

MOOC: Democracy, Elections and Governance in Africa

Course: Elections and Electoral Cycles

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Module 1

Rationale and Principles of Electoral Cycles in a Democratic Process

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Objectives of the training

- ? **Understand the purpose of elections**
- ? **Understand the legal and international standards for elections**

Why hold elections?

Why hold elections?

Legal and constitutional mechanism

Function of legitimating political power

Personal sovereignty of each citizen

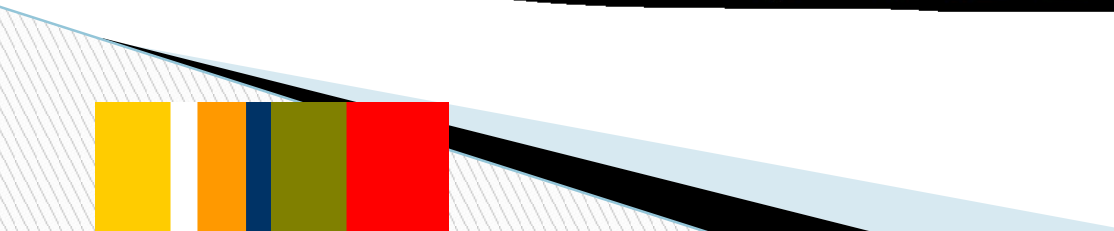
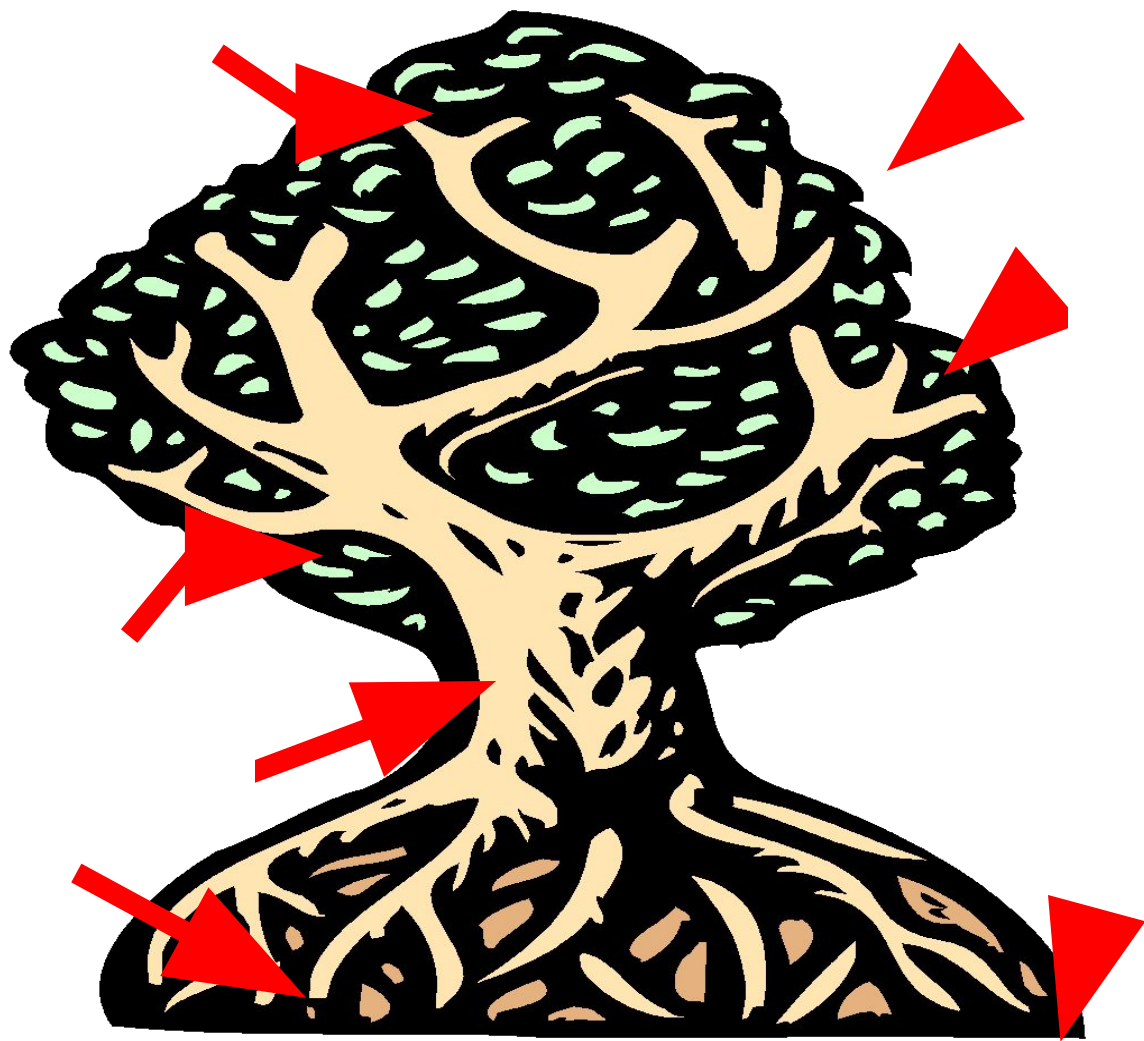


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The election tree



What is the legal framework?



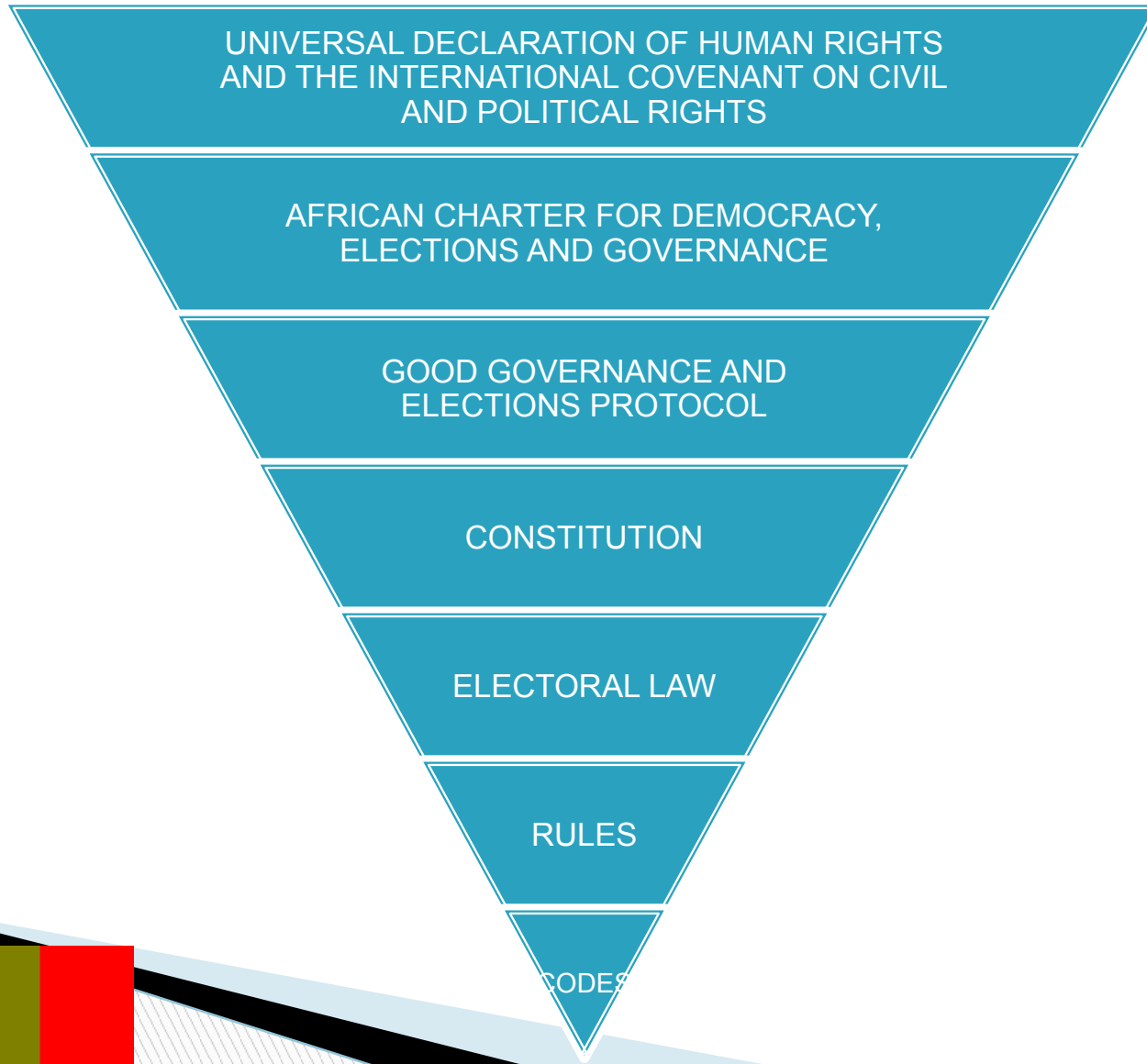
What is the legal framework?

- ? Legislative acts and relevant legal or paralegal texts related to elections.**
- ? Constitutional measures in force**
- ? Electoral and all other laws that have an impact on elections**

The legal components of an electoral process

- ? **Stakeholders involved in the process**
- ? **Practical operations of the process**
- ? **Legal means of control and litigation settlement, as stipulated by the laws**

Introduction to the legal framework





International electoral standards

- ? **Free, fair and regular elections**
- ? **Guarantee universal suffrage**
- ? **Guarantee the confidentiality of the vote**
- ? **No coercion and respect for the principle of «one person, one vote».**



International electoral standards

- ? Fair representation of citizens,**
- ? Equality between men and women,**
- ? Minority rights,**
- ? Specific considerations for people living with a disability**



Democracy, governance and elections

Entry into force of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (February 15, 2012)

On February 15, 2012, the African Union's African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, adopted in January 2007, entered into force.

This charter embodies the commitment of State parties to promote democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

It also acknowledges popular participation through universal suffrage as an inviolable right of the people and prohibits the seizure of power by unconstitutional means.

Conclusions

What you need to remember

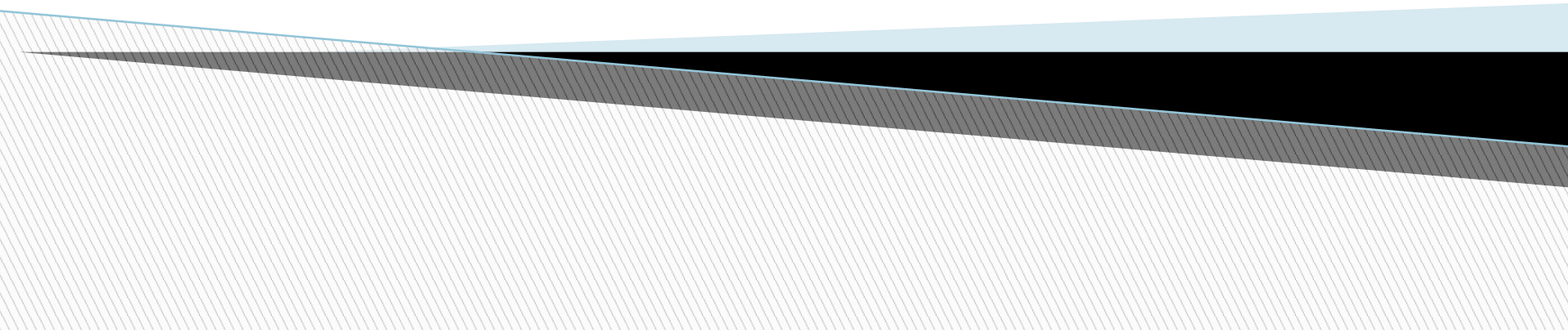
- **Regulatory framework for elections**
- **Legal framework (international, continental, regional and national electoral standards)**
- **Legal components of an electoral process**

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Module 2

Parties involved in the electoral process



Objectives of the training

- ? **Understand the constraints related to the organisation of elections**
- ? **Understand the different stages of the electoral cycle**
- ? **Identify the stakeholders in the electoral process**
- ? **Understand the types of Elections Management Bodies (EMBs)**

**What are the
constraints related
to the organisation
of the elections?**

Restrictions

An inappropriate electoral legal framework

A lack of professionalism in the election administration

Restrictions on political freedoms and participation

Electoral violence and political bullying

And more...



A biased administration of the electoral process

Inappropriate or delayed funding of elections

Unequal access to the media

Electoral fraud and violations



Performance - the way you manage elections

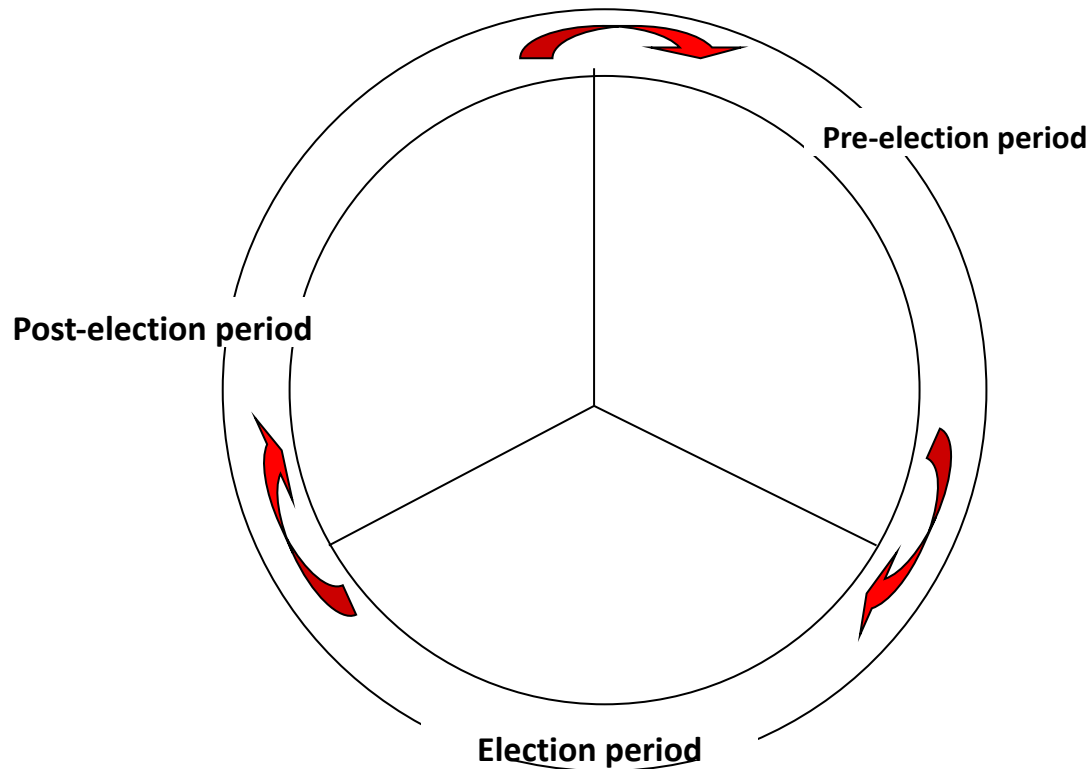
The quality of an election is judged primarily by the public's perception of it

Credibility and trust - being seen to manage elections well

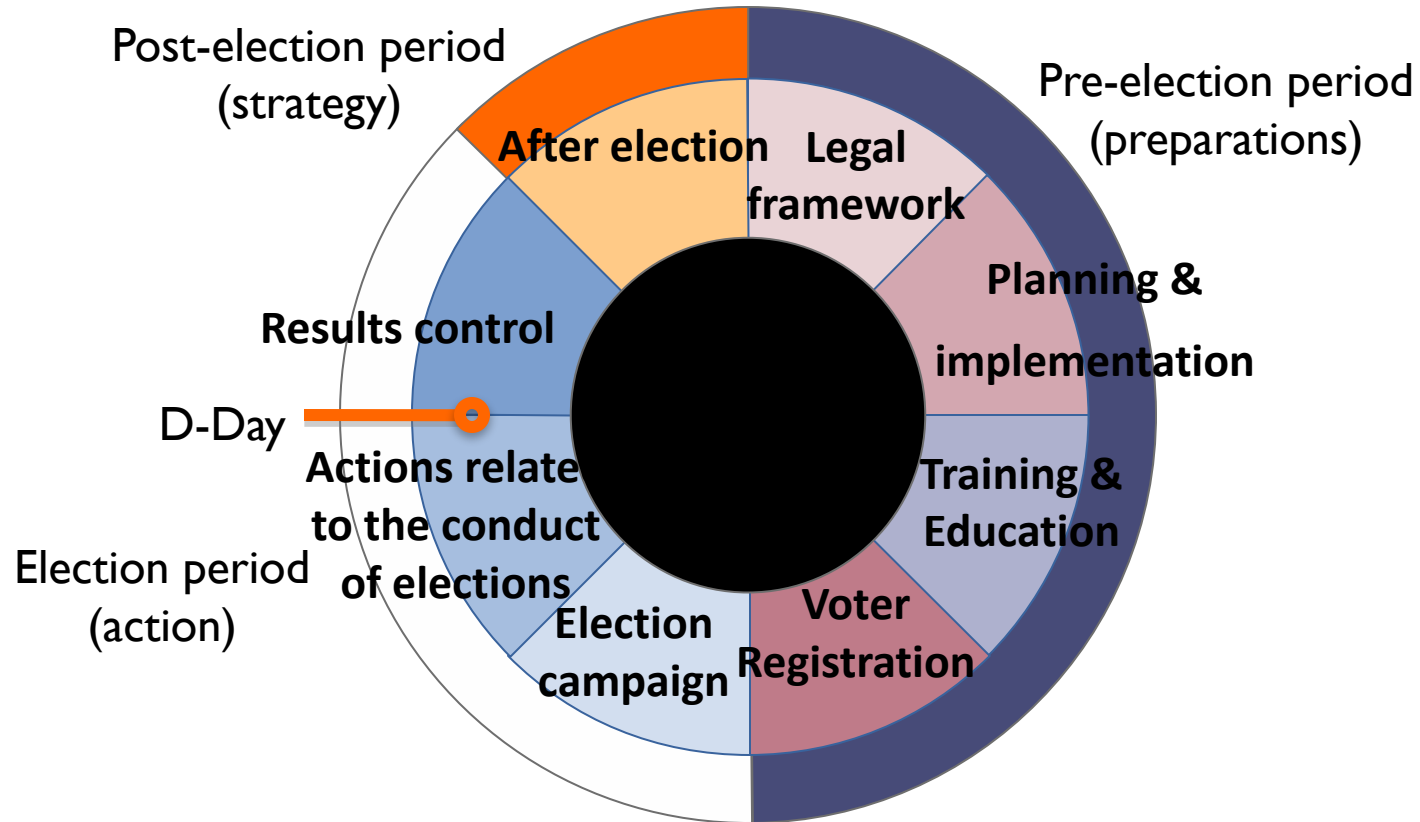
?

Introduction to the electoral cycle

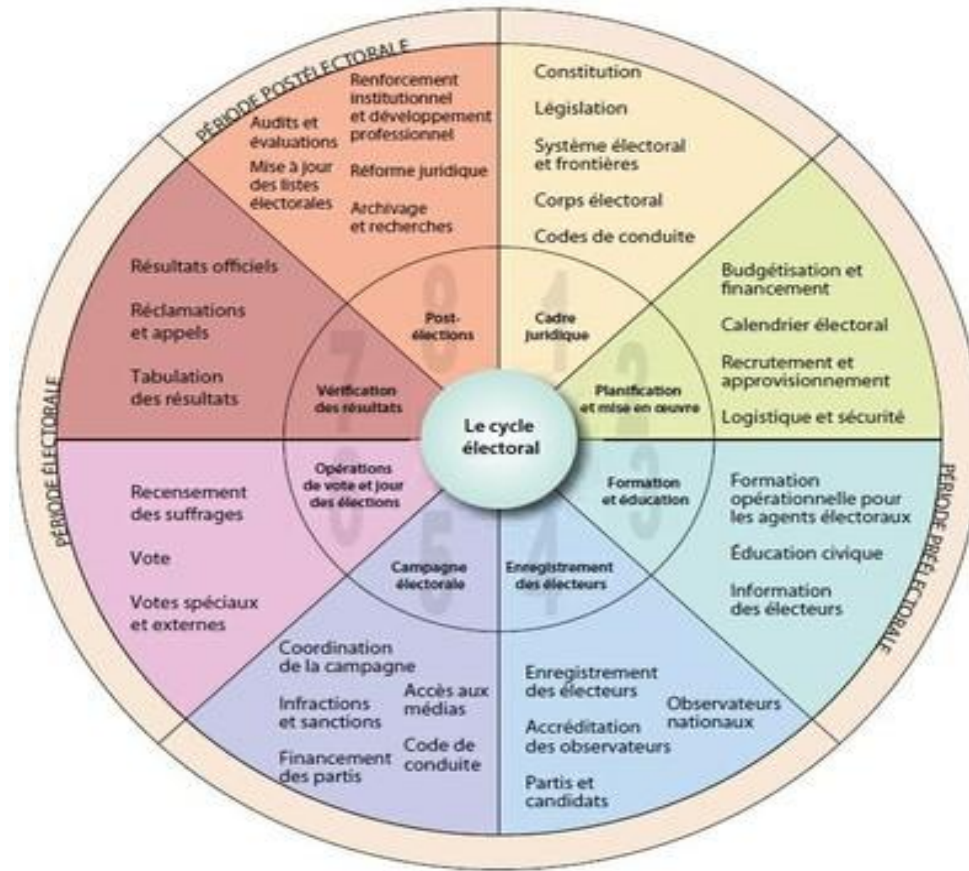
The electoral cycle



The electoral cycle



The electoral cycle




STAKEHOLDERS

- ? In the case of EMBs, stakeholders are those individuals and groups who have an interest in its operations. The word "interest" here implies a risk or benefit related to the EMB's actions. For example, due to their interest in an election (winning or losing), political parties want the EMB to manage the election in an impartial manner.

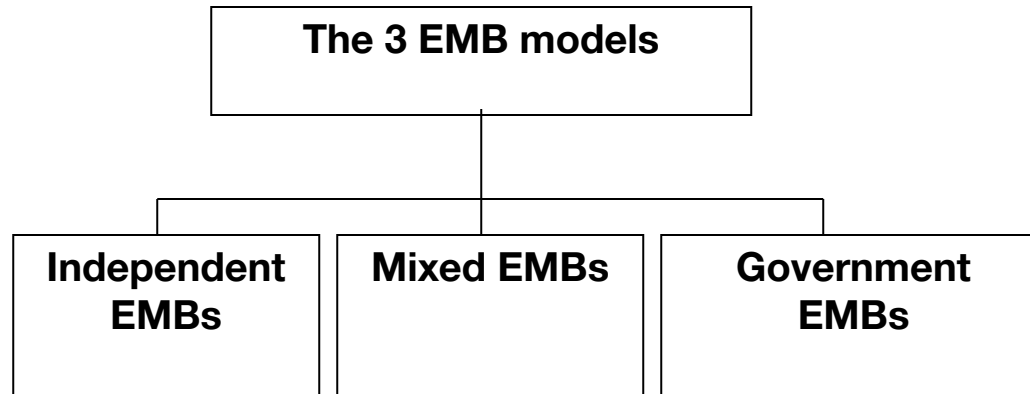
KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

- ? **Political parties and candidates**
- ? **EMB staff;**
- ? **Government ministries;**
- ? **Legislative assembly;**
- ? **Election litigation bodies;**
- ? **Domestic and international election observers;**
- ? **Media;**
- ? **Current and potential voters;**
- ? **Civil society;**
- ? **Donor community and electoral assistance agencies.**

- 
- ? The EMB's secondary stakeholders are those individuals and groups that operate in the EMB's environment but are less directly associated with it, such as:**
- EMB suppliers,**
 - the general public and**
 - international networks.**

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EMBS

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EMBs





Guiding Principles of Election Management



Guiding Principles for Election Administration

- ? **Independence**
- ? **Impartiality**
- ? **Integrity**
- ? **Transparency**
- ? **Efficiency**
- ? **Professionalism**
- ? **Service orientation**



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Module 3

Electoral Observation

Objectives of the training

- ? Understand the concept of election observation and its importance
- ? Understand the types of observation
- ? Be familiar with the guiding principles of election observation
- ? Understand the principles of vote counting

What is election observation?

? Election observation is the deliberate gathering of information about an electoral process in order to make an informative report on the conduct of that process, based on information gathered by persons **who are not inherently authorized to intervene in the process** and whose involvement in mediation must not compromise their primary observation responsibilities.

? **International IDEA**

Why observe elections?

- ? **legitimise an electoral process,**
- ? increase **citizens' confidence** in the electoral process
- ? discourage **fraud,**
- ? promote the **respect of human rights**
- ? contribute to **conflict resolution**
- ? strengthen the **transparency and credibility** of elections

We can:

- ? Observe and report to one's own organisation/authority.
- ? Observe and write a public report or transfer observation recommendations to the EMB.
- ? Observe to certify that elections are free and fair



Observation types

There are 2 types of observation:

Short term: it is about the day of the vote and the counting and publication of the results.

Long term: It covers the entire electoral process.



Making the distinction between observation and monitoring

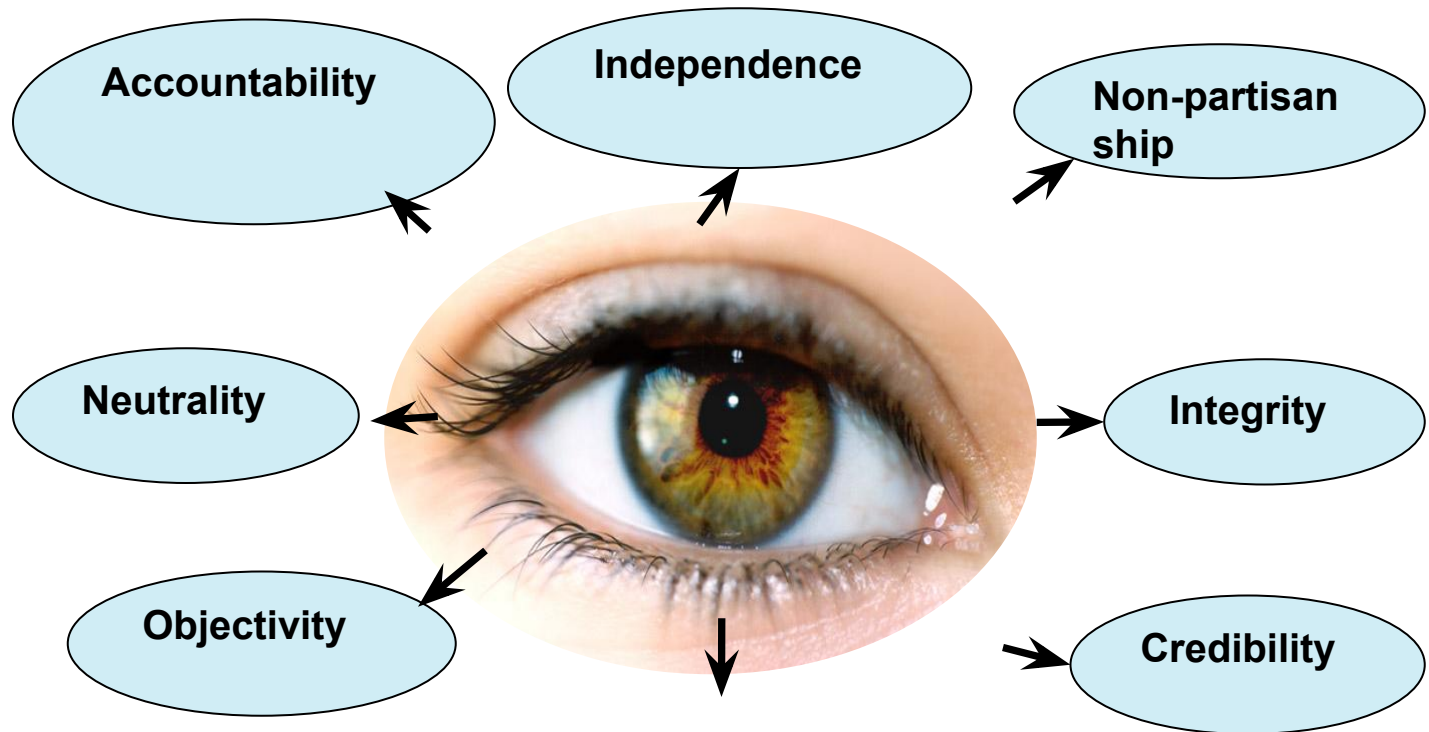
Election observation is different from monitoring:

Observation: look, see, note and report.

Basically, an observer has no role in the management of an election unlike a monitor.

Monitoring: give instructions and correct some malfunctions, if necessary.

Principles of election observation



Principles of counting

The basic principles of counting are:

- ? Transparency**
- ? Safety**
- ? Professionalism**
- ? Accuracy**
- ? Confidentiality of the vote**
- ? Respect for deadlines**
- ? Accountability**
- ? Fairness**

Module 3

Political parties, candidates and financing



Political parties, candidates and financing



Objectives of the training

- ? Understand the requirements for democratic elections
- ? Understand the guiding principles for political parties and candidates
- ? Understand the types of candidate, political party and voter offenses
- ? Identify sources of illicit funds

Obligations for democratic elections

Fair elections reflecting the free expression of the people's will

Right and opportunity to vote

Right and opportunity to be elected

Right and opportunity to engage in public affairs

Freedom of association

Freedom of assembly

Freedom of movement

Freedom of thought and expression

Transparency and access to information

Right to personal security

No discrimination and equality before the Law

Equality between men and women

Right to a fair and open hearing

Right to an effective appeal

Universal suffrage

Equal suffrage

Secret ballot

Regular Elections

Bribery prevention

The government must take the required measures for the application of the rights

Rule of law

Guidelines for political parties and candidates

- ? **Freedom of organisation**
- ? **Freedom to run for office**
- ? **Freedom of speech and assembly**
- ? **Fair and peaceful competition**
- ? **Plurality**
- ? **Participation in the electoral process**
- ? **Equal opportunity**
- ? **Freedom and access to media**
- ? **Transparent political financing**
- ? **Internal party democracy**

The different types of violations

Violations by candidates, political parties, voters, or organisations may include:

- ? Violations of party and campaign finance laws
- ? Fraudulent voting (by impersonation)
- ? Physical intimidation or excessive influence
- ? Voter bribery
- ? Corruption of candidates
- ? Violations of regulations relating to the use of the media during an election campaign.

Sources of illicit funding

- ? Funds from **foreign governments, individuals, companies**, or (in some cases) **exiled communities** may compromise national sovereignty and influence decisions based on interests other than those of the country.
- ? **Donations from companies that have contracts with the government.**
- ? Contributions from national, multinational, or foreign companies.

Sources of illicit funding

- ? Contributions from **state entities** (except under a system of public funding for all parties), as they may compromise the neutrality and impartiality of the public administration;
- ? Contributions from **trade unions**, in order to avoid their collusion with parties;
- ? **Illegal sources** such as organised crime, gambling and drug trafficking;
- ? Contributions from **religious groups** are sometimes prohibited, based on the separation of organised religion and politics.

**There is no
perfect
electoral
system**

Thank you!

