MONITORING AND MITIGATING ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

THROUGH NONPARTISAN CITIZEN ELECTION OBSERVATION

NDI Guidance Document for the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM)

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

NDI

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Nonpartisan citizen election observation organizations around the world have made great strides in monitoring and mitigating electoral related violence, though in many countries groups have only recently begun such efforts. It is important to develop and systematize methodologies in this field. Yet, there are few practical resources that draw out lessons to guide citizen observers' efforts.

NDI has drawn on lessons shared by nonpartisan citizen election monitoring groups at several NDI-facilitated events and workshops addressing electoral violence monitoring and mitigation, including in Cote d'Ivoire (August 2011), Peru (October 2012), Lebanon (April 2013), Thailand (September 2013) and Kenya (September 2013). In addition, the Institute has incorporated best practices shared during Acuerdo de Lima's August 2011 conference in Colombia, which focused on this issue. These working sessions were all conducted in conjunction with the Global Network of Domestic Election Monitors (GNDEM), which currently includes 198 members from 78 countries and regional networks from Africa, Asia, Europe/Eurasia, Latin America/Caribbean and the Middle East/North Africa. GNDEM maintains an electronic resource center of over 1,000 best practice documents, including those on mitigating potentials for electoral related violence. The Institute expresses its deep appreciation to GNDEM members organizations for sharing experience and knowledge with NDI and their sister organizations.

This guidance document was written by Julia Brothers and Michael McNulty, with input from Michelle Brown, Meghan Fenzel, Elana Kreiger-Benson and Phil Brondyke, and with overall guidance from Pat Merloe. NDI wishes to thank the many citizen election observation groups, including organizational and regional network members of GNDEM, whose experiences have been reflected in this document.

The development of this guidance document was supported through a grant from the United States Agency for International for International Development (USAID).[1] The document complements other resources available on citizen election observation, such as NDI's handbooks: The Quick Count and Election Observation (concerning parallel vote tabulations - PVTs); Building Confidence in the Voter Registration Process (on voter registry verification); Media Monitoring to Promote Democratic Elections; Promoting Legal Frameworks for Democratic Elections; and How Domestic Organizations Monitor Elections. These and other resources are available at www.ndi.org/elections. We hope that those who use this document will contact NDI with any comments, suggestions or requests.

[1] This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American people through USAID under Award No. DFD-A-00-08-00350-00. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 INTRODUCTION

Electoral violence subverts basic standards for democratic elections. Violence against candidates, activists, journalists, voters, election officials and observers can reduce voters' choices and suppress the vote. Violence can be used to intimidate individuals and communities to vote against their will for a candidate. Assassinations of candidates can even change electoral outcomes. Armed groups seeking to overthrow a government often resort to violence during elections. In other cases, violence can break out when large numbers of people protested official election results. The effects of violence or the threat of violence can undermine the legitimacy of electoral results and broader political process.

Because in many contexts electoral violence plays such a central role in the integrity of elections, local, national and international stakeholders have sought not only to determine the causes and triggers of violence but also to assess strategies and methods that can help mitigate violence and encourage peace. For nearly three decades, local nonpartisan citizen observers around the world have risked their lives to promote accountability among democratic institutions and to build confidence in the electoral process through impartial, accurate information and assessments. As nonpartisan community leaders and professional watchdogs, these observers play a crucial role in forecasting, monitoring, mitigating and mediating political conflict.

This guidance document aims to help nonpartisan citizen election observer groups develop and carry out electoral violence monitoring and/or mitigation strategies and methodologies that take into account the underlying sources of tension, the potential triggers, and the anticipated types of electoral violence. The document is divided into six sections.

Section 1 outlines an approach that groups can use to develop an overall electoral violence monitoring and/or mitigation strategy.

Sections 2 – 5 examine four key areas in which citizen election observers can contribute to monitoring and mitigating electoral violence. These four areas, which are not intended to be exhaustive, include:

- **Section 2:** long-term observation to monitor and mitigate electoral violence;
- **Section 3**: promoting media accountability;
- **Section 4:** crowdsourcing and electoral violence mapping; and
- **Section 5**: conducting grassroots electoral violence mitigation and mediation.

Section 6 addresses challenges for citizen observers when addressing electoral violence and ways of developing multi-pronged security strategies and approaches.

These sections are followed by a concluding section and several annexes that include examples of a variety of tools that observer groups have used; an in-depth case study on citizen observer groups' efforts to monitor and mitigate electoral violence in Sri Lanka; and a list of additional resources on the subject of electoral violence.

NATURE OF ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

Electoral violence can be distinguished from other types of political violence by its goal – to influence electoral conduct of voters, contestants, officials or other actors and/or to affect the electoral outcome. It can take place during any part of the electoral cycle. Electoral violence involves any use of force with the intent to cause harm or the threat to use force to harm persons or property involved in the electoral process. Electoral violence can be widespread before or on election day, as it was for example in Afghanistan's 2009 elections, and it can occur on a large-scale immediately following elections, such as the events in Kenya in 2007-08 and Cote d'Ivoire in 2010. More common, however, are less widespread forms of violence, designed to: prevent voters from participating; coerce participation or change voter choices; eliminate candidates; disrupt the process or negate votes in certain locations; or seek retribution for political support or votes cast.

Most studies recognize that elections are not a root cause of violence.[2] In fact, when conducted credibly, elections are an alternative to violence, [3] as they are intended to peacefully and inclusively resolve the competition for power. Credible,

[2] Atwood, Richard. How the EU Can Support Peaceful Post-election Transitions of Power: Lessons from Africa. EU, 2012.
[3] Fisher, Jeff. Electoral Violence and Conflict: A Strategy for Study and Prevention. IFES, 2002.

transparent and inclusive elections provide contestants with a fair chance to win office and a channel through which contestants voters can communicate their preferences about candidates and issues, thus reducing the temptation to resort to violence. Genuine elections also provide legitimacy to the winners, which increases the government's capacity to manage conflict going forward.

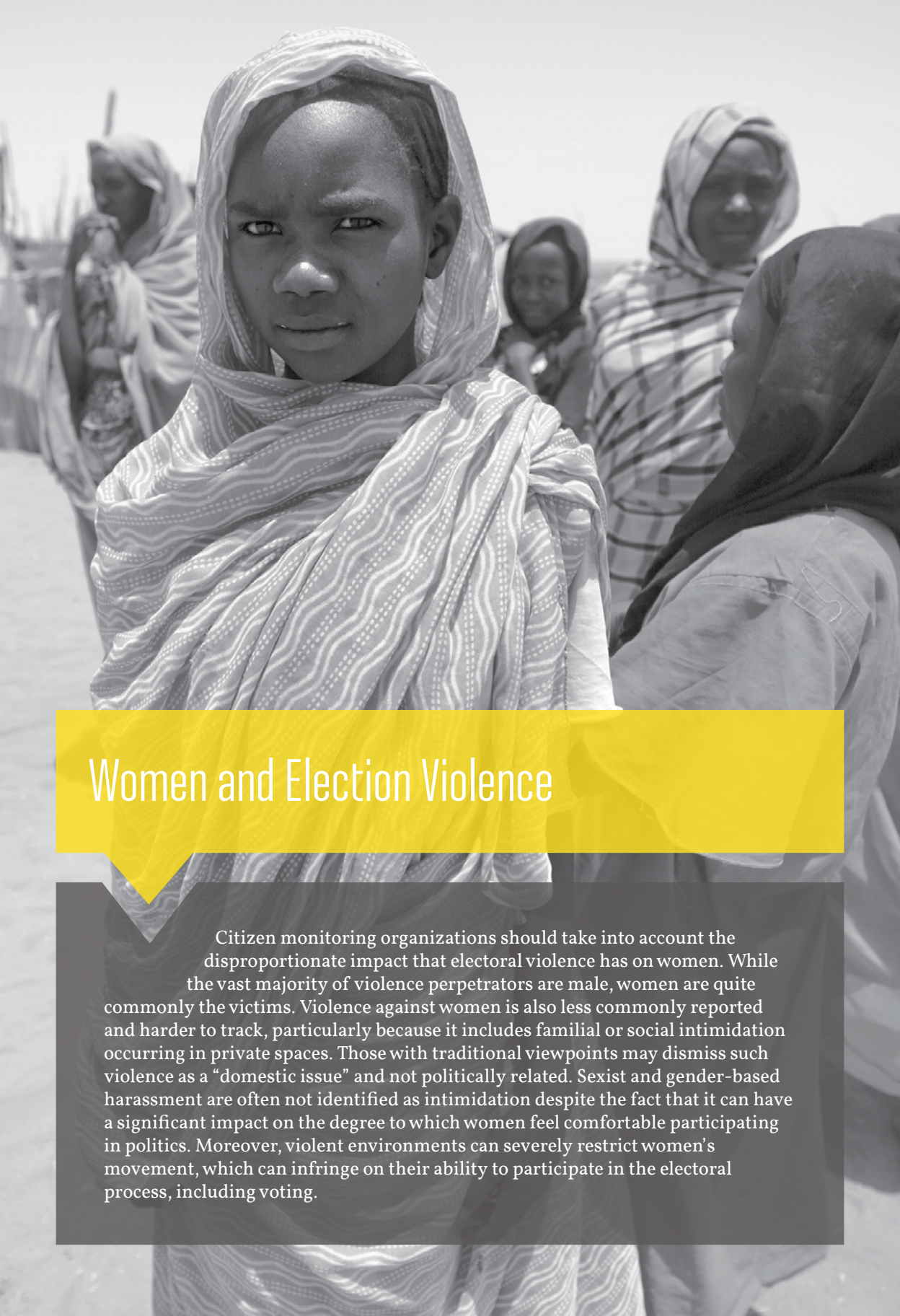
The **underlying causes** of electoral violence are often rooted in social, political and economic deficiencies including but not limited to: a lack of information; polarization and divergent preferences; cultural, religious, tribal and ethnic clefts; scarcity of and ongoing disputes over resources; large-scale inequalities; history of civil conflict or war; and weak security and rule of law institutions.

While elections are typically not the underlying cause of violence, they can exacerbate existing tensions, particularly when they are not conducted credibly. Elections are high-stakes processes in which political power is won and lost, which by nature creates a degree of conflict that needs to be managed so that violence does not ensue. There are several ways in which elections can potentially **trigger violence**, including where there are:

- high degrees of uncertainty about the outcome of the election due to intense competition, combined with a lack of public confidence in the process and/or a lack of transparency;
- population groups and/or electoral contestants expecting to be systematically excluded from gaining power; and/or
- features of the electoral system that produce high stakes, "winner-take-all" outcomes.[4]

Acts of electoral violence are often the result of a combination of such underlying causes, particularly where there are not sufficient mechanisms to build public confidence in the electoral process. For example, in a context with deep social cleavages and high inequality, an electoral process that is poorly managed could spark violence if one or more political contestants believe the outcome does not reflect the will of the people. Developing confidence enhancing mechanisms, such as systematic election monitoring by nonpartisan citizen organizations, can reduce tensions and help sort out the proper course of action.

[4] *Elections and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming*. UNDP, 2009.



Women and Election Violence

Citizen monitoring organizations should take into account the disproportionate impact that electoral violence has on women. While the vast majority of violence perpetrators are male, women are quite commonly the victims. Violence against women is also less commonly reported and harder to track, particularly because it includes familial or social intimidation occurring in private spaces. Those with traditional viewpoints may dismiss such violence as a "domestic issue" and not politically related. Sexist and gender-based harassment are often not identified as intimidation despite the fact that it can have a significant impact on the degree to which women feel comfortable participating in politics. Moreover, violent environments can severely restrict women's movement, which can infringe on their ability to participate in the electoral process, including voting.

DATA ON ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

Studies have shown that while large-scale armed conflict declined over the last 50 years, political violence rose, particularly in the form of escalations of long-standing disputes and rivalries. However, comprehensive information on electoral violence is limited. This is due in part to the difficulties of collecting information in closed societies or in places with weak infrastructure. In remote or chaotic environments it may be challenging to obtain accurate information on deaths and injuries, and data often reflects broad estimates. In addition, because violence often arises from seemingly unrelated societal conflicts, it may not always be categorized or tracked as "politically-motivated" or "electoral" in nature. This also makes it difficult to determine whether the absence of violence was the result of violence mitigation efforts. In these instances, the role of citizen monitors can be important in providing more accurate and clear information on electoral violence.

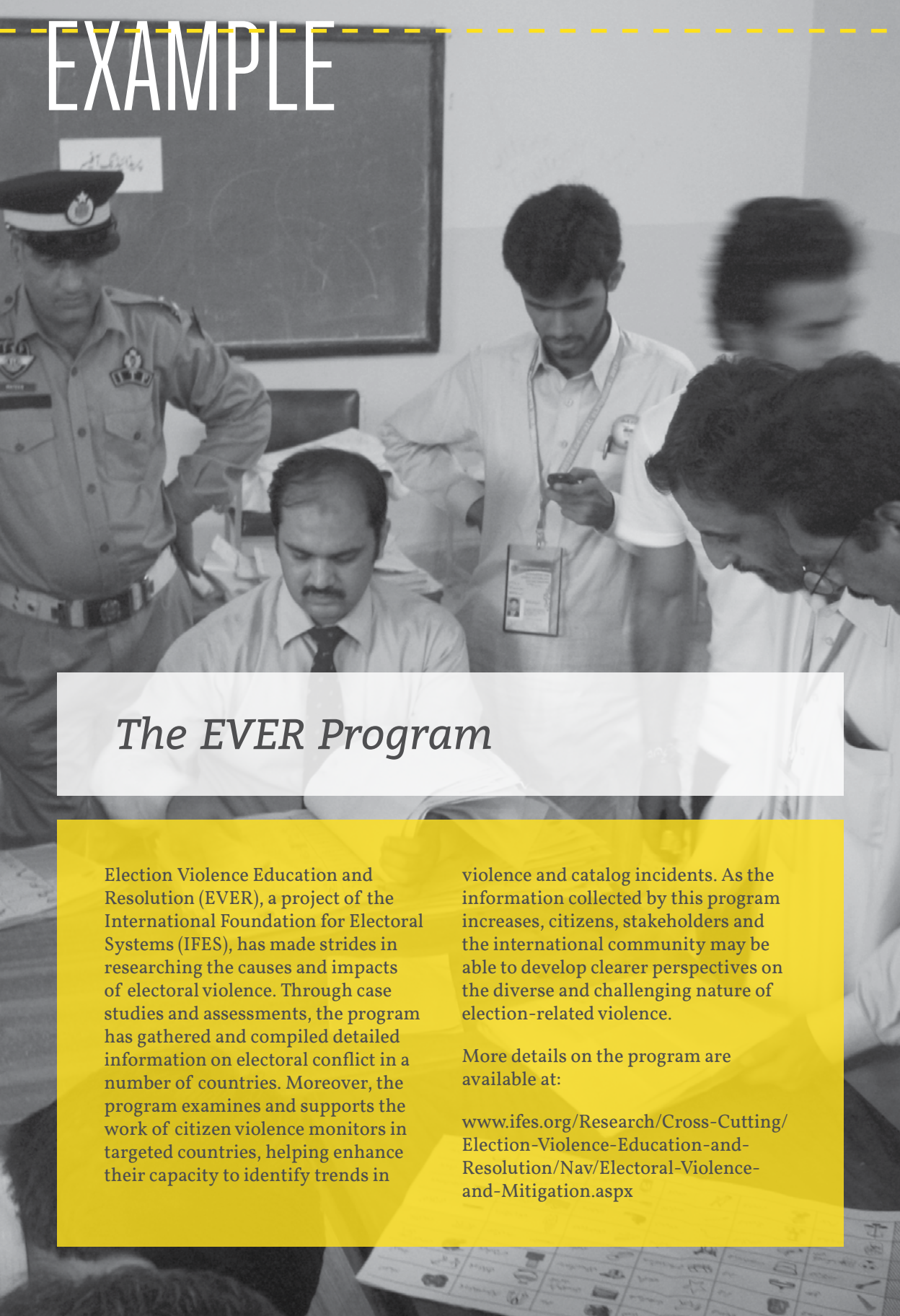
Nonetheless, in reviewing the data, some basic information about the context of electoral violence is clear. Violence can occur at any moment during the elections process, including well before election day, during key elections processes like voter registration or campaigns, on election day both within and outside polling stations, as well as in the post-election period. There are victims and perpetrators in electoral violence, and those may interchange. Anyone can be implicated in and affected by these conflicts, including voters, candidates, parties, election officials, security forces, government authorities, businessmen, unions or even civil society.

WHY CITIZEN ELECTION OBSERVERS?

Widespread and timely electoral violence monitoring can help combat impunity while identifying potential risks and trends for security forces, government authorities and political contestants to address. With networks of hundreds or thousands of trained, professionalized observers, nonpartisan citizen election monitoring organizations are well suited to play key roles in violence monitoring and mitigation. Citizen election observers can ensure that violence monitoring is incorporated throughout all aspects of election observation, including during official election processes, and not treated as a separate and unrelated occurrence. Citizen election monitoring groups also have several other comparative advantages, including that they:

- maintain an established nonpartisan profile and garner the trust of the public as independent and neutral stakeholders;

EXAMPLE



The EVER Program

Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER), a project of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), has made strides in researching the causes and impacts of electoral violence. Through case studies and assessments, the program has gathered and compiled detailed information on electoral conflict in a number of countries. Moreover, the program examines and supports the work of citizen violence monitors in targeted countries, helping enhance their capacity to identify trends in violence and catalog incidents. As the information collected by this program increases, citizens, stakeholders and the international community may be able to develop clearer perspectives on the diverse and challenging nature of election-related violence.

More details on the program are available at:

www.ifes.org/Research/Cross-Cutting/Election-Violence-Education-and-Resolution/Nav/Electoral-Violence-and-Mitigation.aspx

- usually aim to have a nationwide presence, including state and local branches;
- often link large, diverse communities of interest, crossing ethnic, cultural, geographic, religious and other divides and typically mobilize large numbers of youth and women;
- have existing internal decision making, staffing, training and communication structures;
- usually deploy long-term observers (LTOs) throughout the country to monitor the pre-election, election day and post-election environment and processes;
- have accreditation and access to key political processes during which violence can occur;
- can be deployed in much larger numbers and for longer periods of time than international observers
- can link with violence monitoring, mitigation and mediation efforts of other citizen organizations and governmental authorities; and
- serve as technical authorities on the election process with knowledge and data that can help dispel rumors by providing fact-based information.

Incorporating targeted violence monitoring and mitigation strategies and tactics into an election monitoring effort requires a more complex approach to developing the overall observation strategy, greater financial, human and time resources, and additional logistical and security considerations.

Also, it is important to keep in mind that while citizen observer groups' role in mitigating electoral violence can be vital, they are only one of many actors that are essential to addressing the causes and triggers of violence. For example, legislatures and governments must play key roles in addressing the underlying causes of violence, which could include developing policies to reduce exclusion and inequality between groups, tempering zero-sum competition, strengthening rule of law institutions, demobilize armed groups and building trust in the institutions managing and adjudicating the electoral process.[5]

The following sections of this guide highlight several planning and implementation strategies for broadening a group's election observation efforts to take into consideration and help address electoral violence.

[5] Atwood, Richard. How the EU Can Support Peaceful Post-election Transitions of Power: Lessons from Africa. EU, 2012.

02 LONG-TERM OBSERVATION TO MONITOR AND MITIGATE ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

For decades, nonpartisan citizen monitoring organizations have conducted long-term observation to monitor a variety of critical election components, including incidents of violence and intimidation, legal frameworks, boundary delimitation, campaign finance, media coverage, freedom of expression, political party conduct, ballot qualification, women and minority participation, voter registration, results tabulation and complaints resolution. This broad access to the electoral process allows discerning monitors to identify trends in the pre-election and post-election environment and to recognize, evaluate and report any "red flags" that could provide a flashpoint for existing tensions and lead to violence.

Groups seeking to take electoral violence into account during their long-term observation effort have two main strategic options, or a combination of both.

- One option is to monitor and report **incidents of violence**. Timely, fact-based and accurate reporting on incidents of violence by nonpartisan citizen observers can increase transparency and accountability, and can help dispel unfounded rumors that tend to increase tensions. However, because this type of monitoring does not address or monitor the causes and triggers of electoral violence, it is less effective in mitigating violence.
- Groups seeking to help mitigate violence can go beyond monitoring violent acts by also **monitoring and reporting early warnings signs of potential causes and triggers of violence** appropriate for the country context. Observer groups can then use this information to help authorities, observers and other stakeholders direct their attention and resources to particularly vulnerable areas, target audiences and potential flashpoints before violence occurs.[6]

Combining these approaches can make important contributions, particularly if each is conducted in coordination with other election observers and conflict prevention and management efforts of other organizations and the government. Those efforts can range from developing and strengthening local mediation capacities, to developing community forums to address conflict-related issues and

[6] For more details, see *Using Feedback Mechanisms to Mitigate Violence*.

build bridges across issue divides, to enhancing inter-party dialogue and inter-agency electoral security planning, among other efforts.

PLANNING: STRATEGY, SCOPE AND DURATION

Observer groups have a number of issues to consider when planning violence monitoring and/or early warning systems programs. This includes determining the group's goal, assessing underlying tensions and causes of violence in the country, identifying potential triggers or flashpoints during the electoral cycle, defining specific indicators of early warning signs and violent acts to monitor, identifying high-risk geographic areas and developing an observation methodology and deployment strategy that takes all of this into account. These key planning considerations are explained in more detail below.[7]

1. What is the observer group's top priority goal for long-term observation?

Observer groups first need to determine whether their highest priority is strictly to monitor electoral violence, to help mitigate electoral violence or to provide a comprehensive and systematic assessment of the electoral process for the public while mitigating electoral violence is a secondary priority. Observer groups have scarce time and resources and, consequently, have to make many difficult choices that should be guided by their highest priority.

2. What root causes of violence and/or underlying tensions could impact the potential for electoral violence?

Observer groups should carefully assess the potential factors external to elections that could contribute to causing electoral violence. Examples of root causes of electoral violence are provided in the "Nature of Electoral Violence" section and in Figure 1.1.

3. What are likely to be the most significant violence triggers or flashpoints during the pre-election, election day and post-election periods?

Before making an action plan, observer groups should carefully review historical data and the current political climate to estimate when, where and in what form

[7] A more detailed consideration of such factors is provided in International IDEA's Guide on Factors of Election-related Violence External to Electoral Processes (2013).

problems may occur during the electoral cycle. This includes reviewing what has happened in previous elections and any patterns of violence that may have emerged. Observers should analyze each aspect of the entire electoral cycle to determine potential risk factors and flashpoints, including: the legal framework; voter registration; election commission formation, training and preparations; candidate and party registration; election campaign; media environment; voter education; voting and counting processes; results tabulation and announcement; and legal enforcement and dispute resolution. Groups should take into account the electoral system as well. Some electoral systems create greater stakes than others or place emphasis on different aspects of the electoral process. For instance, party registration may be more contentious in a multi-party proportional representation system, while the campaign period may be more vulnerable in a candidate-centered first-past-the-post system.[8] More details on electoral violence triggers are provided in the "What to Monitor" section and Figure 1.2.

Fortunately, there are almost always ways to consult with respected experts and organizations that concentrate on conflict prevention, management and resolution when developing this analysis, and such consultations can lead to cooperation going forward.

4. What are the specific indicators that point to causes and triggers of violence (early warning signs) that should be monitored? What types of electoral violence incidents should be monitored?

Groups must carefully define each indicator that they plan to monitor, distinguish between early warning signs and incidents of electoral violence, and determine how and what information should be collected to ensure that the data is credible. More details on this are provided in the "What to Monitor" and "Data Collection and Verification" sections and in Figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

5. Are there any geographic areas that are considered "hot spots" and may be more susceptible to violence?

This may include areas that may be politically contentious or "political battlegrounds" but also areas where non-political conflict, such as land seizures or violent organized crime, is, or has been, prevalent. Groups may consider increasing the concentration of observers in these areas or prioritizing information from those locales. Hot spots can range in size from larger geographic areas such as provinces or districts to very specific locations, such as towns or even

[8] For a detailed consideration of the conflict implications of different electoral systems, please refer to pages 18-19 of the Elections and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming. UNDP, 2009.


Carte d'Electeur
REPUBLIQUE DE CÔTE D'IVOIRE
Carte Nationale d'Identité
KONE
NAMINATA
MADINANI (CIV)
13/10/2009
12/10/2019
A GRAND-LAHOU

EXAMPLE

Promoting Peaceful Elections through Citizen Observation in Cote d'Ivoire

The second round of the November 2010 presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire sparked a serious political and humanitarian crisis that led to the deaths of more than 3,000 people and the displacement of approximately one million Ivorians. The two main candidates, incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo and opposition candidate Alassane Ouattara, represented the ethnic and geographic divisions of a society deeply fractured from its five year civil war. Gbagbo's refusal to accept electoral defeat pitted these factions against each other once again, throwing the country into violence that ended only when international forces intervened and arrested Gbagbo in April 2011.

Unfortunately, civil society had not been prepared to mitigate challenges to the credibility of the elections. The elections had been repeatedly postponed for five years, draining donor funds and undermining civil society's ability to mount a coordinated, systematic assessment of the process nationwide. Groups that were able to organize observation were limited in funds, time and geographic reach. When the Independent Election Commission announced Ouattara's victory, the pro-Gbagbo Constitutional Court invalidated those results, citing irregularities in Ouattara strongholds. Without an independent assessment from a credible, nationwide network of observers, civil society was not in a position to deny or verify these claims. The UN had its internal workings in place as part of its mandate to certify the election, which allowed it to confidently back the election commission, though that was insufficient to prevent post-election violence as Gbagbo refused to step down.

Following the crisis, civil society recognized the missed opportunity to play a role in mitigating tensions by better coordinating their efforts and providing credible, systematic information on the election process. In preparation for the 2011 legislative elections, the six leading citizen observation coalitions came together to develop a pilot violence monitoring plan, deploying 36 monitors to hot spots throughout the country and in Abidjan. This first step of coordination and strategic deployment set the groundwork for more robust election observation better positioned to mitigate potentials for conflict surrounding the upcoming presidential elections in 2015.

EXAMPLE

Long-term Electoral Violence Monitoring in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has a long history of election-related violence. For decades, civil society groups in the country have undertaken long-term electoral violence monitoring efforts to address recurring political and electoral violence. Since 1997, the Center for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) has focused on contributing to peaceful elections through careful documentation of election-related violence. CMEV employs a "name and shame" approach centered on raising public awareness and reducing the level of impunity around violence using data from long-term observers deployed across the country, information from media sources and verified reports from citizens. CMEV's observation methodology includes long-term observation, pre-election field visits by a core expert team and election-day observation.

For the 2010 presidential elections, CMEV deployed a total of 170 long-term monitors to every province to monitor electoral violence. Field visits by a small group of election, conflict, legal or other experts to "hotspots" identified by LTOs bolstered CMEV's ability to document critical incidents and identify escalating tensions. On election day, CMEV deployed approximately 4,000 stationary observers and 230 mobile teams across the country with higher coverage around areas identified as potential violence hotspots through analysis of LTO reports and historical CMEV and official data. Pre-election and election-day reports were entered in a database and mapped on an online platform, and made public through regular reports. During elections, CMEV also collects data from a number of sources beyond their trained observers, which they carefully verify through a range of means before including in their final data and analysis. For national elections, the Center establishes and publicizes a public incident hotline for citizens to report incidents of violence. CMEV has also established and maintained good working relations with police forces, allowing the organization access to the police log of election-related incidents and enabling CMEV to share data with the police for more rapid and appropriate responses to violent incidents. Overt acts of violence in elections have declined in Sri Lanka over the past decade -- a trend that CMEV has both carefully documented and contributed to through their long-term observation efforts.

neighborhoods within towns.

6. What should the deployment strategy for violence monitors be?

The answer to this question must take into account the answers to the questions above. In most cases, particularly when the group's top priority objective is to provide a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the electoral process, observers should be deployed to all relevant geographic regions, although this may not be possible due to groups' capacity, coverage and/or funding limitations. In circumstances where the group's top priority is to mitigate electoral violence, and particularly when groups aren't able to deploy LTOs in all geographic regions, observers could instead be strategically deployed so they have a higher concentration in potential hot spots and so they can easily access uncovered areas if needed. In addition, groups should have a plan for ways to collect data from areas where they cannot deploy observers (whether due to difficulties in geographic reach, communication constraints or security risks).

The timing of deployment should also be considered. Ideally groups should strive to begin monitoring as early in the electoral process as possible, with long-term observers (LTOs) deployed in a manner that maximizes their access to all major localities. However, groups may have to prioritize and strategize their efforts in light of available resources. For example, if a group has already deployed local or regional level coordinators or supervisors, they could be trained to serve as LTOs if groups do not have the capacity or resources to deploy additional observers.

After evaluating these questions, citizen observation groups should develop a deployment and reporting plan that spans the critical electoral process periods to be monitored. This plan should include alternate methods of collecting information in places where observers are not deployed, including phone interviews with local authorities and monitoring relevant data, such as media and police reports, from those areas.

WHAT TO MONITOR

After clearly identifying the potential early warning signs of electoral violence and developing an overall deployment and reporting plan, observer groups are then be able to narrow down the specific types of triggers, incidents and issues that they will monitor during each period of the electoral cycle. It is not possible for groups to monitor all aspects of the electoral process. Thus, groups must prioritize what they will monitor based on which early warning signs are expected to have

the most impact on fueling violence, which incidents best show the presence of electoral violence, and, in turn, which will have the most impact on the integrity of the electoral process itself. The following text and Figure 1.1 and 1.2 provide guidance to groups in sorting out the question of what to monitor.

Detecting Early Warning Signs

For groups whose goal is to help mitigate electoral violence, citizen LTOs need to monitor indicators (early warning signs) that could forecast the potential for conflict. As mentioned above, these indicators relate to both the underlying causes as well as triggers of electoral violence. If caught and reported in the early stages, these issues can be interceded, mitigated or resolved before violence erupts.

There are a number of indicators that citizen observers can examine, although the meaning, types and complexity of warning signs will vary drastically depending on the local and political context.[9] Observers should not only monitor obvious indicators of political friction but also other non-political conflicts that have the potential to leach their way into politics at flashpoints. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 list the main types of causes and triggers of electoral violence to consider, including a description and illustrative examples of each.

Documenting Incidents Of Violence

In addition to monitoring early warning signs, citizen monitors should also track and document incidents of violence and violent behavior. Violence monitors have used this information to create a visible public record that can discourage perpetrators in light of public scrutiny. Monitors should look for all confirmed incidents of violence but will have to make a judgment, based on compelling evidence, concerning whether they are intended to harm persons or property involved in the electoral process, or otherwise affect the process, with the intention of influencing the elections' outcome and/or conduct. For instance, an armed robbery resulting in a death of a politician or electoral official is likely not electoral violence unless observers can find convincing evidence to the contrary. Monitors should also pay close attention to missing persons reports, as well as any reports of physical threats and coercion. The "Violent Acts and Incidents" column of Figure 1.3 lists a number of examples of violent incidents, organized by the different periods of the electoral cycle.

[9] For more detailed, context specific information about early warning signs in Asia, see: Understanding Electoral Violence in Asia. UNDP, 2011. For more about early warning signs of electoral violence in Africa, see: Atwood, Richard. How the EU Can Support Peaceful Post-election Transitions of Power: Lessons from Africa. EU, 2012.

Powerful Interests and State-Sponsored Violence

In some cases, cartels or mafias that operate illegally will use force to exert political influence. In other situations, observers may notice acts of electoral violence supported by the state. Both of these circumstances can be particularly challenging for observers, as it makes data harder to collect and could increase the likelihood of observers to become targets. In these extreme scenarios, LTOs will want to keep a low-profile and closely follow organizational security protocols. Most importantly, observer groups should try to enlist the support of international actors on the ground that can help provide cover in vulnerable situations. This includes ensuring inter-governmental agencies, human rights and good governance NGOs and sympathetic diplomatic missions are aware and updated on findings and concerns.

FIGURE 1.1

Root Causes of Electoral Violence

Illustrative early warning sign indicators

Identity politics and clefts based on religion, sect, class, tribe or ethnicity	• Pervasive culture of identity-based rivalries and violence
Tension over control of state or private resources	• History of violence, civil war, and/or the existence of militias and/or prevalence of small arms • Disputes over land or other state resources, such as oil or water • Disputes over private resources, such as livestock • High income inequality or unequal access to social resources
Insufficient or corrupt security and policing	• Existence of illegal elements or violent actors (narco-traffickers) • Weak, insufficient and/or inactive security forces (i.e. , police, military) • Politicized security forces and/or security forces used for repressive purposes instead of protection and safety
Weak rule of law	• High levels of corruption and/or lack of rule of law can disproportionately impact different segments of society and political factions

FIGURE 1.2

Triggers of Electoral Violence

Illustrative early warning sign indicators

High degree of uncertainty about the outcome of the election

- Unclear or contested legal framework
- Poorly managed or poorly implemented election processes
- Lack of transparency, including lack of accessible, timely and relevant election data, as well as obstacles to election observation
- Lack of accountability, such as inadequate or partisan system for resolution of complaints and disputes
- Expectation of extremely close and competitive elections
- Evidence of or perception of fraud during the electoral process
- Rhetoric or behavior indicating public and/or political contestants' frustration with the above problems
    - Protests and rallies, behavior of crowd and/or security forces
    - Rhetoric of parties, candidates, media and community leaders (i.e. , rejection of results, boycotts)

Perception of certainty or of unfair or illegitimate outcome of the election

- Exclusion of specific communities during electoral process
    - Perceived or actual systematic exclusion of certain ethnic, religious or tribal groups from participating as voters
    - Exclusion of identity-based party or candidate(s) from competing in elections
    - Exclusion of women and youth, including as party activists, candidates, election officials and/or voters
- Efforts to suppress freedom of expression, such as during campaigning, ranging from intolerance to viewpoints to active suppression
- Rhetoric or behavior indicating growing public, marginalized group, and/or political contestants' frustration with the above problems
    - Protests and rallies, behavior of crowd and security forces
    - Rhetoric of parties, candidates, media and community leaders (i.e. , using divisive or inflammatory rhetoric and/or misinformation to mobilize groups)

High stakes, "zero sum" electoral system

- Presidential election with highly concentrated executive powers
- First past the post systems, particularly where polarity can overcome diverse historically marginalized populations
- Small district magnitudes, such as single-mandate districts
- Referenda with majority rule requirements and high stakes constitutional issues

FIGURE 1.3

Incidents of Electoral Violence

VIOLENT ACTS AND INCIDENTS

Effects of the root causes plus triggers

Pre-election Period	• Assassination or attempted assassination of opponents or potential electoral contestants • Jailing of opponents • Tensions and violence due to voter registration process concerns or complaints • Violence between rival groups of supporters, which can reduce participation or create "no go" areas for campaigning • Attacks on or threats against election officials • Threats or intimidation of supporters, which can cause internal migration or fear of participating in elections
Election Day and Post-Election	• All of the above, plus: • Threats or intimidation of voters • Attacks at or near polling locations • Destroying election-related materials • Protests that turn violent, either due to protesters or authorities • Perpetration of sectarian or ethnic violence

EXAMPLE

Monitoring Electoral Violence in Pakistan

For decades Pakistan's elections have been undermined by a range of electoral violence and broader political violence. To help mitigate and raise awareness of the causes of electoral violence, the citizen observer coalition Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability-Free and Fair Election Network (TDEA-FAFEN) has carried out extensive electoral violence monitoring efforts for more than five years, including the 2008 general elections. Based on this experience, for the 2013 general elections TDEA-FAFEN conducted long- and short-term observation focused on electoral violence. For pre- and post-election monitoring, TDEA-FAFEN trained and deployed 369 LTOs covering each district and constituency. On election day, the coalition mobilized more than 43,000 short-term observers. TDEA-FAFEN complemented its observer data by monitoring media reports of electoral violence across 10 national and provincial newspapers. All incidents were reported using standardized forms (see sample incident form in Annex I) and entered into an online database. With this large amount of data, TDEA-FAFEN was able to provide the public with in-depth analysis of electoral violence, including by geographic area, types and tactics of violence, triggers of violence, and the party affiliation of victims and perpetrators. The group used this analysis to publicize detailed, targeted recommendations of reforms and measures to mitigate future violence and improve electoral integrity. Due in part to the tireless efforts of civil society groups such as TDEA-FAFEN, in 2013 Pakistan experienced its first peaceful transition of power from one civilian government to the next in the country's 66-year history.


PP-14
NA
56
SHEHZORE

DATA COLLECTION AND VERIFICATION

Data Sources

Citizen LTOs collect data on early warning signs and incidents of violence from a variety of sources. Even if observers do not directly witness an incident, they can report it if they have verified the event occurred (see verification subsection below) and have a sufficient amount of data on it. Observers may hear about incidents through reports from and interviews with citizens, the media, other NGOs, parties, candidates, government officials, election administrators or the police. LTOs should read and listen to the news for such stories. They should also cultivate relationships with government authorities, including police and security forces (when such forces can be trusted), so that they can gain access to official data, such as police blotters. Observers should attend as many electoral events, such as campaigns or rallies, as possible.

Verification

When LTOs identify an incident that they did not directly witness, they will need to verify the incident. This means finding compelling evidence that confirms the incident occurred and that it is politically related. This may mean consulting reliable news sources, official police documents and conducting interviews with victims, witnesses, perpetrators and security forces when possible to get complete facts before reporting it to headquarters.

Documenting and Reporting: How and When

Citizen monitors use categorization to simplify and standardize incident reports and early warning sign notifications. This means determining how incidents of violence or coercion will be described by **type** (for instance: arson, robbery, assault, attempted murder, coercion), **severity** (for instance, a ranking system for how many people were effected), **frequency** and whether the incident is **verified** or **unverified**. In order to support claims, observers may also want to collect photographic and/or video evidence of any incidents, damage or destruction, if and when possible.

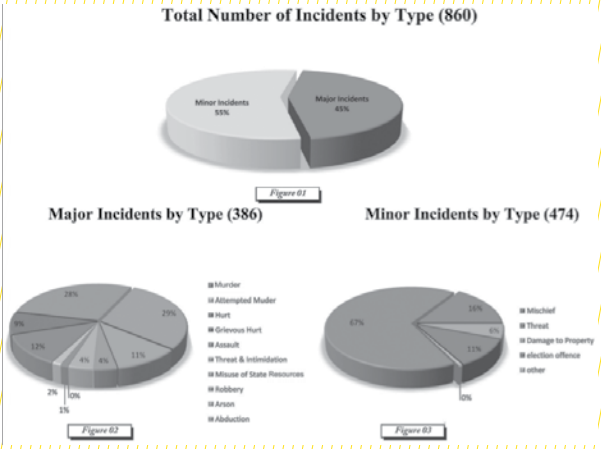
LTOs should document their findings on standardized forms to report them back to their headquarters. In addition to the categorization information, violence monitoring forms should collect the date, time, place, victim(s), perpetrators(s), witness(es), gender(s), ages, any political affiliations and a brief description of

Engaging the Right Actors for Early Intervention

In order for violence forecasting to be effective, citizen monitors must have plans of action if and when warning signs are identified. This includes having an established network of actors that may be able to address the large variety of early warning indicators. In some cases, it may be more effective to first notify individuals that can have an impact on a warning sign rather than publicly releasing information about it. LTOs will want to engage community leaders, local authorities, security forces, the electoral management body, the international community and local NGOs. When a warning sign is identified, monitors will need to decide who the most appropriate actor for resolving it is. For instance, if bribery and corruption are seen as increasing tensions, a group would likely engage political parties and the election commission to address the issue, rather than turning first to the police.

the incident.[10] Reporting forms should use clear and unambiguous language and be organized logically to encourage concise answers with strong information. For clarity, groups should have separate forms for reporting early warning signs that would focus on violence indicators rather than confirmed incidents. Reports of violent incidents should be prioritized and reported to headquarters immediately, while groups should develop a standard schedule – such as weekly – for reporting warning signs and long-term trends.

FIGURE 2



Categorizing Types of Electoral Violence: CMEV's Final Report on Sri Lanka's 2010 Presidential Elections

Incident reports should be centralized at headquarters and compiled in a database. Maintaining incident records in a computerized database allows observer groups to easily sort, code and analyze violence information, which can be shared with relevant actors (see figure 3) and through public reports. An incident database also facilitates easy updating after following up on incidents and/or new developments.

Follow-Up

Citizen LTOs should always follow up on recorded incidents of violence and any warning indicators. Follow-up will help determine whether the problem was resolved and what authorities, if any, were responsible for addressing the issue. Incidents and warning signs that are not resolved should be tracked periodically and updated regularly in the database. If no action is taken on incidents considered significant, groups may want to register an official complaint with the election

[10] See Appendices I, II and III for sample forms.

FIGURE 3

Monitoring and Reporting Early Warning Signs vs. Incidents of Violence

commission or appropriate authority. Figure 3 illustrates different methods of follow-up depending on whether a group monitoring incidents of violence or early warning signs of violence.

RELEASING INFORMATION

In order to create an environment of public scrutiny and accountability and to increase potentials for reform, citizen monitors should release periodic statements regarding their data, particularly consolidated information and analysis on incidents of violence and violent behavior. Only confirmed and verified incidents should be analyzed and included in public reports.

Groups may also consider creating graphs, maps or other forms of data visualization to present their findings (see Section 4 for more detail). Monitoring organizations may want to be more strategic about information gathered on early warning signs. Some early warning data will have little relevance to the public at large or even may create an unnecessary sense of alarm among the public. Such data should be utilized internally for planning purposes and, more importantly, shared with the appropriate local and/or international actors to inform their work and prompt a timely response.

03 HOLDING THE MEDIA ACCOUNTABLE

The language and rhetoric of media, including print, broadcast, radio, online publications, and social media like Twitter and Facebook, can serve as a significant forecast for and catalyst of politically-motivated violence. Some media outlets have been attributed to fueling polarizing views, inciting tensions and distorting facts in vulnerable environments. Often reports from citizen monitoring groups serve as a reliable alternative source of information to corrupt and/or highly polarized media that may aggravate rumors, report information in a biased manner, or fail to report incidents of violence and coercion. Citizen LTOs are in a critical position to monitor the media for hate speech and inflammatory or divisive rhetoric that serve as significant warning signs. In addition, monitoring organizations can use their widespread networks and nonpartisan reputation to harness public scrutiny of media behavior and alert authorities and the international community to irresponsible media conduct.

PLANNING AND BUDGETING

Tracking the tone and content of the media should be folded into the larger long-term effort of citizen election monitors. Media accountability monitoring should span the length of an organization's long-term observation process, including well before, during and after election day. While comprehensive media monitoring is an enormous undertaking, requiring a high level of capacity and resources, a more targeted media monitoring effort focused on early warning signs may not require substantial additional resources or staff.[11]

If resources allow, a specific core team of LTOs may be assigned to exclusively examine the media. Depending on the availability of national news sources, this is something that can be done largely at the headquarters level with a relatively low level of financial resources. However, all LTOs should be trained to alert the headquarters if they observe troubling media behavior in their deployment

[11] For a detailed methodology for monitoring traditional news media, see NDI's handbook entitled Media Monitoring to Promote Democratic Elections, R. Norris & P. Merloe, 2002.

areas. In addition to staff time, monitoring groups should be prepared to pay for newspapers and magazines, if relevant, as well as some recording equipment if they are monitoring television and/or the radio. If the electricity supply is unreliable, having a generator is critical to ensure that no news is lost.

DATA COLLECTION AND FACT-CHECKING

Data Sources

Different types of media are popular in different countries and contexts. In some areas, the vast majority of the public receive information from print media and radio. In other places broadcast television and the Internet may be a more common source of information. Social media is also rapidly becoming a popular source of information in many countries, particularly among young, educated and urbanized populations. Observer groups monitoring the media should carefully assess what the most relevant sources of media are in their respective countries. If observers are operating in a media-saturated environment, it may not be advisable or even possible to comprehensively observe all aspects of the media.

Groups should thus prioritize their monitoring effort by focusing on specific media sources, channels, sites and/or particular programs that have considerable influence on the public, as well as on specific groups and/or individuals that may be most likely to engage in hate speech or inflammatory and divisive rhetoric. Dangerous rhetoric is increasingly going "underground" into more informal, online arenas. Monitoring efforts should take into account that in some contexts, sources outside of traditional media, such as blogs, Internet newspaper comment forums, social media – especially Twitter and Facebook – and other new media may be important to monitor. In some countries, observers may need to track sources in multiple languages in order to fully cover the relevant media.

Once a group has decided on the types of media to monitor, they will also need to narrow the focus of content. Observers interested in content affecting the potential for electoral violence will focus on examining only key sources of political information, such as news and commentary (as opposed to, for instance, entertainment or sports pieces). Monitors should examine Op-Eds, television and radio news commentators, news hosts and news pieces to determine whether the tone and content is conducive for peaceful political participation.

Media Sources: What to Look For

When analyzing media sources, LTOs should track three main issues:

- **Hate speech**: This includes the use of any derogatory or intimidating words or slurs against a person or group. Hate speech has malicious undertones and can encourage discrimination and/or violence against a person or group, often evoking racism or other forms of intolerance. It typically includes a 'target' minority that is de-humanized and often encourages taking violent action against that group.
- **Polarizing or inflammatory language**: Polarizing or inflammatory language is intentionally divisive rhetoric that promotes extremism. Media that takes radical sides on issues or events and does not allow for moderate discussion can be polarizing. Language that encourages actions or intentionally stirs fanatical emotions could be considered inflammatory. This type of rhetoric does not seek peaceful compromises or constructive resolutions and instead draws stark partitions among people.
- **Exaggerations, distorted facts and falsehoods**: Irresponsible media coverage can make it difficult to determine what is factual and what is not. However, some media may blur facts due to political bias and in some cases may even lie about particular news items. Purposeful misinformation can be a serious warning sign. It creates an environment of confusion and can hinder rational dialogue among those engaged in the political process. In cases where it is difficult to discern whether a media outlet is reporting false information, citizen monitors should fact-check suspicious or misleading material. Fact-checking means double-checking assertions made by the media through in-depth research and consultation with reliable sources, such as formal statements, official documents and interviews.

Documenting and Reporting

Citizen observers should clearly define what can constitute dangerous speech in their country context, collect information about these problems using standardized forms. These should include, at a minimum, a categorization of "type" of problem (hate speech, polarizing language, misinformation), the source of the problem (media outlet, program, commentator/reporter), the date, the time and a brief description of the problem.[12] Observer groups should consolidate all reports into a central database, so that the data can be analyzed to inform the

[12] See Appendix II for sample form.

groups' public outreach and direct engagement of the media, as described in more detail below.

PROMOTING MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY

Citizen monitors have the ability to not only track and report on potentially troubling developments in the media, but to also help create pressure on the media to be accountable for what it publicizes. While there are a variety of methods for promoting media accountability, three of the most common and effective methods are:

- increasing public awareness of media behavior;
- enlisting the support of relevant international actors; and
- directly engaging and/or intervening with media outlets and journalists.

To increase public awareness, citizen observer groups should develop, as part of a larger external communication strategy, a variety of ways to inform the public about media behavior. Depending on what groups deem to be most effective in reaching their target audiences, examples of public outreach products include creating and distributing score cards ranking media outlets on different categories (i.e. , hate speech, polarization, distortion of facts), running ads or radio spots, informing opinion leaders and starting social networking campaigns through sites such as Twitter and Facebook. In order to increase their profile and impact, groups may consider issuing separate reports on media accountability independent of their regular LTO reports. These reports could highlight incidents of hate speech, polarizing language and misinformation as well as identify the culpable parties.

By engaging relevant actors in the international community, observer groups can increase pressure on media outlets and journalists to be accountable and responsible in their reporting. Observer groups can engage with human rights groups and international media, as well as media watchdogs or technical assistance providers such as the United States Institute for Peace (USIP), Article XIX, BBC World Service Trust and Internews. Even if there is not a strong NGO or international media presence within the country, these actors can still easily be reached via email, social networking, fax or phone.

Depending on citizen observer groups' strategy and available resources, they may consider more direct engagement with journalists and media houses. This could

Media Codes of Conduct

Monitoring organizations may consider working with media outlets and journalists to sponsor or develop a Media Code of Conduct (sometimes called a Journalist Code of Ethics or a Code of Professional Responsibility). These codes outline standards for media professionalism and responsibility. It may behoove media and journalists to participate in the code development to generate good publicity and ensure rivals agree to the same commitments. However, when media are not willing to be involved in the code development, monitors may have to develop the code themselves and then launch a public campaign to apply pressure on media to agree to the standards. Codes of Conduct are not legally binding – they are typically self-enforcing and informal. However, they provide a baseline of expectations that monitors and the public can use to hold media accountable.

include journalist trainings in which monitors guide reporters on how to fairly and factually cover the electoral process. Some monitoring groups have also developed media Codes of Conduct that outline commitments to responsible journalism.[13] These codes can help media outlets understand their influence on the public debate as it relates to conflict and create obligations and peer pressure to reduce hate speech, polarizing language and rumors.

[13] A sample media Code of Conduct is included in Appendix IV.

04 CROWDSOURCING AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE MAPPING

Collecting, analyzing and rapidly distributing verified information can help mitigate the escalation of violence. Citizen monitoring organizations in Kenya, Lebanon, Maldives, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Nicaragua, Russia, Uganda and elsewhere have used hotlines to collect, report and track regular citizens' accounts of violent incidents and, in tandem with professional observer information, have visualized the relevant and verified data on a digital map. Hotlines provide citizens with a means to participate in the electoral process beyond voting, reporting problems and voicing concerns even if local officials or authorities are unresponsive or unreliable. Observer groups can also help mitigate electoral violence when they take measures to verify hotline reports. By verifying all reports, groups can be prepared to dispute unfounded rumors, such as accusations of large scale fraud, thereby helping to mitigate potential triggers of violence.

Gathering information from everyday citizens (i.e. , the "crowd") to solve a problem through an open call to participate is called **crowdsourcing** or **citizen reporting**. The participatory nature of the methodology and the inclusion of all verified reports in a crowdsourced electoral violence monitoring effort can encourage otherwise apathetic citizens to play a role in identifying and reporting violence, as well as in promoting electoral integrity. This can be particularly useful when groups seek to collect as much information as possible about violence or the potential for violence, as well when groups aim to mitigate the spread of rumors that could trigger violence.[14]

However, crowdsourcing has several limitations that should be taken into account. Crowdsourcing does not accurately or comprehensively reflect the conduct of an election. Information is anecdotal and raw. Reported information has a bias toward negative incidents and toward areas where citizens are better informed about the crowdsourcing effort, such as in urban areas. There is even the potential for bad actors to "game the system" or manipulate the findings by submitting untrue reports. That said, information from trained observers deployed systematically

[14] For further reading on crowdsourcing, visit: https://demworks.org/category/concepts/crowdsourcing and http://mobileactive.org/q-ian-schuler-election-monitoring-citizen-reporting-and-mobiles.

What is a Shapefile?

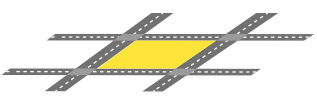
A shapefile is a common file type for storing geographic data, such as points, lines and areas (polygons). To map data for countries and smaller geographic units (such as provinces or districts) within countries, observer groups must have shapefiles, or at least some form of geographic files, for the relevant geographic boundaries. A shapefile is actually a set of at least three files that define the boundaries and attributes of each geographic shape: .shp, .shx and .dbf. Other common types of files that store geographic information are KML, KMZ and GeoJSON files.

POINTS

With map points, a specific x/y coordinate on a map is referenced. Points are usful for showing an exact location where an event occurred.

POLYGONS

Map polygons are configurations of boundary points that note a specific area on a map. They are meant to illustrate geographic units.



and from the crowd can be used in tandem. This approach can be crucial in closed and/or particularly violent political environments, where trained observers may be prevented access to parts of the electoral process.

Filtering crowdsourced data through a professional monitoring group helps ensure that information is categorized properly and that only verified, complete and relevant information is reported to the public. As mentioned above, by verifying whether crowdsourced reports are factual or not, citizen observer groups can help dispel rumors and, as a result, help to mitigate one of the possible triggers of electoral violence. Methods of categorizing and verifying reports are described in more detail in the next section.

Violence and electoral data that is visualized on maps, charts and infographics[15]

[15] Infographics are visual representations of information or data that present complex information quickly and clearly.

Using Tools Appropriately

Crowdsourcing and mapping are two separate tools that often complement each other. However, depending on the environment, the groups' goals and the target audience, monitoring groups may choose to do one but not the other. For instance, if in a given country very few people use the Internet, then digital mapping may not be effective but a citizen reporting hotline might still be helpful. Similarly, collecting citizen reports exclusively through SMS messaging would not be effective if few citizens have mobile phones or a reliable cellular network. Groups should collect reports from citizens using the most appropriate communications mechanisms for their local context.

can help simplify complex data while still representing it accurately. It can also help groups understand and respond to data better by, for example, highlighting geopolitical trends and correlations. Citizen observer organizations are well-positioned to provide important context to mapped data that tells the story they want to tell about the current political and electoral environment. Observer groups' professional, well-informed analysis can also help decrease the likelihood of misinterpretation. Thus, when used appropriately, data visualization can help groups have a greater impact in their work.

ELECTORAL VIOLENCE CROWDSOURCING

Strategy Development

Developing a crowdsourcing strategy is time and resource intensive. Groups should develop a strategy and detailed timeline at least several months before the hotline is open to the public.

The first step in developing a crowdsourcing strategy is to prioritize goals. This will help determine the methodology, reporting mechanisms and external communication that are best-matched for the group's priority goal. For example, if the goal is to promote citizen participation in the elections, then a crowdsourcing effort without rigorous, labor-intensive verification methods may be an effective use of resources. However, if the goal is to use reports to mitigate violence by identifying and verifying early warning signs and incidents of violence and reporting them to relevant authorities, then the crowdsourcing effort should include substantial resources for verification.

Hotline Timing

As with long-term violence and early warning sign monitoring by trained observers, groups will want to determine how long their citizen reporting hotline should operate based on when they anticipate incidents to occur. Groups often keep hotlines open during the pre-election period, election day, resolution of complaints and release of official results. Generally, organizations should strive to use the same timeline for their hotline as for their LTO deployment, which allows groups to potentially use verified citizen reports to complement the LTO data.

Public Advertising Campaign

A number of groups that have attempted to use crowdsourcing during elections have learned the hard way that a substantial and well-executed advertising campaign is essential for ensuring broad participation. Observer groups should carefully consider the time and resources needed to sufficiently publicize hotline information. Extensive outreach should be conducted prior to launch to ensure that the public knows how to report incidents, such as what phone number to call or text, what email address to use and/or what website to visit.

Reporting Mechanisms

Through hotline centers, observer groups can receive citizen reports of violence through a number of mechanisms, including:

- **Phone conversations** – Input is transcribed and entered into the database by a hotline call operator;
- **Text (SMS) messages** – Input is processed and entered into the database automatically;
- **Email or online web forms** – Input is passed straight into the database; and
- **Interactive Voice Response (IVR)** – Callers can select from a menu of options to input their reports.

Generally, it is advisable to use a combination of these methods, which helps reach broader segments of the population and ensures that there are other ways to report if one method does not work or is shut down. Groups should determine, based on resources and local context (infrastructure and prevalence of use), which technologies are the most appropriate. For example, if only email and Internet-based methods of reporting are provided, there will be a heavy bias toward technologically-connected citizens, who likely reside in urban areas. Each method of reporting has a different overall cost, and the distribution of that cost varies. For example, the citizen may need to pay the cost of sending a text message, while the citizen observer group might bear the cost of having a live telephone hotline. Observer groups should also keep in mind that hotlines require consistent staffing to process and verify information, as well as to respond to emergencies. This too can have budget implications.

Given its widespread use and relatively cheap availability for users, text messaging has become one of the most popular forms of citizen incident reporting. Moreover, it has proven to be a more efficient technology for receiving a large amount of data (many texts) in a short period of time. With the right software, SMS data can be

translated rapidly into usable information for analysis and visualization.

Observer groups that incorporate SMS into their crowdsourcing effort should consider using a short code to simplify texting for citizens. A short code is an abbreviated number of only 4 or 5 digits which can receive messages from any user. This helps encourage participation by making it easier for the public to remember hotline phone numbers. Moreover, short code arrangements often utilize the same number across multiple cellular networks and, in some cases, can transfer the airtime costs from the user (citizen reporter) to the recipient (observer group). Setting up a short code has initial administrative costs and may take up to several months to acquire depending on the business environment.

Categorizing and Verifying Crowdsourced Reports

Like all incidents reports, information collected via the hotline should first be categorized or "tagged" accurately. It would befit the observer group to follow a similar taxonomy that its LTOs use for violence monitoring, including incident type and verified status. Most groups choose to designate only a few (three to five categories) incident types, so that the types of incidents are easy for the public to understand.

Reports directly from citizens lack the quality assurances of trained citizen observer findings. Therefore, groups often seek to verify citizen reports before they are presented publicly. This is particularly the case for citizen reports received before and after election day, when the volume of reports is relatively low. Verifying reports on election day, when the reporting volume could be very high, would require significant additional resources. The page to the right provides an example of a citizen observation group in Uganda that carefully verified crowdsourced reports and, as a result, was able to dispel an unfounded rumor that could have triggered electoral violence.

While each group should determine its criteria for verifying reports, some general guidelines to consider are:

- obtaining the same information from at least two reliable sources;
- two or more reports about same incident from two different phone numbers or sources, and then a "verifier" has spoken directly to at least one of the people who reported;
- video, photo and/or audio evidence;
- copies of any legal documentation filed; and/or
- direct report from a trusted, knowledgeable person, such as a trained

Elements of Effective Crowdsourcing

Many groups embarking on a crowdsourcing effort initially believe that their most difficult tasks will be setting up hotlines, collecting citizen reports and mapping data. However, experience shows that these activities only make up a fraction of what it takes to conduct an effective crowdsourcing effort. The more difficult and time consuming activities include advertising the campaign, verifying and categorizing citizen reports and effectively sharing information with the public and/or relevant authorities. If crowdsourcing is employed to mitigate violence, then it is essential to establish and maintain relationships with relevant stakeholders who can follow up or take action based on the information (e.g. , local police or peace committees).

observer or trusted journalist.

Observer groups can categorize and verify citizen reports in a number of ways. While observer groups often have an existing observer infrastructure (including a centralized office, call center and LTOs) that can be expanded upon to verify citizen reports, groups should keep in mind that verification requires a significant amount of financial and human resources. Below is a method that groups could consider using, particularly for reports submitted before and after election day, when reporting volume is lower than on election day:

- Citizen report is submitted directly to central office (hotline center);
- A "tagger" in the central office (ideally someone who is skilled with technology) checks and tags each report to specify, for example, the geographic location, type of incident and whether it has been verified or not;
- Unverified reports are communicated to the relevant LTO (based on regional coverage of LTOs), and the LTO attempts to verify the report using the criteria established by the group; and
- LTOs report to the central office as to whether they are able to verify each report.

Using Feedback Mechanisms to Mitigate Violence

If the main goal of the crowdsourcing initiative is to use reports to help mitigate violence, there are a number of measures observers groups can take to effectively sharing information with the public and/or relevant authorities. Simply reporting incidences of violence or potential triggers of violence via press statements and web-based maps has little chance of mitigating electoral violence unless it is accompanied by rapid feedback mechanisms targeting specific individuals and institutions who can take action to mitigate, deter or mediate potential violence.

To establish these mechanisms, observer groups should build and maintain relationships with the relevant stakeholders who can follow up on the information, such as local police, security forces, election officials, political party leaders at the national and local levels, influential figures (i.e. , religious and community leaders), and peace activists. Citizen observer groups can then communicate their data and analysis to these stakeholders through regular meetings, direct emails and calls, an email listserv and other communication methods. For example, observer groups can identify locations where violence triggers are occurring, which actors are involved, and immediately inform the appropriate authorities to intervene. Examples of this in the Ugandan and Guatemalan contexts are provided in this section. Groups may also be able to use crowdsourced reports to inform

EXAMPLE

Mitigating Violence through Verified Crowdsourcing in Uganda

For Uganda's 2011 presidential election, the Democracy Monitoring Group (DEMGroup), a citizen election monitoring coalition, launched an interactive hotline called Uganda Watch (www.ugandawatch.org). Uganda Watch was a public hotline that enabled citizens to call or text to a short code (6090) with complaints and concerns about the electoral process. DEM Group designated a team of trained staff members and volunteers to review and verify each report. Verification methods included calling back citizen reporters for more information and/or asking DEMGroup field staff to investigate reported incidents. Each report was then digitally mapped, and only verified reports were tagged as "verified." Through this verification process, DEMGroup was able to refute a rumor that a Member of Parliament had been assassinated, which had been causing rising tensions. Had this rumor not been dispelled, it could have triggered violence. DEMGroup also was able to use much of the data collected to inform stakeholders of electoral reform priorities during dialogue sessions around the country with political parties, the election commission and local authorities. Feedback from Uganda Watch 2011 users demonstrated that users preferred an active two-way reporting system that would provide feedback on how their reports are being used rather than simply submitting reports.

peace campaigns, so that the campaigns can target specific individuals or groups that are at the source of potential violence triggers.

VISUALIZING ELECTORAL VIOLENCE DATA: MAPPING

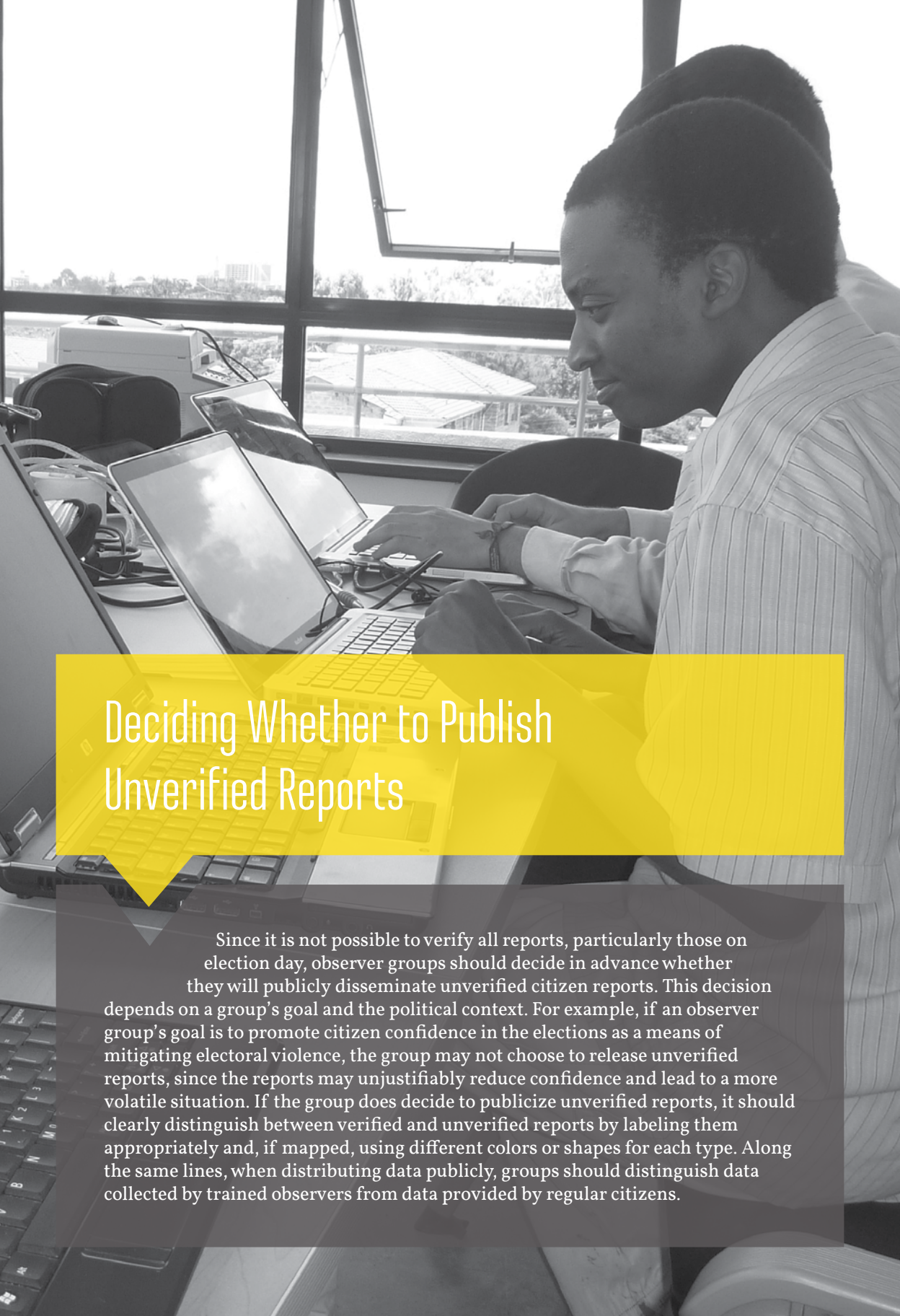
Visualizing data on maps, charts and infographics can help citizen observer groups communicate messages by telling visual stories about data that may otherwise be difficult to understand and interpret. For example, observer groups monitoring electoral violence can use maps to visualize the severity of electoral violence indicators across geographic areas and to highlight specific locations of high risk for violence. Today's technology has made mapping data possible for anyone with basic technical skills.

However, while the technology is becoming more accessible, the most important elements of an effective map are not related to technology. In addition, mapping is not always the most influential or effective way to publicize findings and communicate a story or message. The most important building blocks of effective data visualization are: collecting high quality data, conducting sound and thoughtful data analysis, and understanding how to tell a compelling visual story based on that analysis.

External Communication Strategy

In addition to analyzing data carefully, observer groups should develop an external communication strategy well in advance that includes objectives, prioritized target audiences, messages, communication methods (i.e. , live event, social media, radio, Internet, print media, etc.), tools and/or products, and deadlines for each product. When put into the context of a communication strategy, data visualization is simply one of several potential tools that can be used to communicate messages to specific target audiences.

While developing the strategy, observer groups should consider how their specific target audiences most commonly receive information and then tailor outreach methods and tools accordingly. For example, if one of the target audiences is urban, educated, tech-savvy youth, the observer group may aim to reach them through social media. This could include posting reports and photo and video evidence on YouTube and Facebook, as well as establishing a live Twitter feed of all verified citizen reports. This example demonstrates that, while mapping electoral



Deciding Whether to Publish Unverified Reports

Since it is not possible to verify all reports, particularly those on election day, observer groups should decide in advance whether they will publicly disseminate unverified citizen reports. This decision depends on a group's goal and the political context. For example, if an observer group's goal is to promote citizen confidence in the elections as a means of mitigating electoral violence, the group may not choose to release unverified reports, since the reports may unjustifiably reduce confidence and lead to a more volatile situation. If the group does decide to publicize unverified reports, it should clearly distinguish between verified and unverified reports by labeling them appropriately and, if mapped, using different colors or shapes for each type. Along the same lines, when distributing data publicly, groups should distinguish data collected by trained observers from data provided by regular citizens.

violence data can be useful, it is only one of many tools and is most effective when integrated into a broader external communication strategy.

It is also important for observer groups to keep in mind that there are a range of other data visualization tools beyond mapping. Maps are not always the best way to visualize data. Each visualization tool, such as a chart or infographic, has different strengths and weaknesses for using data to convey messages. For example, many groups use bar charts to clearly demonstrate wide variations across regions or among different types of electoral violence triggers or incidents. There may also be cases where a map is not the best way to visualize data, as explained in the above section on external communication strategy. Infographics can be used effectively when groups want to communicate a message very quickly, simply, and in a visually appealing way that can easily be shared via social media.

Key Elements of Effective Mapping

Before developing a map, there are several questions that observer groups should carefully consider:

- **What story do I want to tell with my data?** This will be the most important factor in determining what type of visualization a group develops, as explained below. What are the two to three key messages?
- **What kind of data do I have?** Is the data official government statistics, findings from trained observers, reports from everyday citizens, or a combination? In addition, data can only be mapped it if contains or can be assigned geographic coordinates (longitude and latitude), which is called "geocoding."
- **Who is the target audience(s)?** The type of map a group might develop for the international community or general citizens of the country may be different than the type of map developed for state institutions and security bodies.
- **Is a map the most effective way to visualize the data?**

Matching Types of Maps to the Key Message

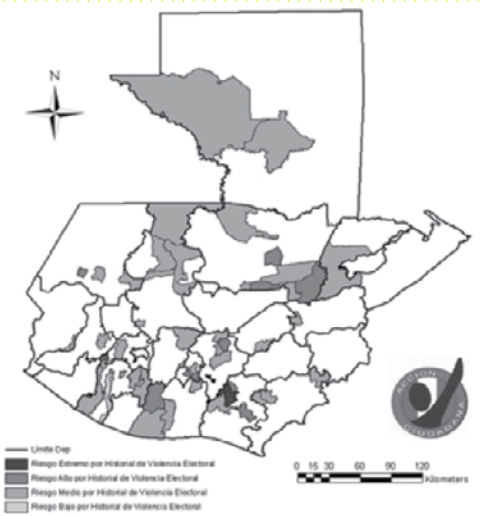
The answers to the above questions will determine how data can be mapped to convey a compelling story. While there are many different ways to map data on violence and elections, the two most common types of maps are described below. To help decide on the best way to map data, observers groups should keep in mind

the following mapping criteria:

- Does it clearly communicate the main message?
- Does it put the data in the right context?
- Does it clearly distinguish between verified and unverified reports?
- Is there a way for the user to get more detail if necessary (either by providing a way for users to "drill down" in the data or by making it clear that more data is available via a contact)?

FIGURE 4

Example of Gradient Map: Historical Data on Election Day Violence in Guatemala



For the 2011 elections in Guatemala, Accion Ciudadana (AC) analyzed and mapped historical election-day violence data across municipalities using a gradient from "extreme risk" (dark) to "low risk" (light). See the text box below for more information on AC's methodology.

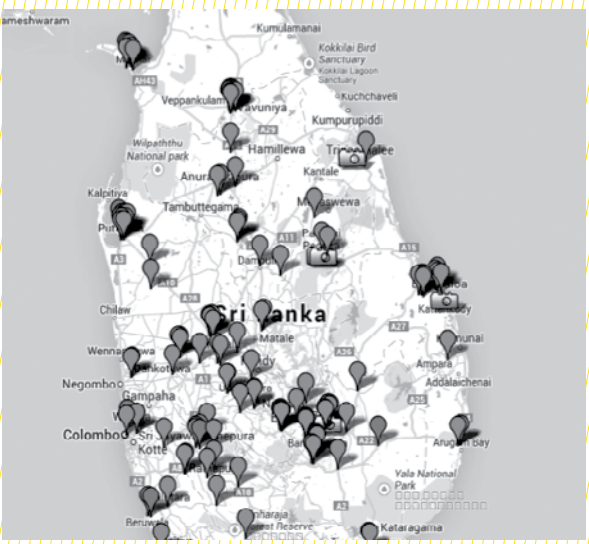
Gradient (or choropleth) maps use different colors or shading (i.e. , from light to dark) to show relative differences in data across geographic areas such as regions, states, provinces or districts.[16] A common usage of gradient maps for elections is to map election results by assigning each candidate a different color and shading each region according to which candidate received the most votes in

[16] Geographic areas drawn on digital maps are called "polygons."

that particular region.

For mapping electoral and violence data, gradient maps can be useful for a variety of purposes. They can be used to show regional differences in rates of historical electoral violence, prevalence of organized crime, or other indicators the observer group selects to illustrate the potential for or presence of electoral violence. Observer groups have also used gradient maps to demonstrate different electoral violence risk levels across different geographic areas. Figure 4 provides an example of a gradient map.

FIGURE 5



Example of Point Map: CMEV 2010 Presidential Election Observation in Sri Lanka

Point maps represent individual reports or other data (such as reports of electoral violence) by using pinpoints or other symbols for each report or data point. Figure 5 provides an example of a point map. As mentioned above, observer groups should distinguish between trained observer data and citizen-reported data, as well as between verified and unverified citizen reports by, for example, using different colors or shapes for each type.

While point maps can show the location of each report of electoral violence, they have several drawbacks. They often lack context and, as a result, can be very misleading. For example, if a map shows 50 reports (points) of violence in the capital and 50 reports spread throughout the rest of the country, it may give the impression that the capital is experience higher levels of violence than the rest of the country. However, if a majority of polling stations are in the capital (i.e. , 80 percent), then in reality the capital may be experiencing comparatively less violence than the rest of the country, since 50 percent of incidents that occurred

were in the capital, where 80 percent of the polling stations are. Not everyone who views the map will be familiar with the overall context, so it is the job of the observer organization to visualize and frame the data in the appropriate context.

Mapping Tools and Software

There are a number of tools for mapping data, some of which can be more costly and technologically complex than others. Some example of tools on the less complex and less expensive side are: desktop graphic publishing, which uses accessible design and geographic information system (GIS) software applications to create or edit country, state or regional maps; Google Fusion Tables, which allow observer groups to map data on top of the free, satellite-based geographic information of Google Maps; and free, open-source software platforms (such as Ushahidi) that allow for collecting and plotting individual reports, such as incidences of violence, on maps. There are a number of more complex and expensive tools for mapping data, including applications that are open source, proprietary and cloud-based.

05 THE ROLE OF CITIZEN OBSERVERS IN GRASSROOTS MITIGATION AND MEDIATION

Many citizen monitoring organizations have worked to mitigate potentials for electoral violence through a variety of strategies and methods, including, for example, voter education campaigns highlighting acceptance, tolerance and peaceful elections and other anti-violence messages. Because many citizen election monitoring efforts are broad coalitions, they are well-positioned to promote dialogue within communities by facilitating events such as community forums or roundtables surrounding elections to foster communication, information sharing and consensus building. Some monitoring groups may even train their LTOs in dispute resolution methods so that they can mediate local-level conflicts.

While this section highlights three methods groups have used to mitigate potentials for electoral violence, it is essential that groups undertake a strategic planning process to determine which strategies, methods and tactics are best-matched for the country context and available resources. This involves working through many of the steps outlined in the "Planning: Strategy, Scope and Duration" subsection of Section 1, including assessing underlying tensions and causes of violence in the country, identifying potential electoral cycle triggers or flashpoints, identifying high-risk geographic areas and developing a strategy that takes all of this into account.

VOTER AND CIVIC EDUCATION

Citizen monitors often conduct voter information and education campaigns surrounding elections. Voter information campaigns help ensure voters fully understand the basic facts, such as how, when and where to vote. Voter education campaigns are broader campaigns that, in addition to providing basic electoral facts, help voters understand the importance of voting and elections, as well as help prepare voters to make an informed choice. In situations where violence could emerge, equipping citizens with complete and accurate information about the electoral process and surrounding environment can help reduce confusion and counter destabilizing forces. Moreover, providing complete information can help build public confidence in elections and decrease tensions.

In contexts affected by the potential for electoral violence, observer groups may take a more direct approach to violence mitigation by incorporating and even featuring anti-violence messages and content in their voter education efforts. Through these efforts, citizens learn about the peaceful nature of elections and about what it means to have political competition that results in winners and losers in the electoral process. These discussions can help prepare the public to react calmly during potential flashpoints, such as during the release of preliminary election results.

FIGURE 6

Democracy Sierra Leone's Civic Education Flyer on Mediating Conflict for the 2007 Presidential Run-off Election

Voter education campaigns that incorporate anti-violence messaging can go beyond education. They can help mobilize support for non-violence, encouraging citizens to move from a position of fear to one that is openly against violence. Such campaigns can be more effective in gaining broad community support when they not only involve passive activities, such as posters and flyers, but also more interactive and creative approaches.

Groups have used street plays, simulations and other community-engagement activities to better prepare voters for the electoral process. This may include role plays in which citizens learn how to handle a conflict at a polling station during voting or when results are posted. Community events, such as concerts for peace and candlelight vigils, can be effective ways of engaging and educating citizens in many contexts. Some groups have garnered the help of musicians and media outlets to play songs about peaceful elections or to run commercials and print ads promoting non-violence. Similarly, campaigns have involved prominent or famous people in promoting the message. Other groups have developed entertaining yet informative video clips and cartoons that can be easily disseminated on the Internet via social media.

EXAMPLE

Youth Campaign for Peace in Kenya

Following the disputed 2007 Kenya elections, civil society recognized the need for promoting dialogue and consensus building ahead of the 2013 elections. As part of this effort, graduates of the NDI-supported Youth Political Leadership Academy decided to launch an Inter-Party Youth Forum (IPYF). IPYF, comprising representatives from all major political parties, provided a forum for youth political party activists from across the political spectrum to collaborate on solutions to the most pressing issues facing youth in the country. Ahead of the 2013 elections, IPYF organized a national youth peace conference in Nairobi, during which 950 youth leaders, representing all 56 registered political parties, from the 47 counties, pledged to uphold peace during the March 4, 2013 General Elections. The peace pledge formed the culmination of a nationwide peace campaign targeting youth leaders, which engaged more than 2000 youth in national and local outreach forums.


PEACE
ENCE

Monitoring groups have similarly engaged political parties and candidates on understanding these critical processes and peaceful avenues available for redress. There are a range of ways groups can engage parties. Monitoring groups can, for example, facilitate dialogue among parties in a neutral setting that focuses on concrete and less controversial policy issues. Groups can also cooperate with parties to develop and sign a Code of Conduct for peaceful campaign and electoral conduct. In the longer-term, monitoring groups can encourage and otherwise advocate that parties undertake intra-party reforms that mitigate the potential for violence, such as ensuring youth have sufficient channels and opportunities to rise up the party ranks and that parties engage through good faith efforts in election inter-party liaison committees led by election commissions or others.

COMMUNITY BUILDING AND DIALOGUE PROMOTION

Citizen election monitoring organizations are often large and diverse networks of citizens interested in safeguarding the election process and promoting peaceful elections. Their role as trusted and nonpartisan interlocutors means they can have significant convening power.

One way that monitoring groups have leveraged this power is by promoting dialogue and social cohesion through, for example, organizing forums or round tables on issues surrounding upcoming elections and hosting political debates or town hall meetings. Observer groups have also organized community events such as voter and civic education trainings, multi-ethnic or multi-faith public events, observer recruitment sessions and information dissemination gatherings that help bring people together.

The organizational structure of citizen monitoring groups is often based on coalitions and networks of civil society organizations. Thus, monitoring groups are often well-positioned to build sustainable coalitions during non-election years and to provide both local- and national-level platforms for dialogue and negotiation. Depending on the nature and degree of pre-existing tensions, violence mitigation can require integrated efforts across multiple sectors, including goods and service providers, women's engagement groups, environmental activists, academic advocates and institutions, law associations and commerce and labor organizations. Monitoring organizations should coordinate with these other organizations, both domestic and international, on conflict mitigation efforts surrounding elections – including those not directly involved with the elections. When possible, citizen observers should also engage the private sector to

discourage commercial influences in violent behavior and increase community participation. Building and leveraging these multi-sector relationships can help lead to better-informed, complimentary projects that address shared goals. Developing coordinated approaches to conflict mitigation can help mobilize collective action against violent behavior.

MEDIATION TRAININGS

Citizen monitoring leadership at the national and local levels often hold community leadership roles that predispose them to playing a mediation role. At the same time, given their nonpartisan role in the electoral process, observers may be approached to mediate local-level conflicts. If observers are to respond to these situations, they must be equipped to play a more active role than simply observing and analyzing incidents and warning signs. Depending on the political context and goals of the group, monitoring organizations may consider incorporating training on dispute resolution methods into the core trainings for LTOs. Training on dispute resolution could include how to recognize and dissect a dispute, what to do in high-risk situations and what steps to take for either engaging an appropriate mediating authority or calming tensions and settling disagreements.

Training observers to be mediators can create additional safeguards for resolving disputes surrounding elections. However, depending on the goals, size and scope of a group's long-term monitoring effort, as well as the capacity of the LTOs, this additional mediator role may place too much burden on LTOs and, as a result, may hinder their ability to carry out their main responsibilities. One alternative strategy that groups may consider is to develop a separate mediation initiative that compliments the LTO effort without diverting resources from it. Another alternative is that groups may decide to partner with other organizations that have the capacity to deploy trained mediators alongside their LTOs.

Women can also play a unique role in conflict mitigation and mediation. Around the world women have been in the forefront of anti-violence efforts. In recent elections in Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, for example, women's organizations, with the backing of UN Women, Open Society Foundations and other organizations, created women's "situation rooms" for peaceful, credible elections that monitored electoral violence against women while campaigning against violence. In addition to violence monitoring, citizen election monitoring organizations should consider the role that female observers in particular can play in violence mitigation, such as organizing women-only round tables and other community organizing activities that enrich anti-violence efforts.

EXAMPLE

Conflict Mediation in Africa

The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) has long been incorporating local-level dispute mediation into much of its programming, particularly in conflict-prone countries. In 2005 and 2006, the organization trained and deployed specialized conflict mediators throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to help resolve disputes at the grassroots level. In South Africa, the group worked with the South African Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to reestablish Conflict Management Panels for the 2011 local elections. These panels linked members of the community trained in mediation to IEC staff in order to build capacity within the IEC to diffuse electoral conflict when it arose at the local level.

06 SAFEGUARDING THE SAFEGUARD: OBSERVER SECURITY

Citizen observers engaged in conflict mitigation and violence monitoring can face serious risks to their safety. Tracking violent incidents and surveying potential warning signs may put monitors in volatile situations and flashpoints prone to violence. Moreover, particularly in corrupt or authoritarian environments, investigating and reporting incidents may be politically sensitive and could make monitors targets for perpetrators. Citizen election monitoring groups should ensure that volunteers understand the risks involved before they commit to participate in efforts related to violence monitoring and mitigation. Such risks could be stated in the observer Code of Conduct or other commitment documents that observers are asked to sign.

At the same time, there are a number of steps that citizen groups can take to protect monitors while still achieving their organizations' goals. In contexts where observer security is a major concern, groups could form an internal committee focused specifically on observer security strategies, plans and measures. Like all aspects of planning, security policies should take into account the political context, each aspect of the electoral process, and each region of the country. Some aspects of the electoral process may be considered more dangerous than others, or some areas of the country may be more volatile, in which case organizations may adjust the level of security for those periods or locations.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

One of the most powerful ways to ensure the safety of monitors is to develop relationships within the communities in which they work, including building constructive relationships with local-level security forces and legal authorities. By ingratiating themselves with a community, monitors will be viewed as an ally instead of a threat, and key contacts will be more likely to provide avenues for rapid response if problems do arise. Moreover, monitoring group leadership should maintain dialogue with the party leaders, government, election management body and central-level security forces in order to respond to less

Social Networking and Security

New media and social networking websites can enhance security for monitors. Social networking platforms such as Facebook can be used to contact large numbers of monitors and other volunteers quickly and easily if potentially violent or dangerous situations arise. However, information on social networking sites is relatively public and can easily be shared, so citizen monitoring groups should be careful about what they post. Groups should refrain from posting anything too politically sensitive or that could place observers in compromising positions. Sites such as Twitter can allow observation leadership to monitor developing situations quickly and to take any necessary security measures in a timely manner.

isolated incidents. Strong relationships with the international community can also help deter and/or react to targeted violence against monitors.

DEVELOPING SECURITY PLANS

It is critical that citizen election monitoring organizations develop security and contingency plans for all their monitoring efforts well before they are executed. This includes creating basic security policies, clear communication structures and phone trees, as well as crisis scenario plans. When developing security plans, groups should consider any additional challenges women or minority observers may face in different scenarios. Monitoring organizations should also have legal support, such as volunteer or staff attorneys, available if a problem arises. In places where security is a significant concern, organizations should develop deployment plans that place long- and short-term observers in teams of two.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Communication policies and tools should be designed to ensure that information can be transmitted securely and with as little burden as possible. This means using secure phone lines and protected Internet connections when possible. In addition, the group's leadership should define a limited number of staff that will have access to the organization's aggregated observer data (for instance, the database), and all monitoring offices should have adequate security to protect information and property. This often includes hiring private security providers.

Generally, no personal information about monitors should be released unless the government requires it for accreditation purposes. In some extreme scenarios, groups may need to take extra precautionary measures to protect the anonymity of their monitors. This could include, for example, using identification numbers instead of personal details. In some cases, it may be appropriate for monitors and monitoring groups to maintain a "low profile." It is up to the monitoring organization to determine if and when these situations occur.

TRAINING

Security should be a part of every citizen observer's monitoring training. Monitors should be clear on who they should contact and how in the case of an emergency. In addition, all monitors should be taught basic precautionary measures they can take, including:

- **Remove oneself from a dangerous situation**: if a monitor feels as though her/his life is in danger, that person should leave the situation immediately. Even though violence monitors seek to collect complete and accurate information on violent incidents, this information can be collected through interviews after the incident is over.
- **Remain neutral in all disputes**.
- **Always carry an identification document** and monitor accreditation, if one is issued.
- **Take every threat seriously**: any and all threats to monitors should be reported immediately to the headquarters.
- **Act professionally and remain calm**.

RELEASING REPORTS AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION

Citizen monitors often collect and report sensitive information, and public statements and reports issued by monitoring organizations can have a social and political impact. It is important that the entire monitoring network, including regional and local branches, as well as all monitors, are made aware when reports are released from headquarters. This can allow them to prepare for any adverse reactions that may occur. Many groups only issue reports from the central, headquarters level, in part as a way to help protect staff and monitors outside of the capital.

Given the complex and sensitive information that monitoring groups are in possession of, they should develop plans for how to release information and what to release in different scenarios. Monitoring group leadership should always assess the security situation before releasing data, and in some cases not all data may be appropriate for public consumption. If there is a high probability that findings could provoke tensions, groups may consider informing stakeholders and authorities of some of their findings before releasing them publicly.

07 CONCLUSION

Monitoring and mitigating the potentials for electoral violence involves a number of strategies from a multitude of actors. With nonpartisan reputations and networks of hundreds or thousands of citizen observers, citizen election monitoring organizations are well suited to play key roles in violence monitoring and mitigation. Monitoring groups should develop complementary, multi-pronged approaches to encourage peace while monitoring the electoral process. Tracking and reporting violence to hold perpetrators, including irresponsible media, accountable, identifying early warning signs, involving everyday citizens in reporting violence and nurturing local-level mediation are all methodologies that citizen election monitors should consider when designing their monitoring effort, particularly in conflict-prone environments.

Integrating these approaches into a monitoring effort will require additional human and financial resources. However, organizations can apply these methodologies to varying degrees to take into account resource constraints. Some citizen monitoring groups have employed many of these approaches at the same time, while other groups may prioritize approaches based on which would have the most impact in their particular context. Generally, groups already planning to conduct long-term election observation should keep in mind that incorporating at least some degree of violence monitoring and mitigation into the LTO effort can be done relatively seamlessly, since the observer infrastructure would already be in place.

When conducted credibly, elections do not create violence. However, because of their high-stakes nature, they can exacerbate pre-existing or unresolved conflicts. The nature and causes of electoral violence differ greatly across different political contexts. Citizen election monitors must conduct thorough assessments before designing their programs and maintain the flexibility to adapt them if new developments arise. Exposing violence, particularly when significant corruption and/or organized crime are involved, can put citizen election monitors at great risk. Observer security should always be a priority in order to recognize, support and protect citizens that are actively engaging in promoting a violence-free electoral process.

Monitoring and mitigation efforts can significantly improve the potentials for peaceful, credible elections. Many nonpartisan citizen election monitoring groups and coalitions are contributing to curtailing potentials for election-related violence in their countries and share experiences with organizations in other countries. Further and more active sharing of experiences and techniques will enhance these efforts around the globe.

APPENDICES

Sample Electoral Violence Monitoring Form

Pakistan

Pakistan 2012: Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability – Free and Fair Election Network (TDEA-FAFEN)

Electoral Violence Incident Report Form

I. Data Collection Information

1. Date of Report *(dd/mm/yy)*:
2. Constituency Name and Number:
3. Name of Monitor:
4. Contact number:

II. Type of Violence *(Tick one box only)*

Political
Electoral
High-Conflict

III. Incident Date, Time and Location

1. Date of Incident *(dd/mm/yy)*:

2. Time of Incident *(Tick one box only)*
   6am – 12pm (noon)
   12pm – 6pm
   6pm – 12am (midnight)
   12am – 6am
   Unable to determine

3. Location of Incident *(Fill all applicable fields)*
   a. Province:
   b. City:
   c. District:
   d. Constituency:
   e. Tehsil/Town:
   f. Union Council:
   g. Precise Location of Incident:

- o Poll Station
- o Registration Site
- o Election Commission Office
- o Counting Center
- o Organization involved in election observation/monitoring
- o Party Headquarters
- o Local Party Office
- o Candidate or Party Member Home
- o Party Meeting, Rally
- o Informal gathering of party supporters (e.g., to put up posters)
- o Unspecified Public Area
- o Road/Path
- o Shopping/Commercial Area
- o Residential Area
- o Forest/Remote Area
- o Park, Square, or Public Center
- o Public Transportation
- o Government Facility
- o Military Facility
- o Police Facility
- o Other Government Site
- o Private Home
- o Restaurant
- o Corporation/Business
- o Media/Press
- o Medical
- o School/Univ
- o Foreign Govt Site
- o NGO Site
- o Mosque/Place of Worship

h. Neighbourhood/Address of Place of Incident:

IV. Summary Description of Incident

1. Title of Incident:

2. Details of Incident *(Provide all details of the incident using active voice. Specify perpetrator/s or participant/s in the incident, as well as victims.)*

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

V. Sources

Source 1

1. Name of Newspaper:
2. Date of Newspaper:
3. Page Number:
4. Headline given in Newspaper:
5. Byline (Author name or wire service, e.g. AP, AFP):
6. Details given in news story:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____
_____
_____

Source 2

1. Name of Newspaper:
2. Date of Newspaper:
3. Page Number:
4. Headline given in Newspaper:
5. Byline (Author name or wire service, e.g. AP, AFP):
6. Details given in news story

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

VI. Impact of Violence

1. Impact on persons and property *(Tick all that apply)*
   - Persons killed
   - Persons injured
   - Persons injured and hospitalized
   - Persons kidnapped
   - Persons detained/arrested
   - Property damaged
   - Property destroyed

2. Impact on the Electoral Process *(Tick all that apply)*
   - Candidates prevented from campaigning or running for office
   - Interference with voter education
   - People discouraged or physically prevented from voting
   - Vote count disrupted
   - Complaint filed with the Election Commission
   - Election cancelled
   - Election postponed
   - Re-run election
   - Unable to determine
   - Women discouraged or physically prevented from registering or voting
   - Election observers prevented from carrying out their roles
   - Election officials prevented from carrying out their duties
   - Polling stations closed, damaged or moved
   - Loss/destruction of key electoral materials (e.g. ballots, ballot boxes) necessary for election to take place

Party prevented from holding meetings and rallies, posting/distributing information, or otherwise unable to engage in normal and legal campaign activity
Campaign or election-related events disrupted and/or citizens and/or party supporters unable to attend
People forced to vote through physical threat or intimidation
Election offices closed, damaged or moved
Not applicable

VII. Perpetrator Information

1. Exact number of perpetrators (if known):

2. Gender *(Tick all that apply)*
   Male
   Female
   Unable to determine

3. Perpetrator Identification *(Tick all that apply and provide specifications)*

Actor	Name	Political/Organizational Affiliation (if any)
Political party leader / candidate		
Political party worker / candidate worker		
Political party supporter / candidate supporter		
Political party agent / candidate agent		
Election official		
State security forces		
Government actor		
Elected member		
Minorities group		
Militants		
Tribal/village leader(s)		
Civil society organization		
Religious leader(s)		
Media / Journalist		
Business owner(s) (specify type of business)		
Professional association (e.g. lawyers)		

Other		
Election Observer (Name of Organization)		
Voters		
Community Member/ Constituents		
Unable to determine		

VIII. Victim Information

1. Gender of Victims *(Tick all that apply)*
   - Male
   - Female
   - Both
   - Unable to determine

2. Victim Identification *(Tick all that apply, and provide specifications)*

Actor	Name	Political/Organizational Affiliation (if any)
Political party leader/candidate		
Political party worker/candidate worker		
Political party/candidate supporter		
Political party agent/candidate agent		
Election official		
State security forces		
Government actor		
Elected member		
Minorities group		
Militants		
Tribal/village leader(s)		
Civil society organization		
Religious leader(s)		
Media/Journalist		
Business owner(s)		
Professional association (e.g. lawyers)		
Other *(specify)*		
Election Observer		
Voters		

3. Total number of dead victims:

4. Total number of injured victims:

5. Total number of kidnapped victims:

IX. Property Damage Information

1. Category of Property:
   Public
   Private
   Both

2. Type of Property and Owner Affiliation

Type of Property	Affiliation of Owner
Roads/Brides/Tunnels/Gates Headquarters/Central Office Public Transit Posters/Flyers/Campaign Material Utilities (Dams/Electric) Office Motorcycle/Bike Large Banners Transportation Systems Mosque, shrine, church, or other religious site Bus, Truck, Van Equipment/furniture (speaker, PC, desks) Industrial Facilities Polling Station Car Data/Information: Computer file, voter lists Ports/Airports/Stations Private Home Ballots and/or Ballot Boxes Energy/Resources Temporary Structure Election Supplies/Materials Barricades/Checkpoints Place of Business/Store	

X. Method/Tactic of Violence *(Tick all that apply)*

Incendiary device
Gun/Fire arm
Sharp objects
Blunt Objects
Arson

Physical Assault (resulting in serious injury)
Suicide Bombing
No weapon
Don\'t Know
Missile/Mortar
Landmine Explosion
Improvised Explosive Device (IED)
Kidnapping/Abduction
Threat/Intimidation
Damage/Destruction of Property
Arbitrary Detention
Physical Abuse (grabbing, striking, slapping, hair-pulling, etc.)
Attempted/Thwarted Bombing

--End of Form--

Sample Violence and Media Monitoring Form

Côte d'Ivoire

Project uni du monitoring de la violence Côte d'Ivoire 2011

IDENTIFIANTS DE L'OBSERVATEUR					
1	Nom		2	Prénom	
3	Organisation		4	Zone Observé	
5	Téléphone		6	Adresse mail	

LOCALITE ET HEURE DE L'INCIDENT					
7	Lieu		8	Quartier	
9	Ville/Village		10	Commune	
11	Département		12	Région	
13	Date (JJ/MM/AA)		14	Heure	
15	Durée de l'incident				
16a	Etiez-vous témoin de l'incident ?				
16b	Si non, comment avez-vous été informé de l'incident ?				

17. CATEGORIES D'INCIDENT	
☐ Assassinat	☐ Destruction de supports de campagne
☐ Tentative de meurtre	☐ Destruction de matériel électoral
☐ Agression physique/verbale	☐ Intimidation/Menaces
☐ Arrestation arbitraire	☐ Incitation à la violence
☐ Torture	☐ Incitation à la haine (nature :_____)
☐ Traitement cruel et inhumain	☐ Diffamation
☐ Viol/Abus sexuel	☐ Obstruction violente des réunions ou manifestations
☐ Enlèvement	☐ Empêchement de vote
☐ Expulsion (nature :_____)	☐ Autre (préciser :_____)
☐ Destruction de biens	

18. CONTEXTE
Quelle était l'activité en cours ? Quelle était l'atmosphère politique/sociale au moment de l'évènement ? Quelle était la motivation des présumés auteurs ? Qui étaient le groupe ou les personnes ciblées ? L'action semble-t-elle préméditée ? Les forces de l'ordre étaient-elles présentes ? Quelle était la réaction des victimes et des témoins ? Quelle était la réaction des autorités en place ? Est-ce que c'est une action isolée ?

IDENTIFIANTS DES AUTEURS DE L'INCIDENT						
19	Nom	Sexe	Age	Profession	Affiliation politique	Autre (préciser)
19a						
19b						
19c						
19d						
19e						

IDENTIFIANTS DES VICTIMES DE L'INCIDENT						
20	Nom	Sexe	Age	Profession	Affiliation politique	Autre (préciser)
20a						
20b						
20c						
20d						
20e						

DEGATS MATERIELS					
21	Genre de matériel		22	Nombre de matériel	
23	Description du dégât				

TEMOINS DE L'INCIDENT							
24	Combien de témoins étaient présents ?		25	Combien de témoins étaient disposés à vous donner leur point de vue ?			
26	Nom	Sexe	Age	Profession	Affiliation politique	Autre (préciser)	
26a							
26b							
26c							
26d							
26e							

27. RECITS DES TEMOINS
Si nécessaire, utiliser une page supplémentaire

REACTIONS PUBLIQUES A L'INCIDENT			
28	*Qui a réagi publiquement à l'incident ?*	*X*	*Réaction*
28a	Responsable des autorités municipales/ régionales/nationale	☐	
28b	Responsable de la commission de réconciliation	☐	
28c	Responsable de la CEI	☐	
28d	Responsable des forces armées	☐	
28e	Responsable des partis politiques	☐	
28f	Responsable religieux/ethnique/social	☐	
28g	Société civile	☐	

COUVERTURE MEDIATIQUE							
29	L'incident a-t-il été rapporté dans les médias ?	Oui ☐ Non ☐		30	L'incident a-t-il été présenté de façon isolée ou à répétition ?	Isolé ☐ Répété ☐	
31	*Quels médias ?*	*Nom*	*Affiliation*	*Orientation des commentaires*	*Nom*	*Affiliation*	*Orientation des commentaires*
31a	Radio						
31b	Télévision						
31c	Journal						
31d	Média Sociaux						
32	Les rapports des médias correspondent-ils aux faits observés ? *Si non, description des différences entre les faits et le rapport*						

Sample LTO Incident Form

Sri Lanka

Center for Monitoring Electoral Violence (CMEV), Sri Lanka

Election Violence Report
මැතිවරණ ප්‍රචණ්ඩකිරිය වාර්තාව
தேர்தல் வன்முறை அறிக்கை
Provincial Council Election 2013

CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE

Date of Incident
සිද්ධිය වූ දිනය
சம்பவம் நடந்த திகதி

Reference No
අනුක්‍රමික අංකය
தொடர் இலக்கம்

Province
පලාත
மாகாணம்' .....

District
දිස්ත්‍රික්කය
மாவட்டம் .....

Name of Electorate
මැතිවරණ කොට්ඨාශයේ නම
தேர்தல் தொகுதி .....

Monitor's Name
නිරීක්ෂකයාගේ නම
கண்காணிப்பாளர் பெயர் .....

Tel
දුරකථන අංකය
தொலைபேசி இல. .....

Date Reported to Monitor
වාර්තා කළ දිනය
அறிவித்த திகதி .....

Time (24 h/s clock)
වේලාව /පැය
நேரம் / மணி .....

Informant / දැනුම් දෙන්නා / தகவலாளர் .....

Designation and Organization/Party
තනතුර හා සංවිධානය/පක්ෂය
பதவி மற்றும் அமைப்பு அல்லது கட்சி .....

Address /ලිපිනය /முகவரி .....

Telephone/Fax/Emergency Contact No of Informant
දැනුම් දෙන්නාගේ දුරකථන/ෆැක්ස්/හදිසි අමතන්න අංකය
தகவலாளரின் தொலைபேசி / பெக்ஸ் இல. .....

Date of Incident
සිද්ධිය වූ දිනය
சம்பவம் நடந்த திகதி .....

Time(24 hrs.clock)
වේලාව /පැය
நேரம்/மணி .....

Place / Location (Address)
ස්ථානය (ලිපිනය)
இடம் ((முகவரி) .....

Police Station
පොලිස් ස්ථානය
பொலிஸ் நிலையம் .....

Police Division
පොලිස් කොට්ඨාශය
பொலிஸ் வட்டாரம் .....

Complainant
පැමිණිලිකරු
புகார் செய்பவர் .....

Complainant's Party Affiliation
පැමිණිලිකරුගේ පක්ෂ සම්බන්ධය .....
புகார் செய்தவரின் கட்சி

Gender
ස්ත්‍රී පුරුෂ .....
ஆண் / பெண்

Attackers
පහර දුන් අය .....
தாக்கியவர்

Attacker's Party Affiliation
පහර දුන් අයගේ පක්ෂ සම්බන්ධය .....
தாக்கியவரின் கட்சி

Gender
ස්ත්‍රී පුරුෂ .....
ஆண் / பெண்

Details of Incident as reported including the Name/s and Sex of the Victims
ගොදුරු වූ අයගේ නම් හා ස්ත්‍රී පුරුෂ භාවය ඇතුලත්ව, වාර්තාවූ ආකාරයට සිද්ධියේ විස්තර
பதிவு செய்யப்பட்டவாறு பெயர் மற்றும் பால்நிலைகள் உள்ளிட்ட விபரங்கள்

.....

.....

.....

(©CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE ශ්‍රීලංකාවේ ඡන්දවලදී සිදුවෙන ප්‍රචණ්ඩකාරී ක්‍රියාවන් නිරීක්ෂණය කිරීමේ මධ්‍යස්ථානය)

Report of incident in your words based on your assessment

සිද්ධිය පිළිබඳ ඔබේ ඇගයීම් වාර්තාව සම්බන්ධ පත්‍රය උංගළතු மதிப்பீடு

.....

.....

.....

Details and Corrobortion : කතාව සිරීම් හා විස්තර : ஏதாவது ஊர்ஜிதங்கள்

.....

.....

.....

Perpetrators Named
චුදිතයන් නම්කොට ඇත
குற்றம் செய்தவரின் பெயர் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது
Yes ඔව් ஆம் ☐ No නැත இல்லை ☐

Firearms/Bombs involved
ගිනි අවි/බෝම්බ භාවිතය
துப்பாக்கி பிரயோகம்
Yes ඔව් ஆம் ☐ No නැත இல்லை ☐

Involving Polling/ID Cards
පත්ද/හැඳුනුම් කාඩ්පත් සම්බන්ධ සිද්ධියක්
வாக்குப்பத்திரம் சம்பந்தப்பட்டது
Yes ඔව් ஆம் ☐ No නැත இல்லை ☐

Details of Police Report / පොලිස් වාර්තාවේ කොටසක් / பொலிஸ் அறிக்கை

Date Reported to Police
පොලිසියට වාර්තා වූ දිනය
பொலிஸாருக்கு அறிவிக்கப்பட்ட திகதி
..... (24 hrs. clock)
වෙලාව / පැය
நேரம் / மணி .....

Entry No
පැමිණිලි අංකය
பதிவு இலக்கம் .....

Police Station
පොලිස් ස්ථානය
பொலிஸ் நிலையம் .....

Police Division
පොලිස් කොට්ඨාශය
பொலிஸ் வட்டாரம் .....

Officer / OIC
නිලධාරිය
அதிகாரி பொ.பொ அதிகாரி .....

Complainant /පැමිණිලිකරු/
புகார் செய்பவர் .....

Party / පක්ෂ/ கட்சி .....

Attackers
පහර දුන් අය
தாக்கியவர் .....

Party
පක්ෂ
கட்சி .....

Report
වාර්තාව
அறிக்கை .....
.....

Perpetrators Named / චුදිතයන් නම්කොට ඇත
குற்றம் செய்தவரின் பெயர் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது
Yes ඔව් ஆம் ☐ No නැත இல்லை ☐

Police Classification /පොලිස් වර්ගීකරණය/பொலிஸ் வகைப்படுத்தல் .....

For Colombo office use only

Checking of Report

Local Police : .....

Confirmation of Details :

Correct ☐ Denied ☐ Changes ☐

Details Obtained On [Date] : .....

At [Police Station] : .....

Police Officer : .....

Checked by

.....

(©CENTRE FOR MONITORING ELECTION VIOLENCE சுகிர்கை தேர்தல் வன்முறைகள் கண்காணிப்பு நிலையம்)

Sample Media Code of Conduct — *United States*

The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Code of Ethics

SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS.

Code of Ethics

PREAMBLE

Members of the Society of Professional Journalists believe that public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy. The duty of the journalist is to further those ends by seeking truth and providing a fair and comprehensive account of events and issues. Conscientious journalists from all media and specialties strive to serve the public with thoroughness and honesty. Professional integrity is the cornerstone of a journalist's credibility. Members of the Society share a dedication to ethical behavior and adopt this code to declare the Society's principles and standards of practice.

SEEK TRUTH AND REPORT IT

Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

Journalists should:

- Test the accuracy of information from all sources and exercise care to avoid inadvertent error. Deliberate distortion is never permissible.
- Diligently seek out subjects of news stories to give them the opportunity to respond to allegations of wrongdoing.
- Identify sources whenever feasible. The public is entitled to as much information as possible on sources' reliability.
- Always question sources' motives before promising anonymity. Clarify conditions attached to any promise made in exchange for information. Keep promises.
- Make certain that headlines, news teases and promotional material, photos, video, audio, graphics, sound bites and quotations do not misrepresent. They should not oversimplify or highlight incidents out of context.
- Never distort the content of news photos or video. Image enhancement for technical clarity is always permissible. Label montages and photo illustrations.
- Avoid misleading re-enactments or staged news events. If re-enactment is necessary to tell a story, label it.
- Avoid undercover or other surreptitious methods of gathering information except when traditional open methods will not yield information vital to the public. Use of such methods should be explained as part of the story.
- Never plagiarize.
- Tell the story of the diversity and magnitude of the human experience boldly, even when it is unpopular to do so.
- Examine their own cultural values and avoid imposing those values on others.
- Avoid stereotyping by race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, geography, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance or social status.
- Support the open exchange of views, even views they find repugnant.
- Give voice to the voiceless; official and unofficial sources of information can be equally valid.
- Distinguish between advocacy and news reporting. Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context.
- Distinguish news from advertising and shun hybrids that blur the lines between the two.
- Recognize a special obligation to ensure that the public's business is conducted in the open and that government records are open to inspection.

MINIMIZE HARM

Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect.

Journalists should:

- Show compassion for those who may be affected adversely by news coverage. Use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced sources or subjects.
- Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief.
- Recognize that gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort. Pursuit of the news is not a license for arrogance.
- Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence or attention. Only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy.
- Show good taste. Avoid pandering to lurid curiosity.
- Be cautious about identifying juvenile suspects or victims of sex crimes.
- Be judicious about naming criminal suspects before the formal filing of charges.
- Balance a criminal suspect's fair trial rights with the public's right to be informed.

ACT INDEPENDENTLY

Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.

Journalists should:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.
- Remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.
- Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment, and shun secondary employment, political involvement, public office and service in community organizations if they compromise journalistic integrity.
- Disclose unavoidable conflicts.
- Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.
- Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors or money; avoid bidding for news.

BE ACCOUNTABLE

Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.

Journalists should:

- Clarify and explain news coverage and invite dialogue with the public over journalistic conduct.
- Encourage the public to voice grievances against the news media.
- Admit mistakes and correct them promptly.
- Expose unethical practices of journalists and the news media.
- Abide by the same high standards to which they hold others.

The SPJ Code of Ethics is voluntarily embraced by thousands of journalists, regardless of place or platform, and is widely used in newsrooms and classrooms as a guide for ethical behavior. The code is intended not as a set of "rules" but as a resource for ethical decision-making. It is not — nor can it be under the First Amendment — legally enforceable.

The present version of the code was adopted by the 1996 SPJ National Convention, after months of study and debate among the Society's members. Sigma Delta Chi's first Code of Ethics was borrowed from the American Society of Newspaper Editors in 1926. In 1973, Sigma Delta Chi wrote its own code, which was revised in 1984, 1987 and 1996.

Case Study on Monitoring and Mitigating Electoral Violence

Sri Lanka

In 2009, Sri Lanka emerged from 25 years of civil war into a fragile peace. While attention has turned to post-conflict reconciliation and economic development, political violence has continued, particularly around elections, and has often been exacerbated or triggered by unresolved post-war issues. Ethnic tensions and the associated political rivalries inflamed during the protracted conflict remain pervasive. The war's legacy of militarization and a proliferation of firearms have left an entrenched climate of fear, particularly in the North. An open-list voting system, allowing voters to rank candidates from the same party list, has contributed to conflict within political parties. In addition, the absence of a legitimate accountability process for wartime abuses, coupled with the erosion of judicial independence, has contributed to a culture of impunity around violence.

Civil society in Sri Lanka has for decades played an active role in trying to address recurring political and electoral violence. While election observation is not recognized by law, Sri Lankan citizens have been permitted to observe most elements of the electoral process at the discretion of the Election Commission -- although, significantly, not the counting and tabulation processes. Citizens have observed with enthusiasm since the 1988 elections. Nonpartisan citizen groups have carefully documented incidents of electoral violence and identified trends in political tension. A range of outreach efforts have allowed these organizations to raise public awareness around the issue of electoral violence and elicit timely and appropriate responses to incidents. Between elections, civil society actors have engaged in initiatives to try and address the underlying social and systemic factors that contribute to political violence. In a political climate that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR) and others have characterized as increasingly authoritarian and a media environment consistently ranked among the world's most repressed, civil society groups have had to constantly assess how to maintain their credibility and safely and effectively make their voices heard.

Building legitimacy through methodologies that emphasize report verification, establishing relationships with other stakeholders, and developing measures to ensure observer security have been integral to the successes of civil society organizations engaged in these efforts. The Center for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV), first convened in 1997, is an election-time coalition of the Center for Policy Alternatives (CPA), Free Media Movement (FMM) and INFORM Human

Rights Network focused on contributing to peaceful elections through careful documentation of election-related violence, allowing them to "name and shame" the perpetrators and reduce the culture of impunity around violence. Outside election periods, CMEV's convening organizations conduct a range of other activities including electoral reform advocacy and voter education. People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL) has observed elections in Sri Lanka since the 1988 presidential elections and is the oldest election monitoring organization in the country, using a broad-based network of civil society organizations to mobilize observers and collect information. PAFFREL focuses on mitigating political tensions that may lead to violence through targeted communication with authorities and decision makers during election periods and a range of peace campaigns and reform activities between elections.

CMEV: DOCUMENTING AND PUBLICIZING INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE

CMEV seeks to provide an impartial voice on electoral violence in Sri Lanka, with the ultimate goal of bringing public pressure to bear on perpetrators and ending the culture of impunity. CMEV convenes during election periods to collect data on incidents of and trends in physical violence, threats and intimidation. The Center disaggregates electoral violence data by incident type, victim information, perpetrator information, location, and other details. While CMEV has documented a decline in physical violence around elections over the past decade, the coalition's co-conveners recognize the importance of continuing to come together during elections to document that positive trend and focus more on less noticeable forms of coercion like intimidation and the entrenched climate of fear, in addition to other growing problems such as abuse of state resources.

CMEV's electoral violence monitoring methodology includes long-term and short-term observation. Long-term observers (LTOs) deploy to every electoral division equipped with forms and digital cameras to report on and capture evidence of violence and abuse of state resources. LTOs are also trained to conduct more general "ground situation monitoring," which covers electoral administration, the campaign environment, and voter awareness and engagement. When LTO reports bring to light high numbers of violations or escalating tensions in a certain area, CMEV conducts a "field visit" during which a small team of election, conflict, legal or other experts deploy to the region to ensure comprehensive documentation of the situation. On election-day, CMEV deploys short-term observers (STOs) recruited through its convening organizations. The deployment plan centers

around analysis of potential violence hotspots based on historical CMEV and official data, as well as ongoing LTO reports. Mobile election-day teams allow CMEV to investigate incidents in more depth.

CMEV collects data from a number of sources beyond trained observers. For national elections, the Center establishes a public hotline for citizens to report incidents, which CMEV is then careful to verify before publicly reporting. CMEV has also generally enjoyed good working relations with police forces, allowing access to the police log of election-related incidents as a verification tool and source of additional reports. This working relationship has benefited police efforts as well, giving them access to CMEV observer and citizen reports and enabling rapid incident response.

Verification of all reports is critical to CMEV's reputation for impartiality and professionalism, which contributes to relationships with other stakeholders and the success of its monitoring efforts. CMEV verifies each incident through a range of means such as the police log, credible media reports, and victim and eyewitness testimony. In addition, CMEV seeks comment from the alleged perpetrating individual(s) or political party -- a measure that provides transparency into its data collection process and gives the accused an opportunity reply to allegations. In the longer term, this step allows CMEV to track how different political parties respond to incidents of violence committed by their members or followers, which in turn can indicate which political parties may be ready to engage on the issue.

CMEV's approach to public outreach is aimed at providing citizens and authorities with impartial, credible information on election-related violence to contribute to public pressure against political violence and, ultimately, diminish the culture of impunity. By encouraging citizens not to vote for violent candidates, CMEV seeks to discourage violence by reducing the political gains that can be achieved by violent actors. To this end, CMEV takes an approach of "naming and shaming" the perpetrators of verified incidents, shining a spotlight through press releases, reports, social media and other means onto those who espouse political violence. CMEV publishes online maps of violent incidents throughout the electoral process through its website and social media. In a country with pronounced ethnic and political divisions that fall along geographic lines, mapping is a useful tool for examining possible patterns of violence that may have larger political or social implications.

Observer security is of critical importance to CMEV throughout these activities. The Center has taken a number of steps to try and ensure the physical safety of its observers including emphasizing personal safety in observer training; providing insurance to observers; encouraging LTOs to register with local police in their area

of deployment; and at times, collaborating with local security-focused firms.

Beyond Monitoring

Between elections, CMEV and CPA engage in a number of activities aimed at reducing political tensions and promoting peace. Voter and civic education activities have focused on encouraging voters not to elect candidates who espouse or perpetrate violence. CPA has also undertaken electoral reform advocacy activities around boundary delimitation to reduce ethnic tensions, among other issues. A major reform success was in 2002, when the court granted permission for the Election Commission to annul the results of a polling station based on violence perpetrated at that location, as documented by citizen observers. CPA has also been active in the ongoing post-war reconciliation process, promoting dialogue at the community level. In addition, CPA's polling unit has conducted public opinion research around elections and voting behavior. This research can help assess the scale and scope of fear or entrenched intimidation among citizens, which can affect candidates and voters alike even if more overt forms of violence are absent.

Broader Impact

CMEV has documented a decline in physical violence in Sri Lanka's elections since the start of its monitoring efforts and work to raise awareness of the issue both among citizens and the international community. CMEV and its co-conveners are recognized both in Sri Lanka and by the international community as providing a credible, nonpartisan voice. Most recently, CPA was honored at U.S. President Barack Obama's September 2013 civil society roundtable.

In addition to establishing its own impartiality and credibility, CMEV has played an integral role in solidifying a reputation for the practice of citizen election monitoring as a whole. CMEV emphasizes that election observers are now an expected and accepted part of the electoral process among all stakeholders including government authorities, candidates and citizens. Through its efforts, the Center has created public awareness, acceptance and recognition of the practice of citizen election observation and helped carve out space for civil society to work on issues of electoral integrity more broadly.

PAFFREL: MITIGATING VIOLENCE THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

PAFFREL focuses on reducing tensions and mitigating political violence in Sri

Lanka, including during elections. PAFFREL conducts a number of activities throughout the electoral process including election monitoring, voter education, outreach to political parties and electoral reform advocacy. Over the past decade, PAFFREL's strategy has shifted from a public "name and shame" approach to one that emphasizes targeted communication to relevant authorities and decision makers.

PAFFREL's election monitoring methodology emphasizes documentation of violent incidents and abuse of state resources. PAFFREL deploys LTOs in the weeks and months prior to an election up until several weeks after election day. On election day, LTOs comprise mobile teams which are deployed to cover all polling stations in their district. Stationary STOs are recruited through PAFFREL's informal CSO network of national and local organizations. As of the September 2013 provincial council elections, PAFFREL's network comprised around 120 organizations, including youth and women's groups, allowing PAFFREL to mobilize thousands of volunteers for election day.

A Colombo-based "Mitigation Unit" staffed by lawyers, law students, and other volunteers receives all observer reports in addition to incident reports from citizens, parties and the media. Mitigation Unit staff verify all reports; enter them in a database; refer verified incidents to the relevant authorities for action; and follow up on incident response. In regions where PAFFREL anticipates the most violence based on the concentration of incidents in past elections or during the pre-election period, it may establish a special regional Mitigation Unit. These local centers have a similar function to those at the national level and play a role in aggregating, verifying and communicating reports of violence, but allow a more targeted allocation of resources to the most potentially problematic areas. This was the case during the Northern Province's September 2013 landmark provincial council elections – the first regional election in the province and the first election of any type in the province since the end of the civil war.

PAFFREL emphasizes report verification as critical to its credibility and the related willingness and ability of authorities to take timely and appropriate action. PAFFREL seeks to not only verify the details of each incident, but Mitigation Unit staff are trained to determine whether an act of violence was in fact political in nature. Over the course of its decades of work, PAFFREL has established itself as a nonpartisan, credible voice – evidenced by political parties, candidates, the Election Commission and even government authorities coming to the group for information.

BEYOND MONITORING

The All Parties Operation Unit (APOU), initiated by PAFFREL in 2001, facilitates targeted communication among a range of actors. The central goal of the Unit is to foster information sharing among parties, the Election Commission, the police and civil society, enabling coordinated, rapid responses to violence or other incidents by relevant authorities. The Unit has also enabled civil society to promote dialogue among convened party leaders, mitigate inter-party tensions and mediate disputes. The creation of district-level Units in recent years has allowed similar interaction at a local level. While the Election Commission now manages the APOUs, PAFFREL has continued to play a central role in their activities.

PAFFREL also conducts a range of activities between elections to promote electoral reform and strengthen the rule of law. Peace campaigns, including street drama, have been an effective way of reaching citizens. A roundtable program begun in 2013 to engage community leaders seeks to promote dialogue and, ultimately, a culture against violence. PAFFREL's electoral reform advocacy has focused on changing the electoral system, which it sees as a major contributing factor to political tensions. A bill passed in 2012 changing the local election system is the first mark of success.

Broader Impact

PAFFREL's efforts to engage stakeholders have fostered more open dialogue and direct communication among political actors. The APOU has proven a successful means of facilitating inter-party communication and mediation, as well as rapid incident response.

PAFFREL's emphasis on report verification and enduring nonpartisanship have allowed it to develop relationships with a range of stakeholders and have contributed to broader recognition of the practice of nonpartisan election observation in the country. Decades of work to establish credibility have hinged on careful information verification and efforts to actively engage with all stakeholders in the political process. These relationships, in turn, have enabled effective communication with authorities and decision makers, including through the APOU initiative, which has helped to address political tensions throughout the electoral process. Direct feedback from citizens attests to the value of PAFFREL's public outreach programs, including highly popular street drama. The above-mentioned 2012 change in the local election system is a first step towards achieving PAFFREL's vision for reform – changes that it sees as critical to reducing the types of tensions that have contributed to violence in past elections.

Resources on Assessing, Monitoring and/ or Mitigating Electoral Violence

Alihodzic, Sead and Asplund, Erik; International IDEA: 'The Guide on Action Points for the Prevention and Mitigation of Election-related Violence', 2013, available at <http://www.idea.int/elections/ermtool/upload/ERMT-Guide-on-Action-Points.pdf>

Alihodzic, Sead and Burcher, Uribe Catalina; International IDEA: 'The Guide on Factors of Election-related Violence External to Electoral Processes', 2013, available at <http://www.idea.int/elections/ermtool/upload/Guide-on-External-Factors.pdf>

Alihodzic, Sead and Asplund, Erik; International IDEA: 'The Guide on Factors of Election-related Violence Internal to Electoral Processes', 2013, available at <http://www.idea.int/elections/ermtool/upload/Guide-on-Internal-Factors_covers.pdf>

Democratic Governance Group Bureau For Development Policy: 'Elections And Conflict Prevention', 2007, available at < http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/electoral_systemsandprocesses/elections-and-conflict-prevention-guide/>

European Commission United Nations Development Program: 'Thematic Workshop: Elections, Violence and Conflict Prevention', 2011, available at < http://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=396&Itemid&lang=en>

European Parliament: 'How The EU Can Support Peaceful Post-Election Transitions Of Power: Lessons From Africa', 2012, available at < http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/note/join/2012/457110/EXPO-AFET_NT(2012)457110_EN.pdf>

Fomunyoh, Chris; Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue: 'Mediating Election Related Conflicts', 2009, available at <http://www.hdcentre.org/uploads/tx_news/32Electionpapermodified.pdf>

International IDEA: 'An Overview of the Electoral Risk Management Tool ERM Tool)', 2013, available at <http://www.idea.int/elections/ermtool/upload/Overview-Electoral-Risk-Management-Tool.pdf>

International Institute For Democracy And Electoral Assistance: 'Towards A Global Framework for Managing and Mitigating Election-related Conflict and Violence',2009, available at <http://www.idea.int/resources/analysis/towards_global_framework.cfm>

Kammerud, Lisa; International Foundation for Electoral Systems: 'An Integrated Approach to Elections and Conflict', 2012, available at < http://www.ifes.org/~/media/Files/Publications/White%20PaperReport/2012/Integrated_Approach_to_Elections_and_Conflict.pdf>

Schimpp, Michele and McKernan, Aud Frances:' Elections and Conflict: An Issues Paper', 2001, available at <http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACW678.pdf>

United Nations Development Program: 'Understanding Electoral Violence in Asia', 2011, available at <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Democratic%20Governance/UNDP_elections_violence_AP.pdf>

USAID From The American People: 'Electoral Security Framework: Technical Guidance Handbook For Democracy and Governance Offices', 2010, available at <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/1-Electoral-Security-Framework.pdf>

PHOTO CREDITS

Cover
UN Photo
Isaac Billy

Inside Cover
Kelly Fajack
Sierra Leone 2007

Page 9
UN Photo
Albert González Farran

Page 11
Sehar Raziuddin
NDI 2013

Pages 16-17
UN Photo
Hien Macline

Pages 18-19
Bianca Polak
Sri Lanka 2009

Page 22
UN Photo
Paul Banks

Pages 26-27
NDI Photo
Pakistan 2013

Page 29
NDI Photo

Page 37
UN Photo
Basile Zoma

Page 41
UN Photo
Tim McKulka

Page 45
Digital Democracy
2008

Page 47
Ken Banks
Image courtesy of kiwanja.net2008
www.kiwanja.net/mobilegallery.htm

Page 49
Cesar Harada
www.cesarharada.com

Pages 56-57
UUSC
Rights in Humanitarian Crises Program

Page 58
Albert González Farran
UNAMID

Page 62
Dana Smillie
World Bank Photo

ISBN: 978-0-9910142-1-7