  
Website: <https://www.idea.int>

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## Introduction

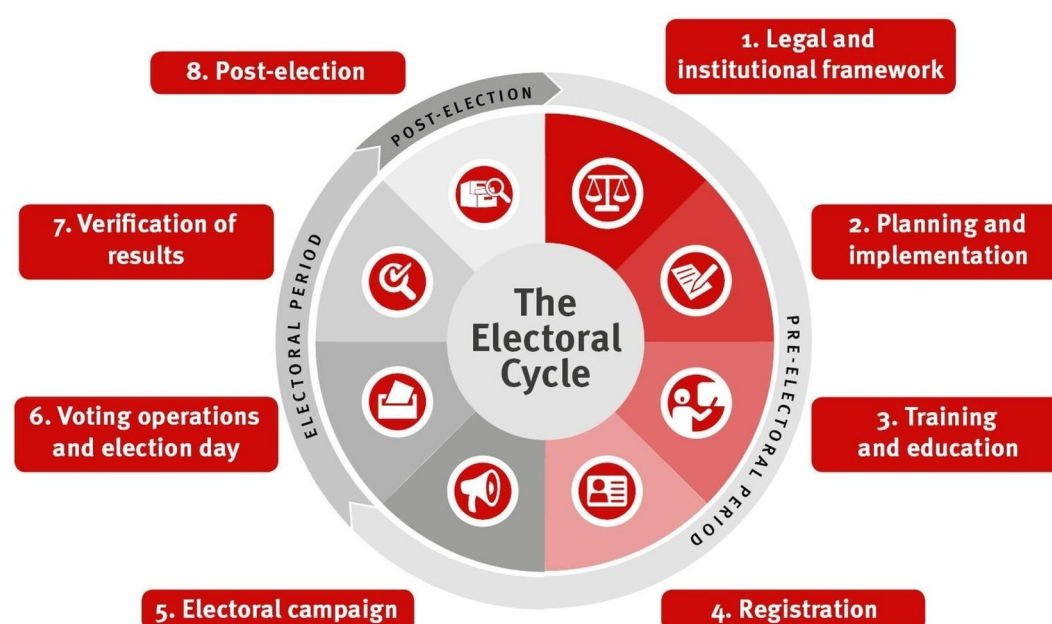
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This guide has been developed within the framework of the project ‘Support to Structural Preventive Diplomacy in Areas of Democratic Governance in Africa’, funded by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office and implemented in conjunction with the Department of Political Affairs at the African Union (AU) Commission. It provides an overview of the risk factors internal (endogenous) to electoral processes that could threaten the integrity and security of elections in the G5 Sahel countries in 2020 and 2021.<sup>1</sup>

The guide draws on the methodology devised by International IDEA and set out in its *Electoral Risk Management Tool: Internal Factors Guide* (Alihodzic and Asplund 2018a), which provides an overview of 26 process-related risk factors that can trigger or contribute to triggering election-related violence. Internal risk factors are election-specific and do not exist outside of the electoral context. They relate to electoral actors, events, practices and materials that can undermine the credibility of electoral processes or, in the worst-case scenario, trigger or contribute to triggering election-related violence.

This guide, which is customized to the G5 Sahel region, highlights 25 internal factors clustered into seven of the eight phases of the electoral cycle (see Figure 1). Each phase, and its associated factors, is covered in a separate chapter. The eighth (post-electoral) phase of the electoral cycle is not discussed. Although there is a possibility that some risks to the consequent electoral processes could materialize in this phase, the underlying risk factors might not be process-related. Instead, such incidents should be examined in the context of structural risk factors, which are defined in the *Guide to Risk Factors for Elections in the G5 Sahel Region: Factors External to the Electoral Process* (International IDEA 2020).

Figure 1. The electoral cycle



Each of the internal risk factors identified below is described in four sections:

1. Introduction: a general definition and explanation of the issues related to a given factor that can trigger or contribute to triggering election-related violence.
2. Empirical cases: an illustration of particular states and the electoral context in which the given factor was identified as a trigger of or a factor in triggering election-related violence.
3. Observable indicators: mechanisms for measuring and assessing the various factors.
4. Data collection and analysis methodologies: suggested data sources, collection techniques and methods for analysis that can be used to capture the required information.

Used in combination with the guide to risk factors external to electoral processes in the region, this guide will help users to navigate a broad checklist that will be useful for identifying risks of election-related violence in any electoral context. The list of factors is not exhaustive. With the aid of International IDEA's Electoral Risk Management Tool (ERMTTool) software,<sup>2</sup> users will be able to modify the list by renaming or deleting items or adding new risk factors and descriptions. In addition, the ERMTTool's Geographical Information System (GIS) instrument will allow users to collect and manage data, as indicated in sections on observable indicators, and methods for data gathering and analysis.

### Endnotes

1. The group of five Sahel countries comprises Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.
2. The ERMTTool integrates the customizable digital libraries on internal and external risk factors and prevention and mitigation options, the GIS and a Risk and Action Register.

## Phase I: The legal and institutional framework

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Electoral law or legislation is the legal structural elements that define or influence an electoral process. These elements can comprise some or all of: (a) the constitution; (b) national laws, which may take the form of a comprehensive electoral code; (c) provincial or state laws, which in federal states may govern processes for provincial or state and local electoral events; (d) ordinances and regulations made by national or lower-level authorities; (e) regulations, proclamations and directives issued by an electoral management body (EMB), where it has the powers to do so; (f) customary laws and conventions, which may be integrated into an electoral law; (g) administrative policies made by an EMB or other bodies; and (h) codes of conduct, voluntary or otherwise (Wall et al. 2006: 43). The framework can also incorporate international standards from international agreements and frameworks.

Regardless of the wider institutional framework in a given state, there will always be a body or bodies responsible for electoral management (Ellis et al. 2014: 5). In emerging democracies, it is common for electoral legal frameworks to promote electoral integrity by making EMBs responsible for controlling the entire process (Ellis et al. 2014: 75). However, some functions, such as boundary delimitation, voter registration, the registration and funding of political parties, electoral dispute resolution, the certification and announcement of election results, and the provision of voter education and information may be contracted out by an EMB, or supported by other institutions or civil society organizations (CSOs). If electoral functions are assigned to more than one institution, the legal and policy framework must be very clear about each institution's functional responsibilities, the hierarchy of authority and the coordination mechanisms between the institutions (Ellis et al. 2014: 77–78).

### 1. Contested electoral law

#### Introduction

Electoral law is made up of one or more pieces of legislation governing all aspects of the process for electing the political institutions defined in a country's constitution or institutional framework (Wall et al. 2006: 330).

Electoral law can exclude individuals and groups from electoral processes by denying them the right to vote or to compete in elections. It can also be designed to favour one party over another.



## Empirical cases

### *Burkina Faso*

The November 2020 presidential election will be the second since Blaise Compaoré was forced out amid popular protests in October 2014 following his attempt to amend the constitution to remove the limit on the number of terms a president may serve.

Constitutional reform was a central campaign promise of President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré and the Movement for People's Progress, which won the 2015 election. Consultations were held and a draft of the new basic law was published in January 2017. Kaboré has promised a referendum on this draft, but a date has not yet been set.

A revised electoral code adopted in 2018 has been criticized by opposition groups. Although it allows for diaspora voting, the requirements for voting—a national identity card or a passport—exclude the many who hold only a consular card. In neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire, of the 980,000 people with a consular card identified by the Burkinabe National Identification Office in 2018, only 300,000 had a national identity card and 100,000 a passport (Africanews 2018). A dialogue between parties was launched in July 2019 to try to reach consensus on the electoral code, an electoral calendar and voting rights. The election is now scheduled for 22 November 2020. It is not clear whether elections can be held in areas currently affected by conflict.

### *Chad*

Chadian legislative elections are scheduled for December 2020. The President of Chad, Idriss Déby, introduced Decree 216 in February 2019, appointing the members of the Electoral Commission. The identity of the opposition representatives nominated caused an outcry among members of the political opposition, who argued that the decree flouted the provisions of Chad law 30/PR/2018 and Ordinance 40/PR/2018 on 'establishing an independent commission' and 'the rights of the democratic opposition'. An International Crisis Group analysis described the move as a 'strong Déby ruling over a weak country' (Motassi 2019).

Opposition members of the national body for political dialogue also rejected the government's adoption of a new electoral code. The code reduces the number of legislators in parliament from 188 to 161, which the opposition argues is illogical given the increase in population. The code was rejected on the grounds that its adoption bypassed an existing system of dialogue between majority and opposition figures before political changes are made (Journal du Tchad 2019).

### *Niger*

Opposition parties have refused to sit on the Commission Électorale Nationale Indépendante (CENI) since 2017. In 2019, the Nigerien Parliament adopted a new electoral code in the absence of opposition MPs. The opposition's main concern was that article 8 of the Electoral Code would make it impossible for the exiled opposition leader, Hama Amadou, to participate in the 2021 presidential elections (Africanews 2019a). Another concern is that 'voting by witness' eligibility criteria effectively make it possible for an individual to vote without identity papers as long as two witnesses confirm that person's identity. Opposition groups cried foul, arguing that this will leave the door open to widespread voter fraud (Jeune Afrique 2016). In September 2019, following the CENI's publication of a calendar for municipal/regional elections in November and legislative elections in December 2020, nearly 2,000 people took to the streets to demonstrate against the electoral code and the government (Jeune Afrique 2019b).

### Observable indicators

1. The level of compliance with regional—AU and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)—and international (United Nations) electoral standards and obligations.
2. The extent to which the electoral law is adequate and comprehensive in regulating all aspects of the electoral process.
3. The level of public confidence in the electoral law.
4. The record of contestation/statements made about the electoral law.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct a specialist overview and analysis of the electoral law and its impact on all groups. Analyse the potentially negative impacts on different regions and among different social groups and political actors. Use maps to identify the regions where the electoral law might lead to heightened risks of violence.
- Conduct periodic surveys among political actors and the general public targeting both men and women to understand their levels of satisfaction with the electoral law. Ensure that all such surveys collect data on respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, including their membership of marginalized groups. This should include their age, sex, language, political orientation, ethnicity, religion and location, as well as any minority group memberships they may have. Plot data and observe trends. Create colour-coded maps to indicate regions where dissatisfaction is high.
- Collect information on official complaints relating to the electoral law filed and resolved at the respective administrative and judicial instances. Use maps to mark the geographic areas where most complaints were filed and plot charts that reflect complaints submitted throughout the electoral cycle. Distinguish between the groups that submit complaints and disaggregate the complaints on the basis of sex and political affiliation.

## 2. An unfit electoral system

### Introduction

At the most basic level, the electoral system translates votes cast into seats won by political parties and candidates (Reynolds, Reilly and Ellis 2005: 5, 177). Different electoral systems can aggravate or moderate tensions and conflicts in society. Some systems work well to ensure gender-balanced representation, the representation of minority groups and the formation of coalition governments that reflect the level of support for inclusion. Gender refers to socially constructed rather than biologically determined roles of women and men, as well as the relationships between them in a given society at a specific time and place. The qualities, identities and behaviours expected from men and women are determined through a process of socialization. Other systems will encourage the formation of strong, single-party government. If an electoral system is not perceived as inclusive and fair, or the political framework does not allow a general feeling that political parties have a chance of winning next time, losers may feel compelled to work outside the system using non-democratic, confrontational and even violent tactics (Reynolds, Reilly and Ellis 2005: 6).

A study published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2009) identifies four variables in electoral systems that are capable of triggering conflicts: (a) the formula for determining how votes are translated into seats; (b) district magnitude; (c) the votes-to-seats ratio; and (d) boundary delimitation.

## Empirical cases

### *Niger*

Niger has three types of constituencies for elections to the National Assembly—ordinary, special and diaspora. Ordinary constituencies correspond to Niger's seven regions and the capital district of Niamey. The special constituencies are single-member constituencies reserved for national minorities. Nigeriens living outside of the country also elect five Assembly members to represent diaspora constituencies. In October 2014, the National Assembly passed a law increasing the number of seats in the National Assembly from 113 to 171 in order to better reflect Niger's growing population.

Two main criteria are used to decide on the allocation of seats—the size of the population and its ethnolinguistic composition. In ordinary constituencies, the law provides for one deputy per 100,000 inhabitants. There is also one deputy per special constituency. Special constituencies were created to take account of the vote of certain minorities in the population, to ensure that they are represented at parliamentary level. In practice, this objective is not always achieved. In Torodi, for instance, where the Goumantche ethnic group is the largest minority, the local deputy is almost always from the Fulani ethnic group. This situation generates tensions between the two groups as the Goumantche feel that they are not represented.

### *Mali*

There are 147 seats in Mali's National Assembly. These seats are allocated among the six districts of Bamako and the 49 Cercles (second level administrative unit) in the rest of Mali. According to the law, a Cercle must have 60,000 inhabitants or more to be allocated a seat. Cercles substantially greater than this cut-off receive additional seats, but some Cercles below the threshold in the Kidal region have also been allocated a seat (Trans-Saharan Elections Project n.d.b).

The 2015 Gender Quota Bill specifies that women must constitute at least 30 per cent of elected or appointed officials. This law helped take the proportion of female parliamentarians from 9 per cent in 2013 to 27 per cent in 2016. The trend is expected to be bolstered by a Gender Parity Law that will take effect for the 2020 legislative elections. This provides that a party with over 70 per cent of its members from one gender will be rejected by the EMB (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019).

### *Chad*

Chad's 188-seat legislature has just 15 per cent female representation. While there are no legal provisions on gender parity, article 54 of Chad's Political Parties Charter sets out that parties with no elected female members will forfeit 10 per cent of their state subsidies.

A mixed ballot system is used to allocate seats, and political parties submit a list of candidates for all the seats. The system stipulates that where a party list wins an absolute majority of the ballots cast in a constituency, it wins all the seats in that constituency. If no party wins an absolute majority, however, the proportion of votes obtained by each list determines the allocation of seats. This hybrid proportional system is regarded as inclusive and has allowed 31 political parties to be represented in the National Assembly. However, opposition to the proportional system cites the principle of equal suffrage to argue that constituency size should be determined on a solely demographic basis. This opposition arose

in response to the fact that as a result of the proportional system, southern Chad, which has a higher population, is less well represented than northern Chad, which exacerbates tensions on the issue of political representation between citizens from south and north (Trans-Saharan Elections Project n.d.a).

#### Observable indicators

1. The level of inclusivity in the electoral system.
2. The representative nature of the electoral system.

#### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct expert analysis of the effects of: (a) the electoral formula; (b) district magnitude; (c) the votes-to-seats ratio; and (d) boundary delimitation on the representation of all significant groups in political institutions. Use maps to mark areas where electoral system design heightens the risk of an outbreak of violence. Use different markers to present different risks.
- Conduct surveys among political and non-political actors to ascertain their perceptions of the appropriateness of the electoral system. Use maps and charts for data presentation and to identify high-risk geographic areas or increasing risk.
- Consider relevant experiences from past elections in the West Africa region.

### 3. Inadequate electoral administrative rules

#### Introduction

The electoral legal framework contains numerous administrative rules such as ordinances and regulations made by national or lower-level authorities; regulations, proclamations and directives issued by an EMB; customary law, conventions and codes of conduct; and EMB regulations or policies dealing with various issues. These rules are important as they set a clear and detailed normative framework that can be clearly operationalized. A lack of legislative and operational clarity can negatively affect the credibility and transparency of the electoral processes and increase the risk of arbitrary manipulation. This has the potential to lead to conflict and violence.

#### Empirical case

##### *Niger*

A lack of legislative clarity stoked significant tensions between incumbent and opposition parties in the 2016 election in Niger following a dispute over whether Niger's electoral commission, the CENI, was empowered to introduce electoral innovations. Because 1.5 million of the 6.5 million registered voters in Niger faced being disqualified from voting because they did not have the voter identification required, the CENI proposed the introduction of a system of 'voting with witnesses', whereby those without identification would be allowed to vote if they were vouched for by two voters accredited at their particular polling station. Since there was no explicit legal provision for the introduction of procedural innovations, however, the proposal was submitted for consultation among the political class (Massalaki 2016). The opposition rejected the innovation based on the premise that CENI had no powers to formulate laws (Mueller and Matthews 2016). Nonetheless, CENI

persisted with the innovation, in a move criticized by the US State Department (BTI 2018b) and academic observers (Winsor 2016).

### Observable indicators

1. The level to which legislative acts are made operational through specific regulations and instructions.
2. The extent to which electoral officials, political actors and citizen groups, including both men and women, are acquainted with and understand the electoral process.
3. The electoral actors' level of confidence in and satisfaction with the various administrative rules and procedures.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Use surveys to measure the level of endorsement of electoral regulations by electoral actors. Use charts to show approval ratings. Distinguish between different political actors by asking about survey respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, such as location and membership of minority/marginalized group.
- Identify the political actors that did not endorse particular legal provisions, such as codes of conduct for political parties. Use maps to show areas where this may represent a particular risk.
- In the same surveys, assess levels of acquaintance with and understanding of relevant electoral regulations among electoral officials, political actors and citizens' groups, including women's and youth groups. Use bar charts to present the results. If there are geographic discrepancies, use maps to illustrate these.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections in West Africa.

## Phase II: Planning and implementation

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Once the electoral legal framework has been finalized, planning and preparation for the implementation of electoral activities need to be instigated. This includes developing operational plans for implementation of the different phases of the electoral cycle, from providing voter information to the registration of voters, political parties and candidates, as well as observers; political party campaigning; polling and counting; and result management. Operational plans will identify the activities to be implemented, timelines, geographic scope, the human resources and training needed, the budget required, and so on. Weakness or controversy in one electoral phase can compromise the integrity of the subsequent phases or the entire electoral process.

When elections are organized in conflict-prone societies, they can exacerbate existing tensions and trigger violent conflicts. Conversely, existing tensions and violence can spill over into electoral processes and affect electoral actors, events, materials and facilities. It is therefore crucial that electoral planning is timely, holistic and conflict-sensitive, and that it considers both the process and the structural factors of conflict.

### 4. Poor performance of the electoral management bodies

#### Introduction

An EMB is an organization or body that is legally responsible for managing some or all the elements that are essential for the conduct of elections or the instruments of direct democracy. These core responsibilities are planning voting operations, determining who is eligible to vote, and receiving and validating the nominations of participants in elections (for public office or positions in political parties); and conducting the ballot, counting the votes and tabulating the results (Wall et al. 2006: 330). An EMB may be a stand-alone institution or a unit within a larger institution that has a broader mandate.

There are three broad electoral management models: the independent, the governmental and the mixed model. In each case, gender-balanced representation on the EMB is fundamental. Regardless of which model is used, however, it is of the utmost importance that the EMB is able to ensure the credibility of the electoral process and the legitimacy of the election results. To achieve this, the EMB must be constituted and operate according to the fundamental guiding principles of independence, impartiality, integrity, transparency, efficiency, professionalism and service-mindedness (Wall et al. 2006: 22–25). If any of these constitutive principles are absent, the EMB's work is likely to generate concern and even chaos, which can lead to outbreaks of election-related violence.

## Empirical cases

### Mali

Mali's electoral process involves four main institutions: the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission (IEBC), the General Delegation for Elections, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD) and the Constitutional Court. The MATD—and therefore the government—plays a central role in the system in the organization of the vote, the centralization of provisional results and their proclamation. This generates suspicion and the impression that it is working at the behest of the power that appoints it. Repeated boycotts enabled the opposition to extract various concessions. In May 2019, its appointees were added to the IEBC and the government agreed that the military would no longer vote on a different day, thereby increasing transparency (Atlantic Council 2019). Afrobarometer surveys suggest that only about half of Malians trust the IEBC (Africa Center for Strategic Studies 2018).

### Mauritania

Opposition parties criticized the CENI's lack of impartiality prior to the 2019 presidential elections and asked for an urgent reform of the body before the elections were held. One major concern was the lack of neutrality and independence of most of the members of the EMB. The authorities responded by highlighting the legal impossibility of reforming electoral law and the CENI on the eve of an election (LA Tribune 2019). In a move that implicitly confirmed opposition allegations of bias, the CENI, through the Minister of Interior, offered the opposition seven positions on the CENI (RFI 2019a). A 2019 Gallup poll found that 64 per cent of Mauritians were not confident in the honesty of the elections (Gallup 2019).

## Observable indicators

1. The levels of trust and confidence enjoyed by the EMB throughout a state.
2. The level of independence and the inclusiveness of the EMB, including from a gender perspective.
3. The level of impartiality of the EMB.
4. The level of transparency of the work carried out by the EMB.

## Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct an expert review and analysis of the legal framework that regulates the establishment and the work of the EMB. If a legal framework is not gender- or conflict-sensitive, that is if it does not ensure the representation of different groups, men and women, and minority or at times majority groups, use maps to highlight the regions where the composition and work of the EMBs may be a factor that might instigate violence.
- Survey and interview political actors and citizen groups in order to measure perceptions of trust in the work of the EMB. Conduct surveys on a regular basis. Chart the level of trust across time to understand trends.
- Analyse the EMB's working practices relating to inclusiveness, transparency and accountability. Interview political actors and civil society groups, targeting both



women and men in these groups on this particular issue or include it in the above survey. Use charts to record/observe trends and maps to highlight the regions where this issue creates particular tensions.

- Consider relevant experience from past elections.

## 5. Inadequate operational planning

### Introduction

The development of a strategic plan is a basic step in focusing the efforts of an EMB on achieving its legal responsibilities (Wall et al. 2006: 131). Operational planning will help to develop a clear blueprint for the steps that need to be taken towards the organization of credible elections. The plan should include descriptions, timelines, the geographic scope of preparations, activities, and details of the human and funding resources required.

Poor implementation of electoral activities might result in mistakes and delays. If these problems are seen as deliberate tactics intended to favour certain political groups or have the potential to influence electoral outcomes, they could trigger violence.

### Empirical case

#### Mali

Ahead of the 2020 legislative elections, there was significant debate over the ability of the CENI to implement its operational plans. A coalition of new administrative Malian regions pointed out that many constituent regions were not ‘fully operational’ and highlighted the weak state presence in some areas due to the level of insecurity. Political parties also voiced concerns about the franchise for internally displaced persons (IDPs), and that there were no plans to make it possible for them to vote in the election (Malijet 2020a).

A statement from the president of the CENI suggested that an audit of the electoral register had found 400,000 deceased voters but did not provide a way forward on resolving the issue (Maliweb 2020). A statement from an electoral official suggested that changes would not be made because under normal circumstances the presidential and the legislative elections should have been held using the same voters’ register (Maliactu 2020).

Following the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, many observers voiced concerns that holding the election would facilitate an outbreak in the country, which would be particularly difficult to contain in areas of low state capacity. Having already postponed the elections twice on security grounds, however, Mali proceeded with the elections (AllAfrica 2020a). The election had a low turnout of 35.73 per cent, which is lower than the previous election when the turnout was 42.7 per cent (Africanews 2020).

### Observable indicators

1. The existence of guidelines on strategic and operational electoral planning among relevant stakeholders.
2. The existence of strategic plans and operational concepts in the responsible bodies.
3. The level of coherence of the strategic and operational plans.
4. The level of consultation among responsible stakeholders during the planning period and the capacity to implement operational plans.
5. The existence of monitoring and evaluation procedures and mechanisms.



### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Obtain operational planning documents from the relevant stakeholders at different levels. Analyse the operational plans in terms of quality and sufficiency, as well as feasibility in terms of resource availability and the timelines envisaged. Highlight any deficiencies, such as potential shortfalls related to human resources and funding for the implementation of plans, and unrealistic timelines. Use maps to mark geographic areas of particular concern.
- Cross-check the level of harmonization between the documents produced by different stakeholders. Use maps to highlight geographic areas where discrepancies are found.
- Compare with the plans from previous electoral processes. Create a map that displays data on historical incidents of election-related violence and existing incidents of violence. Analyse operational plans in the context of historical and existing violence, taking careful note of gender-based violence.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.
- Generate risk maps for the different electoral phases.

## 6. Inadequate funding, financing and budgeting

### Introduction

Electoral costs can be divided into three categories:

1. Core costs (or direct costs), which are routinely associated with implementing an electoral process in a stable electoral environment.
2. Diffuse costs (or indirect costs), relating to electoral services that cannot be disentangled from the general budgets of agencies that assist with the implementation of an electoral process.
3. Integrity costs, which are necessary to ensure security, integrity, political neutrality and a level playing field for an electoral process (Wall et al. 2006: 176).

Inadequate funding, financing and budgeting will not trigger violence directly. However, inadequate resources may force EMBs to make compromises that can affect the integrity and security of electoral processes and thus open them up for disputes that can fuel or trigger violent conflict.

Core cost deficiencies can affect the technical integrity of the electoral process. Lack of diffuse funds will limit the engagement of support agencies, most notably those tasked with providing security. A lack of integrity funds can harm the legitimacy of the process.

### Empirical cases

#### Chad

One reason for Chad postponing legislative elections since 2015 is a lack of finance (AFP 2017). According to the government, organizing legislative elections in Chad requires a financial envelope of 70 billion Central African Franc (XAF), but the National Assembly approved a budget of less than half that amount (33 billion) to organize elections in 2019. An increase of XAF 43 billion in oil revenues in the second quarter of 2019 exceeds the shortfall of 37 billion. According to CENI President Kodi Mahamat, however, the election

remains dependent on the ‘financing of electoral operations’. The Finance Law confirmed XAF 70 billion to enable legislative elections to take place in December 2020 (Journal du Cameroun 2019).

### **Mali**

Despite more than 20 years of democracy, Mali still struggles to mobilize the resources essential for its elections without resorting to funding partners. For the 2018 presidential elections and legislative elections initially planned for the same year, the budget shortfall to be sought from partners was XAF 55 billion—over half the projected cost. Even though most of the costs were funded by the government, support from Mali’s partners is essential (Malijet 2020b).

### **Observable indicators**

1. The adequacy of funds to cover core costs.
2. The adequacy of funds to cover diffuse costs.
3. The adequacy of funds to cover integrity costs.
4. The level of accountability in the procedures for budget approval and spending.

### **Methodology for data gathering and analysis**

- Conduct an expert analysis that involves cross-checking operational plans and available funds. Use maps to highlight the geographic regions where insufficient funds might have an impact on the quality of electoral activities.
- Conduct an expert analysis of diffuse/indirect costs and integrity costs. Use maps to highlight the geographic regions where insufficient funds might negatively affect the security and legitimacy of electoral processes.
- Compare with the budgets for previous elections and cross-check against violent or non-violent outcomes. Chart differences in expenditures throughout the various electoral phases. Observe whether the current budget is a real terms improvement compared to previous election year budget(s), and in particular whether the current budget compensates for previous shortfalls.
- Consider relevant experiences from past elections.

## **7. Inadequate electoral security arrangements**

### **Introduction**

Electoral security entails the protection of electoral stakeholders, such as voters, candidates, poll workers, media and observers; electoral information, such as the results of the vote, registration data and campaign material; electoral facilities, such as polling stations and counting centres; and electoral events, such as campaign rallies against death, damage or disruption. Three broad types of electoral security can be identified: (a) physical security, which concerns the protection of facilities and materials; (b) personal security, which concerns electoral stakeholders; and (c) information security, which concerns the protection of physical ballot papers and ballot boxes, computers and communication systems.

Weaknesses in electoral security, especially in conflict-prone societies and those which experience high levels of violence, will expose electoral stakeholders, information, facilities

and events to violence (USAID 2010: 5–6). Electoral security might entail engagement with and collaboration between different security sector agencies (SSAs), such as police forces, intelligence agencies, the armed forces and special prosecutors for electoral crimes. The security of women in conflict and post-conflict contexts deserves special attention.

### Empirical cases

#### *Chad*

The legislative elections planned for December 2020 have been postponed four times since 2015. This means that the composition of the National Assembly has remained the same since 2011. President Déby's government cites the terrorist threat from Boko Haram as an explanation. Déby declared a state of emergency in the two eastern provinces of Ouaddaï and Sila at the end of August 2019 following deadly clashes between farmers and herders, and in Tibesti in the north, which is a hideout for rebels and illegal gold miners. The opposition parties now argue that having waited this long to hold elections, the government should wait until the conditions are right even if this means further delays (Jeune Afrique 2019b).

#### *Mali*

Ahead of the March 2020 elections, the opposition Front pour le Sauvegarde de la Démocratie (FSD) coalition argued that the National Security and Defence Forces were not adequately equipped to provide security during the elections (Maliweb 2020). The FSD's argument on security was supported by a January 2020 report by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, which noted that the 'security and protection environment for civilians remains alarming in all the regions covered by the monitoring'. The elections were held in the absence of the opposition leader, Soumaila Cisse, who was abducted while campaigning in central Mali (Al Jazeera 2020b). Around 200,000 people displaced by violence in the central and northern regions were unable to vote as no arrangements were put in place for them to do so (France24 2020).

#### *Burkina Faso*

There has been significant concern over how the lack of security will affect the conduct of the 2020 presidential election in Burkina Faso. Polling stations are thought to be vulnerable to attack. While CENI has stated its commitment to holding the elections in the most difficult locations, the President of the National Assembly has stated that 'if the security situation keeps deteriorating, in the name of God there won't be an election', suggesting that there are doubts even within the government (Centre for Democracy and Development 2020).

### Observable indicators

1. The level of public trust in the security sector.
2. The level of accountability among SSAs.
3. The existence of training plans for SSAs deployed to safeguard electoral processes.
4. The existence and quality of electoral security operational plans.
5. The level of collaboration between SSAs and other electoral actors, particularly the EMB.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct periodic surveys among men and women in the population and electoral actors to measure the level of trust in SSAs. Chart data to observe changing trends. Use maps to indicate geographic areas where trust in the SSAs is low.
- Assess and evaluate the comprehensiveness and quality of electoral security training plans for SSAs and electoral officials at the national and subnational levels. Map possible gaps.
- Conduct an expert review of the adequacy of electoral security operational plans, including of designated resources. Cross-check with the EMB's operational plans. Use charts to compare the level of security engagement (e.g. timing and number of security personnel involved) with the level of electoral activities (e.g. number of operating electoral facilities such as voter registration centres or polling stations, and the level of expected citizen participation in the respective events) throughout the entire electoral process. Use maps to highlight regions where the level of security planning does not correspond with the dimension of electoral activity or the availability of security resources.
- Consider relevant experiences from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## Phase III: Training and education

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Training and education efforts are conventionally focused on training for electoral officials on the technical aspects of preparation for and implementation of electoral processes; and educational campaigns for registrants and voters about their rights and duties, electoral timelines, and registration and voting procedures.

Deficiencies in the training of electoral officials, as well as any misunderstanding of electoral processes or misperceptions among political actors, the media and the general public, can increase tensions and contribute to the deepening of conflict and lead to outbreaks of violence.

### 8. Poor training for election officials

#### Introduction

One of the main pillars of professionalism in electoral administration is the proper training and development of permanent EMB staff, temporary management staff appointed for specific electoral events and the large number of field staff that can be temporarily engaged for large-scale events (Wall et al. 2006: 157).

Poorly trained electoral officials will lack the basic understanding and skills to conduct professional voter registration, voting and counting processes. Technical mistakes that take place during voter registration will affect the accuracy of the electoral registers, thereby damaging the integrity of the voting processes at polling stations, and therefore the election results.

#### Empirical case

##### *Chad*

The AU election observer mission report on the 2016 Chadian presidential election noted the lack of trained election staff. It states that their failure to wear uniforms made them difficult to identify, and that they did not show ‘great mastery’ of election practices—and the procedures for counting votes in particular. The latter situation was exacerbated by poor lighting and the lack of vote counting equipment in certain polling stations which led to delays in the announcement of results (African Union 2016).

#### Observable indicators

1. The existence and comprehensiveness of operational plans for the training of electoral officials.

2. The existence and quality of training materials.
3. The existence of sufficient numbers of training personnel.
4. The level of skill of training providers.
5. The degree to which the national training programme has been completed.
6. The level of understanding and skills obtained from the training.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Compile training plans for electoral officials. Use maps to indicate the regions that lack adequate plans. Assess the extent to which men and women are represented in the training.
- Conduct an expert review of the training methodology and curriculum. Map regions where the training methodology and curriculum might need to be reassessed in order to overcome language and other barriers. Canvass the extent to which skills are maintained and institutionalized within EMBs.
- Follow up on the pace of training efforts and the scale of outreach. Chart levels/percentages of training implementation. Map the regions where training is not meeting deadlines.
- Survey trained electoral officials. Chart any particular topics where trained personnel show a lack of understanding. Map the regions where training should be repeated.

## 9. Lack of training for political parties and media

### Introduction

Elections are high-stakes processes for the political parties competing for popular support and political power. During all phases of an electoral process, the role of the media is central in facilitating information sharing, in profiling both women and men as candidates, and in supporting balanced discussions on electoral issues.

If politicians and journalists lack a basic understanding of the technical aspects of electoral processes—including various procedures, and decision-making and electoral dispute resolution (EDR) mechanisms—their actions might cause tensions and lead to outbreaks of violence. The media has a responsibility to report rather than make the news. When this is ignored this can also exacerbate tensions and even cause violence.

### Empirical case

#### *Mali*

Media Landscapes, an independent evaluator of media quality, has adjudged the quality of information that goes out during Malian elections to be low. It attributes this low quality to, among other things, the low level of training and qualifications of journalists—more than 90 per cent of active journalists did not graduate from journalism school but learned on the job. As a result, many do not observe the extant code of ethics and often send out unverified information. In addition, the lack of advertising and subscription revenues makes the Malian media particularly susceptible to undue political influence, as politicians dictate journalistic output by providing much needed finance. Print and audio-visual media often carry out

smear campaigns on behalf of politicians, directly stoking electoral tensions (Media Landscapes n.d.).

### Observable indicators

1. There are electoral processes-related training programmes for political parties and media that integrate gender issues.
2. The level of implementation of training programmes for political parties and the media.
3. The level of understanding among political parties and the media of various aspects of electoral processes, such as the codes of conduct regulating the behaviour of politicians and journalists, decision making, dispute resolution mechanisms and gender issues.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Map election coverage by leading media entities to identify which stories and candidates receive the most coverage.
- Review how gender and issues are covered and what the priorities of the people are.
- Review training plans for political parties and the media. Use maps to identify regions where such training is insufficient or does not take place.
- Conduct an expert review of the training methodology and curriculum. Map regions where the training methodology and curriculum might need to be reassessed to overcome language and other barriers.
- Follow up on the pace of training efforts and the scale of outreach. Chart level/percentage of training implementation. Identify the political parties and media stakeholders that have not received training. Generate maps to indicate the number of politicians and journalists trained.
- Follow up to show how journalists are using the training by monitoring their output.
- Survey relevant political party and media stakeholders on their understanding of electoral processes and media ethics. Chart the particular topics for which a lack of understanding is demonstrated. Map the regions where training should be repeated or reformulated.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 10. Lack of training of security sector agencies

### Introduction

The UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Philip Alston, has argued that one of the most frequent types of electoral violence is that engaged in by state agents against demonstrators in election-related public gatherings or protests (Alston 2010). Apart from the violent acts perpetrated by politically biased police, most abuses occur because police officers are not aware of their responsibilities in the electoral process or of the electoral legislation or other laws involved in the process, such as regulations concerning the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and public protest. In many cases, violent policing of election rallies and demonstrations occurs because ‘the police lack the appropriate use of

force guidelines, training, experience and equipment to control the crowd lawfully and appropriately’ (Alston 2010: 16).

### Empirical cases

#### *Chad*

In 2016, the sons of senior Chadian officials allegedly gang-raped the daughter of an electoral candidate (BTI 2018a). This led to mass demonstrations against the President and the impunity of the political elite more broadly. A demonstration on 15 February 2017 was violently broken up by the police and a high school student was killed. Four days later another demonstrator was killed and 17 others were arrested and tortured, according to the Chadian Convention for Human Rights. On 22 February, soldiers responding to further demonstrations opened fire, killing another demonstrator (Refworld 2016).

#### *Mali*

In Mali in 2018, protesters took to the streets to call for transparent presidential elections. The security forces shot at protesters and hospitalized 30 people, including a prominent opposition member who was left in a coma. During the same period, police beat protesters with batons to disperse a protest held outside the party headquarters of the Malian President (France24 2018).

### Observable indicators

1. The existence of training programmes on electoral processes for law enforcement officials, including the integration of gender-awareness training.
2. The level of implementation of training programmes for both male and female law enforcement officials.
3. The level of law enforcement officials’ understanding of different aspects of electoral processes, including electoral procedures, electoral campaigning methodologies, rights and dispute resolution mechanisms.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Fact finding about specialized electoral training programmes for security sector personnel and the scope of the training (geographic and hierarchical). Use charts to compare the level and completion rates of training in different regions. Use maps to show regions where the training process is inadequate.
- Fact finding or joint events involving information sharing, discussion and consultation between SSAs and other actors in electoral processes. Use maps to show regions where the lack of information sharing is notable.
- Survey relevant law enforcement agencies and officials on their understanding of electoral processes and their role in them. Chart particular topics in which relevant officials demonstrate a lack of understanding. Map the regions where training should be repeated.
- Consider relevant experiences from past elections, including from a gender perspective.



## 11. A poor voter information campaign

### Introduction

A voter information campaign is an effort organized by the relevant EMB to provide the basic information required to enable citizens to participate in elections as candidates and as voters. Such information often includes eligibility requirements and timelines, and the location of and procedures for registration and voting.

Voter information campaigns can be unclear or badly timed and fail to reach all citizens, especially marginalized groups such as women and the elderly (men and women) in rural areas. In most societies of the world, the unequal distribution of power between women and men disadvantages women's access to information. As a consequence, voters might lack clarity about the eligibility criteria for voter registration, the identification documents required, the designated voting location, the voting procedure and so on. Poorly informed citizens could slow down or disrupt electoral processes.

### Empirical case

#### *Mali*

According to European election monitors, some figures took advantage of the poor levels of voter information and security to establish fake polling stations during the 2018 presidential elections (VOA News 2018a). One opposition candidate estimated the number of fake polling stations to be in the hundreds. He also alleged the existence of two electoral lists (New vision 2018).

### Observable indicators

1. The appropriateness of the timing of a voter information campaign.
2. The geographic scope of the voter information campaign.
3. The level of diversity of voter information literature.
4. The quality and social sensitivity of the voter information campaign.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Assess the timelines for voter information and education. Chart the timelines of different electoral activities; observe overlaps and the extent to which the design of the voter information campaign meets the objectives.
- Analyse the geographic coverage of the voter information campaign and its capacity to reach all social groups. Take account of sex, age, ethnicity, language and religion. Consider voters with special needs, such as the disabled. Map the coverage of all media used to convey information, including social media. Identify geographic areas or groups that remain out of reach or have been excluded from the campaign.
- Conduct surveys among recipient and excluded groups to measure the effects of the voter information campaign and the level of understanding of campaign messages among citizens. Chart the extent to which information has reached and been understood by different social groups. Map reach and understanding across different geographic regions.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## Phase IV: Registration

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Electoral processes encompass three types of registration:

1. Voter registration—the process of verifying a citizen’s eligibility to vote.
2. The registration of political parties and candidates—verification of the eligibility of political parties and candidates to stand in an election.
3. Observers’ accreditation—a procedure designed to grant different actors access to observe relevant electoral activities.

All three can have an impact on the credibility and integrity of electoral processes and therefore represent contributory factors to election-related tension and violence.

### 12. Problematic voter registration

#### Introduction

Voter registration establishes the eligibility of individuals to cast their ballot on election day. As a general rule, eligibility to vote is a precondition for the registration of candidates. Voter registration is a technically complex and sensitive process. Voters with multiple registrations, electoral registers that contain the names of deceased or non-existent people, rejected voter registrations, incorrect assignment of a voter to the proper polling station and other factors all have the potential to influence electoral outcomes. All the political actors competing in elections will therefore be very concerned about the quality of voter registration. Manipulation of voter registration, or perceptions that this has happened, can trigger or contribute to triggering election-related violence.

#### Empirical cases

##### *Chad*

The distribution of voter cards during the 2016 elections in Chad has been described as chaotic. The cards arrived from the supplier arranged in alphabetical order, but they were distributed in no particular order and without the use of biometric identification (Debos 2016). In addition, opposition parties claimed that the list required auditing as a number of minors and refugees, as well as a high number of ‘people identified as fingerless’ featured on the list (Makaila 2015).

### Burkina Faso

Up to 1,500,000 people were expected to register for the 2020 Burkina Faso elections but the president of the CENI expressed dissatisfaction with the actual number of around 400,000. Several reasons were given for this low level of enrolment: it was difficult to access remote areas, the low level of security deterred the distribution of registration kits in conflict-affected regions and a coalition of civil society groups monitoring enrolment noted that some kits were stolen in an attack (Wakatsera 2020). There was also little awareness of the electoral process, to the extent that the CENI began to rely on political parties to get information out to hard-to-reach areas (Infowakat 2020). Uncertainty about the registration of IDPs was a further complicating factor (Wakatsera 2020).

### Observable indicators

1. The level and quality of performance at voter registration centres.
2. Turnout data, disaggregated by sex.
3. The level of reliability and performance of voter registration technology.
4. The collection of voters' cards.
5. The number of successful registrants versus the number of rejected applications.
6. The appropriateness and the level of actors' understanding of complaint procedures.
7. The existence of a period for the scrutiny of provisional electoral registers.
8. The number of complaints from both men and women related to the voter registration process.
9. The location and number of violent incidents related to voter registration processes.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct periodic surveys with political parties, civil society organizations and citizens regarding their perceptions of the quality of the ongoing registration process. Obtain their views with respect to the extent to which the quality of registration can/will predetermine electoral outcomes. Chart feedback to monitor level of risk and changing attitudes. Show level of confidence among different political opinions, civil society organizations and citizens. Map areas where voter registration is perceived to be problematic.
- Check the availability of provisional voter registers and the efficiency of complaint procedures. Map areas where provisional voter registers are not made available.
- Review voter registration logs, records of registration-related appeals at the relevant appeal bodies and the dynamics of case resolution. Chart the number of complaints by region. Create maps indicating the number of complaints by region. Colour code the maps accordingly.
- Collect data on incidents involving increased tensions and violence related to registration processes. Colour code risk by region accordingly. Place static markers at the locations where incidents took place. Map the number of incidents per region.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 13. Problematic registration of political parties and candidates

### Introduction

Political parties exist outside of the electoral context but compete in elections. They must usually be registered with the body in charge of conducting elections. Basic registration requirements might include providing information on party identity, documentation of their political programmes, and evidence of popular support, geographic coverage and financial viability. Basic registration requirements for a political party's candidates might include proof of eligibility to vote in a given electoral district and additional information such as financial statements.

However, registration requirements can be used as a way of excluding groups or individuals from the electoral competition and from participation in power sharing. Exclusion from electoral processes through the denial of registration can provide incentives to excluded groups to turn to violent means in pursuit of their political interests. In many situations, psychological and physical violence are used to prevent candidates from standing for elections.

### Empirical case

#### Mauritania

The ruling party, Union for the Republic (UPR), has repeatedly blocked the registration of the Initiative for the Resurgence of the Abolitionist Movement (IRA) as a political party. The IRA is led by Biram Dah Abeid, who was runner-up in the 2019 presidential election standing as an independent candidate (Sipri 2019). The UPR has denied registration to activist parties such as the IRA, which opposes racial discrimination (Freedom House 2019).

### Observable indicators

1. The level of difficulty associated with meeting the requirements for party and candidate registration, including:
  1. *legal* (prior registration as a political organization, candidate registration, country of birth, signed statements and so on);
  2. *financial* (registration deposits, fees, financial declarations and so on);
  3. *logistical* (timelines, location where registration can take place and so on); and
  4. *gender* (if there are no provisions on gender representation on party lists, this will restrict gender parity in terms of participation and representation in elected bodies).
2. The geographic and social representativeness and inclusiveness of political parties.
3. The number of incidents involving physical and psychological violence against prospective party candidates, disaggregated by sex, during primaries and the registration period.
4. The number of successful party registrations/number of rejected registrations.
5. The number of small parties (e.g. satellite or briefcase parties) in coalition with the ruling party (or main opposition party) that dilute the electoral landscape and erode opponents' potential.

6. The number of complaints received and processed related to party and candidate registration.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct an expert review of the legal framework for the registration of political parties and candidates, and analyse the impact of this framework. Map particular regions where party registration requirements might disqualify particular political, socio-economic or geographic groups such as women and young people from political competitions.
- Review party and candidate registration logs, records of registration-related appeals and the dynamics of case resolution. Chart the number of internal political party complaints submitted by candidates and show by geographic region. Chart the number of complaints by parties to their registration systems and show by geographic region. Use maps to highlight areas where political parties have been denied registration.
- Gather data on violent incidents during primaries and throughout the registration period. Colour code regions according to risk. Place static markers at the locations where incidents took place. Map the number of incidents per region.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 14. Problematic accreditation of domestic and international observers

### Introduction

Domestic and international observers often confer legitimacy on an election and can safeguard against electoral fraud. It is very common for the public to place a great deal of trust in their findings.

However, authoritarian regimes will tend to limit the presence of international observers and deny registration to domestic observation groups. In the case of domestic observation, regimes might also resort to intimidation in an effort to influence their reporting. Problematic accreditation can be perceived as part of preparations to rig the electoral results, which contributes to increased tensions and increases the likelihood of rejection of the results or outbreaks of violence (ACE Electoral Knowledge Network 2012).

### Empirical case

#### *Mauritania*

The ruling UPR rejected opposition requests for international observers to travel to Mauritania during the 2019 elections. This led opposition parties to speak of ‘worrying signs’, warn of potential fraud and accuse the CENI of bias (Al Jazeera 2019). Election observation, either national or international, did not exist in Mauritania before 2006. There was no framework for the conduct or accreditation of observers. The first national organizations to observe elections were the National Observatory of Elections (ONE); the Initiative for Promotion of Citizenship Education and Political Dialogue (IPCD); the Study and Research Group on Democracy, Economy and Social Development in Africa (GERDDES–Africa); and the Cyber-Forum, all of which monitored the 2007 elections (Trans-Saharan Elections Project n.d.c).

The Arab League, the AU, Organization of La Francophonie (OIF) and the Organization of the Islamic Congress (OIC) were invited to observe the 2009 elections. In an official statement, these groups praised the conduct of the polls while citing some irregularities that they claimed had not affected the overall outcome (Amadou and Collins 2009).

### Observable indicators

1. The level of difficulty associated with accrediting domestic and international observers.
2. The number of accreditations rejected and potential geographic focuses (data disaggregated by sex).
3. The number of complaints related to rejected observations.
4. The number of incidents of intimidation reported by observers.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct an expert review of the legal framework for accreditation of domestic and international observers.
- Identify groups and organizations that are denied access to observe. If geographically specific, map. Wherever possible, show the data disaggregated by sex.
- Conduct interviews with national and international observation organizations on their views about the accreditation process. Obtain numbers of deployed observers, events observed and geographic coverage. Use maps to highlight the areas of observer deployment. Identify potential gaps.
- Survey citizens in relation to the level of trust in different electoral observation groups. Chart the level of popular trust. Generate maps to present the data.
- Review past or real-time reports and materials published by international and domestic observers in relation to intimidation. If region-specific, use maps to highlight the region(s) and specific locations where observers were intimidated.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## Phase V: Electoral campaign

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Political parties use the electoral campaign period to promote their political programmes and interrogate the political views of others. Campaigning allows citizens to gain a better understanding of the various political options and to decide who to vote for. During the campaign period, political parties will use different strategies to reach voters and seek their support. They will organize political rallies and parades, and distribute promotional material and media advertisements to increase their profile and visibility. Media appearances are particularly important as it is well established that media debates are important vehicles for winning popular support.

Unequal media access, especially between women and men and between ruling and opposition political parties; provocative media messages and appearances; and aggressive campaigning and actions have led to outbreaks of election-related violence, including gender-based violence, in many different contexts.

### 15. Unequal media access and favouritism

#### Introduction

Political parties use different media during electoral campaigns to promote their messages and appeal for popular support. The traditional media, which comprise radio, television and the print media, have dominated the space but social media are fast becoming an important platform.

Favouritism towards incumbent candidates and political parties on the part of state-owned media—in terms of biased reporting, gender discrimination in the coverage and reporting, media time, discrimination against political opponents and unethical/inaccurate reporting—is often a factor in increased tensions. Private sector media might adopt the same practices to champion their favourite candidates and become political agitators instead of campaign facilitators. Such scenarios can increase tensions and fuel election-related violence directed at political opponents and journalists. Incumbents have also resorted to shutting down the Internet during elections.

#### Empirical cases

##### *Mali*

As early as 10 months prior to the 2018 presidential elections, the ruling party weaponized the Malian public sector channels and state television to broadcast propaganda for President Keita. They sought to magnify the President's positive work and ignore his failures (Malijet 2017b). The Governor of the District of Bamako ordered the closure of *Renouveau FM* on

2 August 2018 on the grounds of incitement to revolt and to hatred. In justifying the closure, the governor claimed that the aim was to preserve ‘public order and tranquillity in the district of Bamako’. The closure was justified after comments made by an opposition activist, Youssouf Mohamed Bathily, which denounced ‘jams in ballot boxes’ and questioned the capacity of the state to ensure security (VOA Afrique 2018).

There was also an effort to limit Malians’ access to the Internet during the presidential elections. Technical restrictions were introduced to prevent the use of virtual private networks and social networks on the eve of the presidential run-off (Internet Sans Frontieres n.d.).

### Chad

Following approval of a constitutional amendment in March 2018 that allowed Idris Déby, the 66-year-old incumbent President, to remain in power until 2033, access to sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Viber were blocked by the telecom companies Tigo and Airtel on government orders. The shutdown lasted for 16 months (Africanews 2019b). The same approach had been used previously in the aftermath of the 2016 elections, when Internet access was limited for eight months (News24 2016).

### Observable indicators

1. The existence of and the quality of the provisions in a code of conduct for the media, both state and privately owned, during electoral campaigning.
2. The operationalization of the provisions in the media code of conduct.
3. The existence of mechanisms to ensure equal media access for all political parties during the campaign period.
4. The level of gender sensitivity in media reporting and coverage.
5. The level of equality in terms of time allocated and the impartiality of the reporting.
6. Monitoring of media content, directly or through third-party reports.
7. The number of complaints received by electoral dispute resolution bodies related to unequal media access and favouritism.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Identify all existing bodies and methodologies for monitoring the media, including from a gender perspective. Map the coverage and identify any potential gaps.
- Identify the relevant legal framework for regulating broader media conduct, and specific documents or provisions for regulating media access during the campaign period. Observe their implementation directly or in partnership with existing media monitoring bodies and organizations. Chart violations of the relevant accessibility rules over time. Generate maps to indicate regions where violations occur more frequently and the media involved.
- Review official complaints during the electoral campaign related to equal access to the media not only across political parties, but also between women and men. Chart the number of complaints related to individual media. Map the geographic spread of complaints and identify whether they are made by particular political or socio-demographic/minority groups.



- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 16. Provocative use of media by political parties

### Introduction

Media campaigning traditionally provides a unique space for different political entities to confront the political views of their opponents. In all contexts, including well-established and transitional democracies, political debates facilitated by the media are essential for informing voters of policy options and winning voters' support.

Although envisaged as a platform for issues-based discussion and confronting political arguments, media campaigning can often become a campaign of derogation and hate speech. In many societies, insults aimed at women in politics tend to focus on undermining their capacity as leaders, as opposed to men who are assumed to be born leaders. Political parties sometimes abuse campaign opportunities and access to the media to disseminate false statements, and to create imaginary threats and a feeling of insecurity in order to mobilize support. Such campaigning has often led to violent outcomes.

### Empirical cases

#### *Burkina Faso*

In the lead-up to the 2020 Burkina Faso elections, political parties have offered interpretations of the insecurity in the country that suit their political goals. For example, in a press statement on the killing of 43 civilians in Yatenga, two political parties denounced the descriptions of the killer and the victims in the media and offered their own unsubstantiated interpretations. They noted that although the government has said that the crime had been perpetrated by unidentified armed individuals, an independent investigation was needed to verify this. They then attributed the killings to the failure of the government to deal with a similar issue in Yirgou, asserting that the government had left 'the Burkinabe population in the hands of terrorists' (Le Faso 2020).

#### *Mali*

Political communication in the 2018 Mali presidential election revolved around the emotionally charged topics of the jihadist insurgency, poverty, ethnic killings and security force abuses. These interwoven issues were maximized for their own ends by both ruling and opposition parties. Cisse pegged his campaign not just on the challenges, but on highlighting how Malians wanted nothing more to do with the regime. The ruling party, on the other hand, emphasized the need for continuity and improved security (Cocks 2018).

### Observable indicators

1. The extent (geographic and frequency) of provocative media campaigning.
2. The type of media where provocative campaigning is recorded.
3. The type of ownership of media where provocative campaigning is recorded.
4. The political actors involved in provocative media campaigning.
5. The content of provocative messages, including gender stereotypes and sexist messages.

## Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Conduct extensive media monitoring or establish cooperation with media monitoring agencies and organizations to obtain data about provocative media campaigning by political parties. Use charts and maps to observe trends and highlight the geographic dimension of provocative campaigning.
- Identify the actors engaged in provocative campaigning in terms of their political affiliation, place in the party hierarchy, gender and geographic influence. Use maps and charts to present data.
- Assess the seriousness of incidents and identify their capacity to increase the risk of election-related violence. Use charts to observe risk trends and maps to highlight the most critical geographic regions.
- Review the records of official appeals related to inappropriate media campaigning by political parties. Examine the efficiency and appropriateness of responses. Chart and map the data.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 17. Provocative party rallying

### Introduction

Political parties organize rallies during the electoral campaign period to reinforce the links between the political leadership, party activists and party supporters. Electoral rallies are also demonstrations of strength, unity and power.

In conflict-prone societies where political divides often correspond with social divides and gender discrimination, election rallies can represent high-risk events. The disposition of the crowd, inflammatory rhetoric and hate speech can inspire violent reactions, regardless of whether this was the organizers' intention. In addition, actions taken to limit, obstruct or prevent competitors from holding political rallies can trigger violent reactions.

### Empirical case

#### Niger

In the 2016 Niger presidential elections, the Democratic Movement for an African Federation (Mouvement démocratique nigérien pour une fédération Africain, MODEN) political party campaigned on behalf of its presidential candidate, the former Speaker of the Parliament, Hama Amadou, and incited participants to resist—including by violent means—the impending vote, which it perceived as non-inclusive. Amadou was in custody facing charges of baby trafficking. Amadou's party had campaigned previously in 2014 while its leader was in Filingue prison. During a rally in Niamey, over 10,000 of Amadou's supporters are reported to have clashed with the security forces. The rally was for the 14 other candidates—including Mahamadou Issoufo, the incumbent, and the leading opposition leader, Seini Oumarou—to speak out against violence against political opponents (OSIWA n.d.).

### Observable indicators

1. The scope of political party rallies (political parties, events, location, frequency).

2. The number of prohibitions on party rallies by the relevant authorities.
3. The effectiveness of the security arrangements put in place to prevent campaign-related violence.
4. The extent of the use of inflammatory language, gender stereotyping and hate speech.
5. The number of violent incidents or clashes following political rallies.
6. The political actors involved.
7. The number of victims, disaggregated by sex.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Collect data about planned and scheduled party rallies from the authorities responsible for approving them at different levels. Cross-check with the data from the respective political actors. Use charts to show the dynamics of events throughout the campaign period. Use maps to mark the geographic locations where political rallies take place. Identify high-risk events. Use different sizes for markers in order to identify the size and scope of the various events.
- Obtain information on and analyse the security sector arrangements for political party rallies. Assess whether the size of the security deployment corresponds with the size of the event and whether it sufficiently reflects the risks associated with the event. Use maps to mark the size of security deployment and cross-check with the maps showing the size and risk of political rallies.
- Monitor or liaise with monitoring networks to obtain records of inflammatory rhetoric, gender stereotyping and hate speech at party rallies.
- Record incidents linked with political party campaigning during or after party rallies, including perpetrators and information about the victims, disaggregated by sex. Obtain official police reports and media reports, deploy fact finding, establish hotlines and use crowdsourcing platforms. Use maps to pinpoint related incidents. Cross-check with other data. Use markers of different sizes to reflect the different scale of incidents.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 18. Provocative and violent actions by political parties

### Introduction

Electoral processes are supposed to offer a level playing field in which the success of a political party is determined by the quality of its electoral manifesto. In reality, election campaigning and party actions go beyond political rhetoric. In some contexts, political actors resort to different forms of psychological and physical violence to ensure that their electoral success is secured prior to election day. Most of these activities take place during the campaign period, and involve aggressive party activists, recruited thugs or members of party militias committing acts of harassment, intimidation or assault, as well as the destruction of property, violence against women and girls, and even political assassinations. Such actions are directed against political opponents, their supporters and journalists. These scenarios are particularly dangerous as a single provocative or violent act can trigger responses that start a vicious circle.

## Empirical cases

### *Burkina Faso*

The International Crisis Group has raised concerns that both the government and opposition groups might seek to make alliances with vigilante groups to intimidate voters ahead of the 2020 vote (International Crisis Group 2020). In the 2016 elections, the selection process for mayors of municipal councils was marred by clashes between party activists, which resulted in three deaths and many injuries in Karangasso and Kantchari (US Department of State 2017). The state apparatus could have prevented such violence but was paralysed by the newly elected government's reluctance to act against its own supporters (Alihodzic and Matatu 2019).

### *Mauritania*

In 2018, the ruling party under former president Abdel Aziz allegedly masterminded a wave of suppression of political opponents and independent media outlets. Biram Dah Abeid, the president of the IRA and a former presidential candidate, was arrested, as were the online journalists Babacar Ndiaye and Mahmoudi Ould Saibout. The journalists had posted an article critical of the crackdown and of a lawyer close to the Mauritanian Government (Amnesty International 2018).

## Observable indicators

1. Incidents of intimidation, threat, destruction of property, physical harm, kidnapping and assassination, as well as any other violent act committed against electoral actors, journalists, voter registration officials and voters.
2. Psychological and physical violence directed against vulnerable social groups, such as women, children, ethnic and religious minorities, during the election period.
3. The extent to which the perpetrators of violence associated with political parties are prosecuted.

## Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Obtain official information about incidents of election-related violence. Make use of police reports, media reports and civil society network reporting; engage in fact finding; establish hotlines; and use crowdsourcing technology. Use maps to highlight the various geographic locations where incidents take place. Distinguish between the perpetrators and the victims, including victim subgroups. Chart and publicize trends in election-related violence, including gender-based violence, over time.
- Obtain information on the number of judicial processes against individuals or groups associated with political parties that committed provocative or violent actions. Compare with the number of incidents obtained by the police, human rights activists, observer networks and the media. Indicate any discrepancies. Map the regions that are most affected by the problem.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## Phase VI: Voting operations and election day

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Voting operations will in most cases include logistical preparations for election day, the conduct of special and regular voting, the vote counting and the tallying of the result. Critical aspects of voting operations will include logistics and security linked to the handling of electoral materials, the integrity and transparency of special and external (out-of-country) voting, real or perceived problems with the integrity of voting on election day, and the technical accuracy and credibility of the counting and result tallying. If technical operations are executed poorly or in a way that might create the perception that there has been manipulation or rigging of the result, the reaction can be violent.

### 19. Insufficiency, destruction and loss of sensitive or non-sensitive materials

#### Introduction

EMBs are responsible for ensuring that election day runs smoothly. An important precondition for successful voting is proper logistical arrangements. This involves the timely and sufficient provision of sensitive and non-sensitive materials to all polling locations and ensuring that these materials are protected at all times.

Failures or delays in supplying essential electoral materials, poor security or lack of transparency in the handling of them, before or after voting and counting, can have a negative impact on perceptions of the credibility and integrity of elections, and lead to a rejection of election results (ACE Electoral Knowledge Network n.d.). This can trigger or contribute to triggering election-related violence.

#### Empirical cases

##### Mali

During the 2018 presidential elections, there were delays with the arrival of election materials. In addition, voting could not take place in over 700 polling stations in northern and central Mali due to attacks or threats of violence (VOA News 2018b). In Timbuktu, Kidal and Mopti, several incidents of violence prevented people from casting their votes. In the village of Lafia, in the northern Timbuktu region, ballot boxes and electoral materials were set on fire by jihadists who claimed that ‘God does not like elections’ (DW 2018). Overall, 20 per cent of polling stations were affected by violent disruption and 3 per cent were closed altogether (Freedom House 2019). There were reports of attacks on election officials (RFI 2018). The run-off elections held in August were also marred by violence. As a result, figures provided by the CENI estimated that 200,000 of the 8 million registered

voters were unable to vote in the first round and 100,000 were similarly disenfranchised in the second round.

The long-awaited parliamentary elections of March 2020 were also marred by kidnappings, the disruption of polling stations and roadside bomb attacks as voters elected new parliamentarians (Al Jazeera 2020a). The local election observer group, the Coalition for Citizen Election Observation in Mali (COCEM), noted ‘the kidnapping of electoral workers and observers in some areas’ and that: ‘In other areas, voters were prevented from voting because the ballot boxes were taken away’ (AllAfrica 2020b).

### *Niger*

In the prelude to the Niger presidential elections, controversy followed the discovery of 20,800 thumb-printed ballot papers in favour of the opposition candidate, Hama Amadou. There were suspicions that Amadou, who was a former president of the National Assembly, had organized the ballot box stuffing (Jeune Afrique 2016). However, his party claimed that the ballots were just specimens used to conduct civic education and invited the customs to remove and destroy the specimen ballots.

### *Observable indicators*

1. A sufficient quantity of electoral materials has been produced.
2. The appropriateness of the timing of the dissemination of non-sensitive and sensitive materials.
3. The level of security of transport and for storage premises.
4. The level of engagement of the SSAs.

### *Methodology for data gathering and analysis*

- Verify the feasibility of the plans for the production and dissemination of electoral materials as set by the EMB. Use maps to indicate transport and dissemination routes. Analyse the appropriateness of designated resources, and the timelines for production and dissemination. Map critical regions, transport routes and storage facilities. Use colour codes, numbers and static markers to combine and present the different layers of geospatial data.
- Survey the level of confidence in logistical preparations for voting operations among political actors, civil society organizations and the broad electorate. Map geographic areas of concern.
- Assess and evaluate the preparedness and performance of the SSAs responsible for securing electoral materials. Map locations, such as EMB offices and storage facilities, where security was provided/not provided. Use different markers to highlight locations of concern.
- Review the relevant appeal records for historical complaints.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 20. Lack of transparency for special and external voting

### Introduction

Special and out-of-country voting are options for voters who cannot attend regular polling stations on election day. Such voters might be institutionalized or housebound, refugees, diplomatic or military personnel or living abroad. Arrangements are made to allow them to vote either at special locations on a special day or series of days prior to voting day, or at mobile polling stations on election day. Votes can be cast in person or by post (Ellis et al. 2007).

Organizing voting for external populations is more complex than organizing in-country polling and taking on this logistical and financial burden in a challenging environment, especially in the context of a post-conflict election, is rarely without risks. A large external population could change the outcome of an election, which might not be politically acceptable to the general population (Goldsmith n.d.). Moreover, due to complexities associated with special and external voting, political actors or independent observers might not be in a position to independently verify its integrity. All these issues can become contested in a close election.

### Empirical case

#### *Mali*

Leading up to the Malian presidential elections of 2018, a former vice-president of the National Assembly argued that the government did not take any measures to register Malian refugees on electoral lists. The president of an opposition party at the same event noted that Malians living abroad faced significant difficulties obtaining their registration files and their national identity cards (Malijet 2017a).

### Observable indicators

1. The number of special and external voters registered.
2. The effectiveness of the systems in place to manage external voting.
3. The number of special voters casting ballots.
4. The number of political, civil society and international observers accredited to observe special and external voting.
5. The level of citizens' and observers' trust in special and external voting.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Monitor voter registration in relation the number of special voters, and of external voters who vote in person and those voting by post. Use charts to show the data disaggregated by sex. Use a world map to highlight states and cities where external voting is organized. Indicate where observers are accredited to observe these processes.
- Conduct expert analysis to understand the extent to which external votes might influence the distribution of power in a state. Map the regions affected.
- Identify the regions where some or all of the activities associated with special and external voting cannot be independently verified. Map these regions.



- Survey political actors' and citizens' confidence in and general views on special and external voting. Chart the levels of trust of different actors and in different regions. Map areas of concern and disaggregate the views of women and men.
- Obtain information about special and mobile voting. Map the locations visited and travel routes. Indicate on a map whether some of these events might face increased security risks.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 21. Problematic election day operations

### Introduction

Election day operations are designed to facilitate the process of casting a ballot by all eligible voters. The level of participation and time constraints make election day operations highly complex. In many of the G5 countries, more than half the population will exercise their democratic rights on election day. This process must be managed by a large number of male and female electoral management officials and SSA personnel. Political parties, civil society groups and international organizations provide a presence in electoral facilities across the country to scrutinize and testify to the integrity of the voting process.

Any problems and irregularities that occur on election day have effects that are difficult to repair afterwards. If the margin of victory is expected to be narrow, even the smallest irregularity or perception of irregularity could spark conflict and violent reactions. Due to the short time in which voting takes place, election day problems might only become apparent in the days following the vote.

### Empirical cases

#### *Chad*

Concerns were raised about ballot stuffing during Chad's 2016 presidential election. The AU mission stated that 10 per cent of the polling stations they visited were failing to guarantee the secrecy of the ballot (African Union 2016).

#### *Niger*

In the 2016 presidential elections, ECOWAS observed that voting commenced in polling stations between 08:40 and 10:40 when polls were scheduled to open at 08:00. This was due to either the late arrival of electoral officials or a lack of election materials. ECOWAS noted disturbances in voting processes and attempts at intimidation in some polling stations in the Diffa region in Ngourti (ECOWAS 2016). Overall, however, ECOWAS concluded that the election was held in a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

### Observable indicators

1. The timely opening of polling stations across all regions.
2. Waiting times at polling stations.
3. The number of complaints relating to the voting process, disaggregated by sex.
4. The number of interventions by EMBs.
5. The number of interventions by the SSAs.
6. The number of violent incidents, disaggregated by sex.



### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Obtain and map information about all the polling stations in the country. Use special symbols or colours to highlight polling stations that face increased risks.
- Obtain continuous, close-to-real-time data from polling stations from the electoral officials or election observers. Mark polling stations that experience problems with opening or with their work.
- Establish hotlines (SMS data crowdsourcing, Ushahidi platform or similar) to obtain information about incidents and irregularities.
- Maintain communications with political actors and map/chart the data obtained.
- Obtain figures on complaints filed at polling stations and with the relevant appeal authorities. Use maps to highlight the geographic regions where complaints were filed. Use different symbols to distinguish between different types of complaint.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 22. Problematic ballot counting and result tallying

### Introduction

Vote counting and the tallying of results are activities that are particularly sensitive and vulnerable to abuse and manipulation. They usually follow immediately after the polling stations close. Vote counting and result tallying are highly complex processes and prone to human error. They are also prone to political manipulation in order to favour a particular candidate or party, even when done electronically. If political actors, civil society organizations and international observers are obstructed in their work, suspicions will arise to the point where this can deepen conflicts and lead to violence.

### Empirical case

#### *Chad*

During the 2016 presidential elections, representatives of opposition candidates pulled out of the counting process, saying that they refused to endorse the forgery being implemented by the CENI, which they alleged was violating the electoral code. They claimed that while they were allowed to enter the data entry and control room, they could not question the officers or take notes. Furthermore, they claimed that they were unable to use mobile phones while ruling party officials could use theirs freely (VOA News 2016).

### Observable indicators

1. The number and locations where the counting process is delayed.
2. The number and type of challenges to the vote counting and result tallying processes.
3. The number of discrepancies between the number of voters who voted and the number of ballot papers counted.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Obtain close-to-real-time reports from the counting locations from electoral officials or election observers. Map progress and record delays. Distinguish between regular and disputed counting operations. Change the colour of a polling station marker once results have been processed.
- Maintain contact with political party liaison officers and observer groups. Establish hotlines using SMS data crowdsourcing platforms.
- Collect data about formal challenges relating to vote counting and tallying. Generate a map that presents numbers by region. Colour code the map accordingly.
- Collect data on election-related incidents that do not take place at the counting locations. Map incidents and analyse risks.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## Phase VII: Verification of results

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The body responsible for the conduct of elections is usually responsible for announcing the final election results. The preliminary results provide good indicators of electoral outcomes and the distribution of political power for the next political term of office.

For an incumbent, admitting defeat and handing over political power to an opponent is a difficult decision. Political leaders who are disappointed with the initial figures will often feel strong incentives to use all available means to challenge the election results or interpret them in their favour.

Inconsistencies, delays and lack of transparency on the part of the bodies in charge of the management of electoral appeals and announcing results will create greater scope for such challenges. Where elections are zero-sum competitions, political parties might pursue political gains by resorting to violence.

### 23. Poor management of election results

#### Introduction

EMBs are responsible for the compilation of election results from the field, reconciliation of results at the electoral district and central levels, announcement of the preliminary election results and announcement of the final election results.

The imperative is to minimize the time lapse between election day and announcement of the final results. Any unnecessary or unexplained delay will feed suspicions about the integrity of the processing of the results. Whether real or perceived, biased results processing will increase the likelihood of outbreaks of election-related violence.

#### Empirical case

##### *Chad*

The presidential poll was held on 10 April 2016 but the results declaring the incumbent, Idris Déby, the winner were not announced until 22 April (France24 2016). The opposition claimed that hundreds of ballot boxes had disappeared during the counting process (BBC 2016). There was also an online blackout as access to the Internet was cut and mobile phones were unable to send text messages. There were also allegations that around 60 soldiers who voted against Déby later disappeared, a claim that the government denies (France24 2016).

#### Observable indicators

1. Delays in the announcement of election results.

2. The number and location of areas experiencing delays.
3. The reasons provided for delays.
4. The level of trust among political actors in election results management.
5. The level of transparency in the results management at different levels.
6. The existence of mechanisms for relaying visible, accurate and transparent results to the general public.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Use official and observers' data to map the regions, municipalities and polling stations for which election results have been delayed. Change the colour of the static markers denoting the regions as the results are provided.
- Obtain the official reasons for delays and cross-check these with independent observers. Map different categories of problems using static markers and the number of problems using numerical values. Create a bar chart for different categories.
- Interview the relevant political actors, both women and men, about their perceptions of delays in the announcement of election results. Observe increased risks resulting from increased dissatisfaction or mistrust of the process. Generate colour-coded maps to indicate regions where opinions are highly critical.
- Assess the transparency of the management of the election results independently and through observers' perceptions. Map the geographic regions where transparency is unsatisfactory.
- Obtain data on the number and type of complaints relating to the management of election results. Create maps that indicate the number and type of complaints per region.
- Consider relevant experience from past elections, including from a gender perspective.

## 24. Poor management of the final round of electoral appeals

### Introduction

In most cases, electoral dispute resolution mechanisms involve EMBs, administrative bodies and judicial institutions. Their mandates and relative hierarchy differ across different electoral systems.

Any appeal that is not dealt with adequately with a remedy provided can create discontent and might also seriously contribute to a deepening or aggravation of conflict. In an already tense situation, unresolved issues can become a trigger for conflict and an excuse for violence.

### Empirical case

#### *Mauritania*

The result of the 2019 Mauritanian presidential election was hotly contested by opposition parties, which suggested that they had mathematical evidence that, given the polling unit results, President Mohamed Ould Ghazouani could not have won an outright majority in the first round (Jeune Afrique 2019a). On that basis, the opposition filed applications for an annulment by the Constitutional Council. These were summarily dismissed by the Council, which went on to confirm the victory of Ghazouani on the basis of an absolute majority

acquired in the first round (North Africa Post 2019). The opposition responded that the Constitutional Council had ‘ratified the decision of the CENI which [the opposition had] decried with very clear and convincing arguments’. This had the effect of deepening the ‘political crisis’ in Mauritania (RFI 2019c).

#### Observable indicators

1. The number of appeals pending following election day.
2. The number of appeals filed in respect of election day, the counting process and the management of the election results.
3. The number of appeals effectively resolved by the relevant EDR bodies following the elections.
4. The level of satisfaction among political parties in relation to the performance of EDR bodies.

#### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Obtain official records of the appeals submitted during or after election day. Map appeals by geographic region. Distinguish between different categories.
- Obtain official records on appeals management and resolution, and map the geographic regions and bodies that fail to process appeals in a timely manner.
- Interview political actors about their level of satisfaction with the performance and composition of EDR bodies. Map criticized regions and analyse trends.
- Disaggregate and present the data on the basis of sex.

## 25. Rejection of the election results

### Introduction

Rejection of the electoral results is an extreme act that might result from a real or perceived lack of integrity and credibility in the electoral process and its outcome. In broad terms, rejection of the result by a particular party might result in self-exclusion from participation in a democratic institution or process. Such a decision very often leads to protests with violent outcomes involving protestors or the SSAs.

### Empirical case

#### Mauritania

The ruling UPR’s candidate, Mohamed Ould Ghazouani, announced victory just hours after the polls closed in the 2019 election. There were widespread claims of vote rigging in the capital, Nouakchott (RFI 2019b). Opposition candidates released a joint statement rejecting the results even before they had been published in full. In opposition strongholds in Nouakchott, tyres were burned and barricades erected. Up to 800 protestors began a march on the CENI offices before being met by the security forces, which used tear gas to disperse them (BBC 2019). Over 100 people who the UPR government described as ‘foreigners’ were arrested for causing unrest (HRW 2019).

The government detained at least three pro-opposition public figures and two journalists without charge as part of efforts to smother dissent over the outcome of the election. Many

other activists were arrested, and 13 of those arrested were imprisoned for disturbing the peace and damaging public property. The campaign headquarters of three opposition candidates were closed (HRW 2019).

### Observable indicators

1. Analysis of historical data relating to disputes over election results.
2. The number of cases of rejection of, or threats to reject, election results.
3. The number of statements about possible courses of action following the rejection of results.
4. The number of events related to the rejection of election results, such as protests and other gatherings, and the number of participants.
5. The number of incidents of violence perpetrated by protestors.
6. The number of incidents of violence perpetrated by the SSAs.
7. The numbers of victims and the level of damage.

### Methodology for data gathering and analysis

- Obtain data through media monitoring and interviews with political actors related to the circumstances surrounding the rejection of election results. Chart and observe trends in terms of use of inflammatory language and threats of violence.
- Monitor media; use existing networks or crowdsourcing platforms to obtain close-to-real-time reports about non-violent and violent protests and related events. Map all such events across the country. Capture and project data on the size of the event and political patronage.
- Obtain data on violent incidents following protests. Map the level of violence by geographic location; disaggregate the perpetrators and victims on the basis of gender.

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## About the authors

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**Sead Alihodžić** is a Senior Programme Manager with International IDEA's Electoral Processes Programme. Prior to joining International IDEA in 2008, Alihodžić gained extensive experience in dealing with elections, post-conflict democratization and security issues through 11 years with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina. His professional focus is on elections and conflict, with a special interest in prevention and mitigation of election-related violence, and risk management in elections.

**Maurice Enguélégué** is a Senior Programme Officer with International IDEA's Africa and West Asia Programme. He was previously a Professor of Political Science and taught for 20 years in French universities and in Cameroon at the International Relations Institute. He also worked for the French Government as a Technical Advisor at the Office of the Prime Minister and as Head of Project for the Foreign Ministry's 'Promoting Democratic Governance in Africa'.

Enguélégué was the Programme Coordinator of the Africa Governance Institute (AGI) from May 2008 to July 2013. He was Executive Director of the AGI from July 2013 to September 2015. He has been a member of the Advisory Council of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation since 2012.

**Idayat Hassan** is the Director for the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), an Abuja-based policy advocacy and research organization with a focus on deepening democracy and development in West Africa. Her core interests include democracy, peace and security, and transitional justice in West Africa. She is a lawyer by profession and has held fellowship in several universities across Europe and America.



## About International IDEA

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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 democratic practices; offers technical assistance and capacity-building on 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 are located in Stockholm, and we have regional and country offices in Africa, Asia and the 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.

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The G5 Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad) will organize elections in 2020 and 2021. These elections will take place in a context in which all are facing serious humanitarian and security challenges, aggravated by the fragility of their institutions. The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impacts worsen the situation and even raise questions about the possibility to organize elections in so volatile an environment.

This Guide has been developed to assist decision-makers and practitioners in this context. It provides an overview of 26 process-related risk factors that can trigger or contribute to triggering election-related violence. These internal risk factors are election-specific and do not exist outside of the electoral context. They relate to electoral actors, events, practices and materials that can undermine the credibility of electoral processes or, in the worst-case scenario, trigger or contribute to triggering election-related violence.



**International IDEA**

Strömsborg

SE-103 34 Stockholm

Sweden

Telephone: +46 8 698 37 00

Email: [info@idea.int](mailto:info@idea.int)

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