ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

My VOTE
My Valentine

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
VOTER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSIVE, INFORMED & ETHICAL PARTICIPATION
19th-21st OCTOBER, NEW DELHI, INDIA

NO VOTER TO BE LEFT BEHIND

INDIA	AFGHANISTAN	AUSTRALIA	BRAZIL	CANADA	FIJI	GEORGIA
INDONESIA	IRAQ	KENYA	LESOTHO	MALAYSIA	MALDIVES	MAURITIUS
MEXICO	MYANMAR	NAMIBIA	NEPAL	PAKISTAN	PHILIPINES	SRI LANKA
THAILAND	TUNISIA	UGANDA	USA			

CONFERENCE READER

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

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VOTER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSIVE, INFORMED & ETHICAL PARTICIPATION

CONFERENCE READER

Dedicated to the Voter

FOREWORD

In India and across the world, the imperative of enhanced voters' participation in Elections is no more a matter of debate, but a serious assignment. Several countries in fact have voters' education as part of their constitutional mandate. Voter is the central actor in democratic election and voters' participation in the democratic and electoral processes is integral to the successful running of any democracy and the very basis of wholesome democratic elections. In India, the constitutional mandate of the ECI for 'superintendence, direction and control of elections contain in-built high responsibility to have every eligible Indian on the electoral roll and get everyone on the electoral roll to voluntarily vote.

Democracies and EMB shave grown up in different historical ecosystems but despite difference in our heritage and circumstances, we all share a common aspiration for healthy democracy.

TheConference is an effortto provide a common platform to the EMBs where we can learn from each other and also from those countries that have not been able to make it in the conference here due to various reasons.This Conference Reader intends to visit some of the fundamental concepts in the realm of democracy, elections and the voter education to support discussions during the proposed conference. This paper is followed by the readings, for each of the sessions, which include the strategies, approaches and systems developed and adopted by different countries for Voter education

I thank Mr. Umesh Sinha, Deputy Election Commissioner and his team and Dr. S D Sharma, former State Election Commissioner and now associated with the Election Commission of India as a Senior Fellow for compiling and editing this massive collection of the voter education programmesfrom across the world around various themes of the conference.

I hope that the Conference Reader will be of immense value to the delegates during this Conference and serve as a good reference document on topics related to voter education and outreach even beyond this Conference.

Dr Nasim Zaidi
Chief Election Commissioner of India

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Election Commission of India,   **S D Sharma, IAS (Retd.)**
New Delhi   *Senior Fellow*
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ABBREVIATIONS

AEC   -   Australian Electoral Commission
ADA   -   Americans with Disabilities Act
AVTI   -   Accessible Voting Technology Initiative
A-WEB   -   Association of World Election Bodies
CABER   -   Australian Electoral Commissioner's Advisory Board on Electoral Research
CALD   -   Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CEC   -   Central Election Commission of Georgia
CEP   -   Provisional Electoral Council of Haiti
CEDAW   -   Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEEP   -   Campus Election Engagement project, USA
CIRCLE   -   The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement, USA
CRPD   -   Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DFID   -   United Kingdom Department for International Development
EAC   -   Electoral Assistance Commission, USA
EC   -   Elections Canada
ECI   -   Election Commission of India
ECN   -   Electoral Commission of Namibia
EDF   -   Eleitor do Futuro (Voter of the Future)
EMB   -   Election Management Body
FEC   -   The Federal Electoral Court, Brazil
FES   -   Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FPCA   -   Federal Post Card Application, USA
FVAP   -   Federal Voting Assistance Programme
HAVA   -   HELP America Vote Act,2002
HAVCP   -   Help America Vote College Program
ICCPR   -   International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICERD   -   International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
IEBC   -   Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, Kenya
IEC   -   Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan
IEPP   -   Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme, Australia
IFES   -   International Foundation for Electoral Systems
JEMB   -   Joint Electoral Management Body of Afghanistan
KICD   -   Kenya Institute of Curriculum development
LWV   -   The League of Women Voters, USA
MILI   -   Myanmar Independent Living Initiative
NDI   -   National Democratic Institute.
NEA   -   NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
NSW   -   New South Wales
NVEP   -   National Voter Education Policy, Namibia
NVRD   -   National Voter Registration Day, USA
PEC   -   Provisional Electoral Council of Haiti
PIRG   -   Public Interest Research Group.
PwD's   -   Persons with Disabilities.
STEJ   -   Supreme Tribunal of Electoral Justice, Paraguay
UDHR   -   Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UEC   -   Union Election Commission
UNCHR   -   United Nations Center for Human Rights
UNDP   -   United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS   -   United Nations Office for Project Services
UOCAVA   -   Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act
UN HRC   -   United Nations Human Rights Committee
US AID   -   United States Agency for International Development
VAAs   -   Voting Advice Applications
WHO   -   World Health Organization

This Conference Reader has been prepared to facilitate the interaction during the three day International Conference on Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical Participation.

The Reader focuses on some of the fundamental concepts in the realm of democracy, electoral standards and the voter education followed by the readings, for each of the sessions (Sections 1-5), which reflect the strategies, approaches and systems developed and adopted by different countries for voter education besides the Introductory Note and Note on Issues and Challenges in respect of each of the thematic sessions of the Conference. Section 6 offers some Case studies.

The Introductory Section deals with basic concepts and extends welcome to the Conference through sharing the Indian experience of voter education.

International electoral standards emanate from the UDHR and ICCPR etc. Article 21of UDHR speaks of right to participation by all in forming the government in a country, will of the people to be to be basis of the authority, will to be expressed through periodic and genuine elections and elections to be conducted through universal and equal suffrage by secret vote. Article 25 of ICCPR is about participation and introduces human rights aspects into electoral process. Any system operating in a State must be compatible with the rights protected by Article 25 and must guarantee free expression of the will of the electors. The principle of one person, one vote, must apply.

Participation, direct or indirect through freely elected representatives, is the fundamental connect with the base of substantive human rights. A voter is the central figure who elects in a democracy. Free and fair elections, characterized by inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, and competitiveness, are fundamental to democracy and the basis for democratic legitimacy. Elections are a process comprised of multiple steps. Elector confidence or the public confidence in each step of electoral process is vital to the credibility and integrity of an election and in turn the democratic polity.

For electors, to choose their representatives through the ballot, it is essential that they are fully aware of all the steps and procedures of the electoral process and they are comfortably confident of making informed ballot decisions. In this context, voter education is of tremendous significance and import to the voters, the election management bodies and the contestants. And this is what forms the basis for voter education and its generic macro sphere that is civic education

The UNCHR in its Handbook on Human Rights and Elections (1994) has spelt out the guiding principles on "Public Information and Voter Education." The principles inter alia state that the funding and administration should be provided for objective, non-partisan voter education and information campaigns especially for new voters. The public should be well informed as to where, when and how to vote besides why voting is important. Voters must be confident in the integrity of the election process and their right to participate in it. Literature should be widely available in all national languages to help meaningful participation by all eligible voters. Multimedia methods should be employed to provide effective civic education to people. Voter education campaigns should cover the entire territory of the country.

In this background, aims and objects of voter education must address the information and awareness needs of all categories of voters including the needs emerging from new technologies so that a voter feels confident and familiar with the entire electoral process. Voter education must be universal in coverage and address challenges of gender sensitivity, inclusion, voter apathy, youth engagement besides marginalized sections of society.

Civic education, as compared to voter education, is a broader and generic concept aimed at conveying knowledge of a country's political system; the organization, structure and the way it operates. Voter education is most effective when it integrates with civic education that puts the election into context for voters and provides an explanation of the election's purpose, the surrounding issues, and their significance.

Strategies and approach adopted for voter education may vary in different countries. EMB's are primarily responsible for voter education; institutional arrangements and strategies for connect with the Voter. The government, the public and private media, political parties, non-partisans including international organizations plays a vital supplementary role as stakeholders subject to overall guidelines of the EMB and strict conditions of non partisan approach.

In India, 'Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation' (SVEEP) is the flagship programme of the ECI which addresses the voter education needs of over 834 million voters spread over 543 constituencies of the House of People and 4120 Assembly constituencies covering 30 States and Union Territories. Essentially an outreach based programme, it engages voters through multimedia under well designed strategies to connect with the grass roots of Indian democracy with its vertical impact going down to the voters spread over almost a million polling stations located in far flung villages, hamlets in rural areas and its capture of Indian diversity which generates the strength of India's unity through its democratic polity.

SECTION 1 offers readings on 'Electoral Literacy in Formal Education: Voter Education in Curricula and Extra Curricula.' The section visits the experiences of voter education in Australia, Canada, Georgia, India, Kenya, Namibia, New Zealand and The US.

Australian Electoral Commission provides technology driven, comprehensive voter information and education resources for all categories of voters easily accessible on its user-friendly website. 'The AEC Schools' provides free and attractively tailored educational resources and programmes to suit the needs of students at different levels and teachers. Some of the programmes visited in the Reader are as follows:

'Get voting': a holistic programme, provides all what is required to run a free and fair election for school level students. The National Electoral Education Centre in Canberra offers free voter and civic education programmes. 'Democracy Rules' is an enquiry-based electoral, civic and citizenship education resource for students. 'Australia Votes DVD', 'Down for the Count DVD' and 'Every Vote Counts' video explain the electoral process and encourage participation. 'Making a Nation' focuses on evolution of the Australian democratic system. Teacher resources include professional learning workshops, classrooms activities and other useful information about the electoral system.

Elections Canada (EC) Online provides voter education resources called as shareable Federal Election resources and tools through web based online operations for educating all categories of voters on electoral process to make them fully aware and ready to exercise their right to vote. Voter education encompasses curriculur, extracurricular electoral and civic education programmes for students and the teachers, youth engagement, community involvement and various other means including online services, partnership building etc. EC's outreach, special programmes, blogs, research studies, social media connect contribute to the electoral engagement and educational programmes. EC's mandate is supported by the Canada Elections Act. EC's educational resources are free and easy to order; customized to the requirements of the students. Some of the featured programmes include Student Vote, National Democracy Week, and Forum for Young Canadians, CIVIX Rep day, Keystone etc.

Central Election Commission (CEC) of **Georgia** is mandated to create an environment where voters and electoral stakeholders can freely exercise their electoral rights. Civic and voter education is one of the priorities under the Strategic Plan (2015-19). The CEC has undertaken several initiatives such as Electoral Development School, 'Election and Young Voter', Legal Clinic and Distance Learning Program etc. to achieve the desired objectives of electoral and civic engagement.

SVEEP, **India** discussed at length in the Introductory Section has outreach based and focused components for electoral engagement of the students in the country. It may also be mentioned that SVEEP –III intends to focus on curriculum based voter education.

IEBC, Kenya has developed a structured, need based voter education curriculum and guiding documents through stakeholder participation. These documents include audio, video, print booklets with lucid and user-friendly illustrated hand books besides website based information. Voter Education Training Manual of the IEBC supports the Voter Education Curriculum as reference material.

IEBC has developed an operational system of formal and informal channels to reach voters. Formal channels include schools and universities. Voter Education Providers have been accredited by the IEBC in each of the constituencies in sufficient numbers for informal action. IEBC has produced user- friendly guides such as "Yes, I can Vote!' to facilitate voters, educators, trainers etc. IEBC organizes Public Forums on Voter Education and Annual Voter Education weeks. The IEBC has launched an inclusive voter education project namely 'Nurturing Democracy in Schools' funded by the Canadian Government through the IFES.

The Election Commission of **Namibia's** recent interventions have strengthened the civic and voter education system through legislation and a new policy framework. Consequently, voter education has been specifically assigned as a statutory function to the ECN; the ECN has to establish a permanent division of voter and civic education; and the ECN has been assigned legal authority under the Act for accreditation of persons providing voter and civic education. The initiatives envisage development of need based curriculur and extracurricular materials.

The New Zealand Electoral Commission provides online information for all categories of voters. EC NZ also provides online civic and voter education resources to guide and help schools deliver engaging activities designed to encourage students' understanding of electoral processes. The main objective is to prepare future generation of active, engaged citizens with 'Your Voice, Your Choice teaching units'. Schools are encouraged to adapt the sequence of learning activities depending upon the specific needs and experiences of students. The School Resources include 'Kids Vote: Have Your Say', Curriculum-linked teaching units under 'Your Voice, Your Choice' for different levels and different communities.

The Electoral Assistance Commission **(EAC) of the US** has developed technology based, robust educational and electoral engagement resources for the schools and college students besides the voters' resources. The system is backed by the provisions of the Help America Vote Act, 2002 and the state financial support besides partnership with Non-partisans.

The main programmes include: Help America Vote College Program (HAVCP) for student engagement in the electoral process, National Student and Parent Mock Election for schools, Help America Vote Foundation for non-partisans etc. HAVCP focuses on campus engagement through workshops, webinars etc, and poll worker assignments for hands on experience. Mock Election fo-

cuses on school forums and local cable shows, speeches and debates, quiz competitions, voter education weeks, mock election and neighborhood campaigns etc. Non partisans build partnerships to support the curricular and extracurricular voter and civic education programmes.

A Success Story from **San Francisco** describes an analysis and evaluation of outreach in San Francisco, USA for implementation of Instant Runoff Voting.

SECTION 2 offers readings on 'Inclusive Electoral Literacy through Informal Education Channel. The Section visits experiences of over a dozen countries in reaching out to those outside schools and other marginalized groups i.e. persons with disability, women, people working in unorganized labor sector, tribals etc

The Introductory Note to Section 2 explains the significance and import of Article 5 of the ICERD on equality for participation, Article 7 of CEDAW on equality to women in political participation and Articles 21 and 29 of CRPD on equal access to PwD's. The voter education must address information needs of all constituents to achieve inclusive and universal coverage. To achieve this certain groups need strategic outreach and focused campaigns to receive information and motivation to participate.

IEC Afghanistan carries out inclusive voter education campaigns through attractive posters and leaflets with focused messages of encouragement to voters in local languaage for participation. Contributing a Voice, understanding of voting procedures before election and inclusion in participation are some of the themes covered in these posters produced by IEC with the help of UNOPS and UNDP

In **Myanmar**, MILI collaborated with the UEC to develop inclusive voter education posters, brochures, logo and pamphlets that provide guidance for PwD's and the public on how to cast their ballot. Visuals with simple local language and clear message helped mitigate communication challenges of low literacy levels besides inclusion in the campaigns of 2015 elections. The initiative was supported by IFES, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Swiss Agency for development and Cooperation, and the DFID.

Haiti embarked upon an effective system of voter education for the PwD's through attractive educative posters and signage's with support from the IFES. The posters cover the electoral process stepwise with a message for inclusion and encourage the PwD's to join the electoral process. The themes in the posters include messages such as 'All Our Voices Count', 'Go Vote', 'Arriving to Vote' and 'Voting by All Citizens'. The poster 'Counting of Vote' produced by the PEC and IFES in Haitian Creole explains the process that follows after the ballot has been cast.

Kenya made a robust beginning in inclusive voter education through banners announcing the launch of a new inclusive voter education initiative for schools, led by the IEBC, the Kenyan Ministry of Education and the KICD. The project is supported by the IFES and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development. Campaigns include attractive educative posters carrying messages of inclusion, gender sensitization and encouragement to women for larger participation.

In **Paraguay** the STEJ has taken several initiatives in collaboration with CSO's for inclusive voter education. These initiatives include Accessible Voter Guide, posters and brochures produced by Fundación Saraki and the USAID for people with visual, hearing, intellectual, physical and psychosocial disabilities. The 'Accessible Voter Guide', which carries a message "a disability doesn't take away the right to vote" on the cover, explains step-by-step instructions to vote.

In **France**, CIDEM, a non-partisan organization operates well designed and net worked advertisement campaigns especially for youth participation through partnerships with government and other civil society organizations. Besides television and radio advertisements and debates, the campaigns are carried on through spots in cinemas, visual advertisements in underground stations, visual ads on buses, flyers placed on parked cars.

The **Indian** experience through SVEEP, reflects inclusive voter education and best practices developed by different states in India. Paper on elections to rural local bodies in Jharkhand, India reflects electoral outcomes of inclusion through Constitutional provisions. Women, tribals and other marginalized sections are genuine stakeholders in this case.

The **Australian** electoral system facilitates equal access to the indigenous people and provides guidance and education to aboriginal voters to ensure their participation in electoral process. AEC provides resources by way of guides, systematic education and impressive posters etc to ensure participation by aboriginals. AEC encourages the aboriginals to work during the federal elections. The AEC initiatives include Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme and the National Indigenous Youth Parliament for young indigenous Australians.

Elections Canada's Accessibility policy and Service Offering document focuses on the tools and services that people with disabilities can expect when they vote. Among other things, the policy describes the mechanism for feedback, complaints and inquiries from individuals concerning accessibility and acts as a 'living' document as EC works on a continued basis to remove the barriers. Since the last general election in 2011, EC has implemented a series of measures to improve the accessibility.

In Dominican Republic electoral law provides for equal access to PwD's. With a view to effectively remove barriers to electoral and political participation 'Right to Choose Project' for PwD's etc was taken up in 2012 with support from IFES, La Red and the Dominican Republic Central Electoral Board (JCE) etc. The Project has generated an impressive 'Manual for Best Practices and Lessons Learned' and has helped address accessibility challenge significantly.

New Zealand citizens have right to equal access to enrollment and voting at elections. Supported by the provisions of the Elections Act, Electoral Commission of

New Zealand provides efficient and effective electoral assistance for participation to persons with disabilities, aboriginals and other categories besides women. EC NZ has developed Access 2020 strategy on the basis of past experience. Special programmes 'Your Voice, Your Choice: Votes for Women' and for the aboriginal 'Mauri' Voters in local language provide examples of depth of inclusion

The **League of Women Voters** (**LWV**) is a nonpartisan American civic organization formed to help women take a larger role in public affairs as they won the right to vote. The key aims and objects include educating and engaging Voters. LWV's work especially seeks to aid those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved communities, including first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, minorities, and low-income Americans. Hundreds of local volunteer teams work year-round to register, inform and mobilize voters in the lead-up to Election Day. The League also serves voters through its technology driven online service VOTE411.org, as one-stop elections information hub. Since 2012, the League has been the single-largest on-the-ground partner of National Voter Registration Day (NVRD). LWB has powerful online strategies and Media strategies to engage voters.

In the US rights of the voters with disabilities and other marginalized sections are protected under HAVA and ADA. The EAC has taken several initiatives to provide equal opportunity to such voters in the matters of awareness, voter education and engagement in the electoral process. The EAC's Accessible Voting Technology Initiative (AVTI) supports accessibility research on transformative technologies and approaches. The initiatives include the EAC's Military Heroes grant to provide assistance needed for injured military personnel to participate in elections. EAC's Electoral Resources include EAC's '6 Tips for Making Voting Accessible' and '10 Tips for Voters with Disabilities' besides robustpartnerships with non-partisans.

SECTION 3 carries readings on **'**Enhancement of Participation by Special Categories of Voters'. The Section visits experiences of Australia, Canada, India, Kenya, New Zealand and the US on outreach for defence personnel, diplomatic mission personnel and overseas citizens**.**

Normally electors go to the polling stations to exercise their right to franchise. However, it may not be possible for some electors to be physically present at the polling station on the date and time fixed for the purpose due to many good reasons. The Section looks at the coverage under this category and the system of voter education followed in different countries.

Australian Electoral Commission provides complete Online guidance to all categories of overseas voters on enrollment and vote process in a stepwise manner. The definition of overseas voters is comprehensive and online facilities are provided by the AEC. AEC's guide 'How to Vote by Mail' provides holistic and step-wise guidance to mail voters in simple and lucid manner with well done up illustrations

Elections Canada Online provides facilities for voting by Special Ballot to Canadian electors temporarily away from their electoral districts, overseas Canadian citizens, Canadian Forces electors including civilians support staff etc under the Special Voting Rules. EC Online provides stepwise guidelines for information, education and guidance to facilitate voting process through its website.

In **India ECI** provides postal ballot facilities for Service Voters and Election Staff on duty. In 2014 elections the overseas Indians have also been provided this facility. As of present, standard guidelines of the ECI and the outreach facilitate postal voting. .

The Constitution of **Kenya** stipulates legislation of a framework for the progressive registration of overseas Kenyan citizens. IEBC is developing detailed regulations and procedures on Diaspora registration and voting through a consultative process that needs the inputs from the Diaspora, CSO's and consensus amongst political parties and consideration of international best practices.

Electoral commission of **New Zealand** provides for enrollment and voting by overseas voters including defence personnel, their families and persons from diplomatic missions etc. EC NZ provides all information on its website for awareness and guidance of such voters. The facilities are technology driven and supported by the Electoral Act of 1993.

USA has well designed technology driven system to support the voting rights of its overseas citizens including the Armed Forces personnel and their family members. The legislative framework is provided under provisions of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). Federal Voting Assistance (FVAP) provides support on the subject. The multilingual Voter Guides and the EAC's '6 Tips for Helping UOCAVA Voters and their Families' provide information, guidance and of educative value to these voters.

SECTION 4 offers readings on 'Role of Information and Communication Technology for Voter Education and Feedback'. The Section visits the experiences of Australia, the UK, Canada, New Zealand, India, Kenya and the US besides CEEP on technology use for dialogue with the stakeholders including feedback, surveys etc..

The way we vote has changed significantly with the advent of 21st century. Ballot papers and pencils have given way to EVM's and e-voting. Online voter registration, biometric voter registration has substituted the conventional methods of registration. Internet and web based voter awareness and educational resources besides citizen especially youth engagement through new media, social media have become an integral part of the electoral process.

Australian Electoral Commission provides technology driven voter information and education resources for voters besides students through its website. AEC engag-

es voters especially the youth for electoral participation through a range of direct and mediated communications. AEC approached the subject through a structured Study on use of social media for enhancing democratic participation and used its recommendations for strengthening e-democracy initiatives. Use of social media inter alia by NSW EC has been analysed in the Study. Key learning suggests that the critical components in use of social media are the content, tone, employee time costs, response time expectations, monitoring, approval processes and 'Learning as you go' Main opportunities include real time response, affordable costs, effective reach. The challenges include resourcing, content, metrics and weak control.

New technology is integral part of Elections **Canada**'s electoral process. Most of its functions are based on technology applications including voter information and education and the resources for students. EC develops its social media presence and customized applications that support key services like online Voter Information Service, real-time broadcasting of election results and online reporting for political entities. The most up-to-date information on the Canadian electoral process is accessible worldwide on the Elections Canada website. EC maintains a continuous connect with stakeholders through different media including social media. EC's blogs are user friendly, informative and interactive instruments for electoral interactions and communications for voters and the public as such. Student Vote, National Democracy Challenge, Democracy Week etc are note worthy.

Multimedia communication is an integral part of the strategic communications set up of the **ECI** for SVEEP for its campaigns. Besides the conventional communication channels of radio, television, print media SVEEP uses social media for engaging with the electorate. Strategies vary from state to state depending upon the nature of the targeted population.

IEBC in Kenya has made a modest beginning in use of technology for electoral Process and the voter Education. Memo of Understanding between A-WEB and IEBC was signed in 2015. IEBC, has identified key areas especially in Voter Education and ICT which need strengthening as the Commission prepares for next General Elections.

Elections **New Zealand** Online is responsible inter alia for support to broadcast of election programmes, public education on electoral matters and new technology in the electoral process. It has well defined communication strategy for engaging voters with a specific emphasis on youth A key feature of the Elections New Zealand online communication was Orange Elections Man character. The 'Orange Man' gained enormous popularity and public attention. The Facebook Page is hosted by the NZ Electoral Commission *Orange Man* on the Web site, in advertising and in educational videos. Other social media like You Tube were also linked. Special attention was paid to engage marginalized sections like Maori Voters, PwD's, first time voters and ethnic minorities. Social Me-

dia Policy has also been developed. Google metrics and platform analytics showed positive results.

E-democracy initiatives and electoral engagement in **the UK** were given momentum by the UK Digital Dialogues Report. Since then, a large number of technology based initiatives have been launched for civic and electoral engagement. The 2012 London Mayoral election saw extensive use of social media to engage citizens and young people in particular through 'Bite the Ballot' campaign created by young people. Similarly, Rock Enrol!® is a high quality, interactive resource pack to encourage young people to register, vote and engage them in the democratic processes. 'Follow My Vote' is dedicated to improving the elections through innovations such as blockchain technology to enhance voter turnout. The 'Snapchat election story' on the day of the UK elections was noted with a significant positive response. YouGov involves citizens in electoral feedbacks and surveys to enhance engagement. Feedback and correctional steps are also taken up as a follow up. Democratic Audit UK presents an interesting analytical study.

Campus Election Engagement Project is a national nonpartisan voter-engagement project that helps colleges and universities in the US to use their institutional resources engage the students in the electoral process. The project operates through a network of its reputed allies and partners. CEEP has a powerful reservoir of highly analytical engagement resources, bank of best practices, action plans, Nonpartisan voter guides and online analytical tools to navigate students through ever-changing barriers to electoral engagement. The Online Voter Tools include collection of CEEP and related allies, partners' engagement sites with registration and voter information, maps, widgets, webinars etc. Some of the networked online resources include: Rock the Vote's Registration Widget, Election Protection App, Student PIRG's New Voter Project, Vote With Friends, Vote 411, Fair Elections Legal Network's Campus Vote Project, Project Vote Smart, Nonprofit Vote etc.

CEEP works to develop customized action plans through interactive strategies such as **'Seven Key Ways to Act' for engaging campuses.** Each campus is unique and has its own culture, it is essential that strategically well structured and designed engagement action plans are developed to help enhance student participation. CEEP action plans also focus on combating cynicism, covering elections through social media, working with student newspapers etc.

The voter education system of the **US EAC** is characterized by robust voter information system, vast voter resources, voter guides, voluntary guidelines, campus engagement programmes for universities and colleges, schools and involving students into the electoral process, mock election programme and achieving desired objectives through partnership building with non partisan, non profit organizations. Its strengths lie in strong technological base, Online Resources including Social Media and

integration into each of the electoral processes besides the robust support from   legislative framework and a Nonpartisan network. EAC's voter education resources include Voter Information Guides, Voluntary Guidelines Series, Quick Start Series, Language Accessibility Resources easily accessible on EAC's website for different categories of voters.

SECTION 5 offers readings on 'Voter Education for Informed and Ethical Voting.' The Section visits the experiences of Brazil, India, Non-ProfitVote of the US and Voter Advice Applications.

In **Brazil** 'Voter of the Future' programme was launched in 2002 as a parallel mock election for the young people of 10 to 15 years with the objectives of informing and engaging youth on (i) the need for conscientious voting; (ii) the political process for informed ballot decisions; (iii) a sense of civic responsibility; (iv) good and bad electoral practices; (v) against practices and attitudes that vitiate electoral processes; (vi) ethical approach to electoral politics. The mock election had a special impact on youth especially in areas with long standing tradition unethical practices. Focused interactions were held for explaining   the electoral laws, the rule of law and ethics in the political process. The programme carries a promise for informed and ethical voting.

A **Voting Advice Application (VAA)** is a Web based application that helps voters in informed and ethical voting. VAA's are in use in many countries. VAAs help users in ballot decisions by comparing their policy preferences with the stance of political parties. The success of VAAs comes from the design of the questionnaire, the presentation and the user-friendliness. The typical users of VAAs across the world are young, highly educated, politically interested, and actively participating in politics. The concept can be targeted especially on Youth for informed and ethical decision making on electoral choices and improving the quality of voting. This tool may also come as a solution for the apathetic behaviour of educated youth who are indifferent to the electoral processes on the account of information gap. VAA's can be developed on different platforms depending upon on the target audience.

In **India,** promoting Ethical and Informed Voting is one of the objectives of the Action Plan of SVEEP of the **ECI**. Accordingly, the expenditure sensitive constituencies are identified. Booth Level awareness groups are activated and ECI's guidelines on expenditure control are disseminated for feedback on any violations and quick action in such violations. CSOs, Schools and Colleges are involved in spreading the message of ethical and informed voting. Campus Ambassadors are the nodal points for dissemination of information and promoting ethical and informed voting on college campuses. Ethical and informed voting forms the component of the various edutainment and games designed for children and adults under the Ed-utainment category

In the US Nonprofit VOTE was founded in 2005 by a consortium of state nonprofit associations and national nonprofit networks to provide resources and training to conduct nonpartisan voter participation. Nonprofits represent democracy's highest ideals of public service, active citizenship and commitment to a better society. They provide high quality resources to promote voter participation and engage with candidates on a nonpartisan basis. They reach populations that are less likely to vote, and as such they are effective in increasing turnout among these groups thereby reducing disparities in votes based on age, income, and ethnicity.

SECTION 6 offers some selected readings on Case Studies from different countries especially on Inclusion.

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INTRODUCTORY

i. INTRODUCTION

Regular and periodic elections are one of the critical features of a democratic polity and free and fair elections are critical to the legitimacy of the democratic governments. Elections shape up the political will of the people which forms the base of authority of the democratic governments. For electors, to choose their representatives through the ballot, it is essential that they are fully aware of all the processes and procedures of the electoral process and they are comfortably confident of making informed ballot decisions. In this context, voter education is of tremendous significance and import to the voters, the election management bodies and the contestants.

Different countries have approached the subject of Voter Education as per requirement subject to the guidance under the international standards. There is tremendous scope for sharing experience and learning from the international experience. The Election Commission of India is organizing an International Conference on 'Voter Education for Inclusive, Informed and Ethical participation' to be held on 19-21 October, 2016 at New Delhi which provides an inspiring opportunity for interaction in this area, especially with Indian experience of voter education for over 800 million voters through SVEEP.

The instant paper intends to visit some of the fundamental concepts in the realm of democracy, elections and the voter education to support discussions during the proposed conference. This paper is followed by the readings, for each of the sessions, which include the strategies, approaches and systems developed and adopted by different countries for Voter education besides a brief Introductory Note and a Note on Issues and Challenges for each of the sessions

Though the intention was to include details from many other countries, an attempt has been made to provide sufficient reading on each of the sessions to initiate discussions to be enriched by the rich and vast experiences of the participating dignitaries.

DEMOCRACY

Origin of the expression 'Democracy' lies in the Greek words *demos* meaning 'the people' and *kratos* meaning 'authority'. There are many definitions of democracy such as: government which is conducted with the freely given consent of the people; or a system of the government in which supreme authority rests with the people. The most commonly acceptable and simple definition is rule by people.

Democracy may be direct democracy or indirect democracy. The latter is also called as indirect democracy where people elect representatives. These elected representatives constitute the government and are accountable to the people. This accountability is the function of periodic elections which have to be free and fair in line with international standards. Those representatives who clear the test of accountability are returned by the electors and those who fail stand rejected.

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

International standards for elections find their base in political rights and fundamental freedoms established by universal and political commitments. The principal and universal legal instruments are Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which has force of international customary law and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) signed and ratified by over 160 States and is legal binding on all the ratifying countries. In addition, these instruments have strong political and moral force. Other universal treaties also provide standards for the conduct of elections. These include the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities (CRPwD).

Adoption of the Universal declaration marked the beginning of participation as a human right. Participation, direct or indirect through freely elected representatives, is the fundamental connect with the base of substantive human rights. Though the expression democracy is nowhere defined or mentioned in the Declaration, at this stage let us look at the covenants of **Article 21 of the** UDHR:

"**Article 21**

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

xx   xx   xx   xx

3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures."

Fundamental features of the Article include inter alia, right to participation by all in forming the government in a country, will of the people to be to be basis of the author-

ity of the government, will of the people to be expressed through periodic and genuine elections, elections to be conducted universal and equal suffrage by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures. These are all the ingredients of what constitutes a democracy and the electoral processes requisite for a democracy.

THE GLOBAL NORM OF PARTICIPATION

Plan to create a global bill of Human Rights was completed with the adoption of inter alia the International Covenant on Civil and political Rights (ICCPR) in 1966. **Article 25 of the ICCPR** reads as below:

"Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in Article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions:

(a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives;

(b) To vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot , guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors;

(c) To have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his country."

Article 25 is about participation and introduces a number of human rights aspects into electoral process. As per General Comment 25 of the UN HRC, although the Covenant does not impose any particular electoral system, any system operating in a State must be compatible with the rights protected by Article 25 and must guarantee and give effect to free expression of the will of the electors. The principle of one person, one vote, must apply. The constitutional, legal and legislative framework of each country shapes up the respective electoral process subject to the international covenants discussed above. An elector or a voter is the central figure who elects representatives.

ELECTIONS: AN ELECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Free and fair elections are fundamental to democracy and the basis for democratic legitimacy. They provide periodic opportunity to citizens to hold their elected leaders accountable. A credible election is characterized by inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, and competitiveness. Elections are a process comprised of multiple steps. Elector confidence or we may say for the better, the public confidence in each step of electoral process is vital to the credibility and integrity of an election. In order for citizens to participate, understand, evaluate and accept an electoral process and its outcome as representing their will, the relevant electoral information and data must be open to the citizens and for effective participation they must understand the process well. And this is what forms the basis for Voter Education and its generic macro sphere that is Civic Education

UN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS GUIDANCE ON VOTER EDUCATION

The United Nations Centre for Human Rights in its Handbook on Human Rights and Elections (1994) has spelt out the following guiding principles for voter education:

"Public Information and Voter Education

124 Funding and administration should be provided for objective, non-partisan voter education and information campaigns. Such education is especially critical for populations with little or no experience with democratic elections. The public should be well informed as to where, when and how to vote, as well as why voting is important. They must be confident in the integrity of the process and their right to participate in it.

125. Literature should be widely available and should be published in the various national languages to help ensure the meaningful participation of all eligible voters. Multimedia methods should be employed to provide effective civic education to people with various levels of literacy. Voter education campaigns should extend throughout the territory of the country, including to rural and outlying areas."

VOTER EDUCATION

Voter education (VE), in general terms, is used to describe the dissemination of information, materials, electoral resources and programmes designed to inform voters effectively on specifics and mechanics of the registration or enrolment and voting process for an election. Voter education involves inter alia providing information on who is eligible to vote, where and how to register or enroll, how the electors can check voter lists to confirm their correct and appropriate inclusion in the voter's list, what

type of elections are being held; who the candidates are; where, when and how to vote; secrecy and sanctity of the vote; and how to file complaints, if any.

Voter education must address the information and awareness needs of all categories of voters. Voter education must address the emerging needs of voters from use of new technologies in the electoral process so that a voter feels confident and familiar with the entire registration and vote process.

> NDI's operating definition of Voter education is the process by which citizens are educated on how to register and vote, develop a sense of civic duty to participate in the electoral process, and learn to respect the outcome of legitimate elections
>
> NDI's programmatic perspective on voter education: Regular elections provide citizens with an opportunity to express their will and determine the composition of government. To make sensible choices, however, citizens must be aware of an election's purpose, their voting rights and obligations, the dates and procedures, the range of electoral options, and they must know how to vote.

VE: AIMS AND OBJECTS

While the essential guidance on the aims and objects of VE can be derived from the UN Documents referred to above, aims and objects of VE may be shortlisted as below:

- Voter information on: eligibility criteria, where, when and how to register or enroll as a voter and verify that their names have been rightly included. This is to help Voter Age population to become Voter Eligible Population and finally the Electors.
- Voter information on: where, when and how to vote: Requirement of identity documents; place, date and timing of poll, procedure of voting including accuracy and correctness of voting to obviate any rejections of vote.(An important step to translate votes into seats)
- Motivation to participation in electoral process with a view to enhance participation and maximize voting or the voter turnout.(Addressing deepening of democracy)
- Voter information on facilitating inclusion in electoral process and voting covering all categories of voters.(Inclusion)
- Appropriate and sufficient information on candidates for informed choice or the informed ballot decision. (Nonpartisan information on candidates for addressing the issue of why to vote or whom to vote.)
- Do's and don'ts during election process: Model code of conduct.

- To ensure that the voters are familiar and well versed with using the technology based tools applied in the electoral process.
- How and whom to complain in case of requirement.
- To ensure that all constituents, men and women in an inclusive manner (covering all categories of voters), understand their rights, political/electoral system, the contestants and contests they are being asked to decide;
- Sanctity and secrecy of vote, ethical voting. For an election to be successful and democratic, voters must understand their rights and responsibilities, and must be sufficiently knowledgeable and well informed to cast ballots that are legally valid and to participate meaningfully in the voting process.
- Relevant issues in post-conflict countries, where political situations may be volatile and where elections may have an unprecedented impact on the countries' stability and future.
- Voter information, Voter awareness, voter education structured Formal and informal, Participation, Voter engagement.
- New Technologies; voter turnout.
- Increasing civic engagement, popularization of elections especially amongst youth through specially designed programmes engagement, both at the school and college level. (Investing in the future electors).
- FAQ's

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, STRATEGIES AND APPROACH FOR VE: A GENERAL OVERVIEW

Strategies and approach adopted for voter education may vary in different countries. National Election Management Bodies are primarily responsible for voter education; the institutional arrangements and strategies for connect with the Voter.However, the government, the public and private media, political parties, nonpartisans (civil society organizations) including international organizations may be involved and can play a vital supplementary role in spreading the message subject to overall guidelines of the EMB and the strict conditions of non partisan approach.

Youth engagement through educational institutions both, the schools and colleges is provided by many EMB's through well developed formal VE programmes, mock vote, participation, student engagement and a host of other programmes for supporting the youth and the future voter. Educational Resources including formal curricula and other relevant information for supporting the execution of such programmes is provided on user friendly and interactive websites in many cases.

Generally EMB's provide comprehensive electoral resources for voters on their user friendly websites which may be interactive to facilitate participation especially in registration and presenting certain requests in the electoral procedures. In addition comprehensive electoral resources for all stakeholders are provided on the websites for easy access and universal dissemination.

Voter education data consists of all pertinent information about the electoral contests, the candidates and parties running, and any referenda or ballot initiatives up for vote. In many countries this information is available in multiple languages. Information on voter registration and Election Day voting procedures is also made available to citizens. Often, EMBs make these materials available on their website and document whether they have made public service announcements in the mass media.

Elections cannot be genuinely democratic unless voters understand the differences among the contestants so that they can cast an informed vote. Voter education should also equip voters with the necessary information to make an informed choice in deciding their ballot.

Voter Guides with comprehensive information, basic guidelines for voter guides, voter education series are published by some EMB's. These may be all available in print form in addition to availability on websites. EMB's issue press releases, advertisements, posters and direct mailings to voters for precise information on electoral processes.

A creative approach with robust outreach can help ensure that information is disseminated further and is better understood especially where the literacy levels of the voter population are relevant. Under the overall guidance of the EMB's, in partnership or otherwise, non partisans, civil society organizations and other groups organize materials or activities such as street theatre, role playing, radio spots, jingles, songs, comic strips or internet and social media campaigns to ensure that all categories of voters, women as well as men have comfortable access to the information necessary to participate intelligently in the electoral process including voting. Women's groups can be especially effective in developing material that will resonate with women voters.

Outreach to PwD's including those with visual or hearing impairment should be conducted. Information in minority languages should be made available to facilitate informed ballot decisions by the voters in such categories.

All VE materials should be vetted by the EMB to ensure accuracy and non partisan nature, sensitivity to gender and inclusion.

UNIVERSAL COVERAGE UNDER VOTER EDUCATION

The Goal of Voter education is to make information available and accessible to all constituents. Voter education

in all forms should seek to achieve universal coverage of the electorate including women. This requires effectively reaching out to disadvantaged groups in addition to the mainstream voters. Voter education must take into account factors such as high rates of illiteracy or the use of different languages in a country. Marginalized sections of the society, internally displaced persons, persons with a disability, defense personnel, citizens living abroad whether on official or private engagement and other minority groups of society should be covered under the electoral information, awareness and the voter education. Young adults eligible to vote for the first time may need special messages explaining how to register and cast a ballot. Voter education should also include publicity encouraging and motivating people to vote.

VE: POST- CONFLICT SOCIETIES

In post-conflict countries in which security remains a problem, safe resource centers should be established. Carefully targeted voter education can also help alleviate "double discrimination", which may occur when women are also members of disadvantaged ethnic minorities. Information on the importance of women's participation should also target men.

VE CAMPAIGNS: TIMINGS

Effective voter education campaigns start early and continue throughout the election process. Very early in the process, constituents should be informed about voter registration procedures so they have ample time to register. They should be told how and where to check their respective voter lists to ensure their entries are correct. Voters should be informed of the type of election to be held, the polling date and location, when the polling station will be open, and how to cast their ballots. Voter education should be provided even on Election Day; there should be posters and other materials inside the polling stations, and even inside the voting booths, explaining the voting process and the correct way to mark the ballot.

CIVIC EDUCATION

Civic education, as compared to voter education, is a broader and generic concept aimed at conveying knowledge of a country's political system; the organization, structure and the way it operates. Civic education may include information on the system of government; the nature and powers of the offices filled in an election; the principal economic, social and political issues facing the nation; the value of democracy; the equal rights of women and men; and the importance of peace and national reconciliation. In many countries the term civic education

is preferred to democracy education. However, these two terms are accepted to be interchangeable.

As per UNDP prescription, at the core of Civic Education lie the values and principles of transparency, participation, responsiveness, accountability, empowerment and equity. Communication and Access to Information are also integral to Civic Education. Civic Education is generally understood to comprise three elements: civic disposition, civic knowledge and civic skills.

Civic Education or the democracy education would generally be a part of the school education curriculum unless it is structured into adult education programmes. The curriculum may broadly include the following:

- Knowledge of the political systems and government; Constitutional provisions; Democratic Institutions: their role, structure and functioning; rights and responsibilities;
- Independent Judiciary, Electoral Management Body.
- Freedom of expression, media.
- Democratic values and principles; culture and society. and equality before law, inclusion, citizenship, integrity, mutual civic respect and civic engagement
- Important social, political, economic, environmental, international and other related issues.
- Elected offices; roles and responsibilities, electoral system and how it operates for regular and periodic free and fair elections; accountability.
- Skills involving critical thinking, understanding complexities of democracy; Role of Media.

Voter education is most effective when it integrates with civic education that puts the election into context for voters and provides an explanation of the election's purpose, the surrounding issues, and their significance. Further, civic education should be built into a country's educational system so that when children reach voting age they understand the basis of the national and local political and electoral systems.

SOME GENERAL PERSPECTIVES IN VE

Each of the sessions will focus on specific themes, the related perspectives, issues and challenges. What is given in the following relates to general perspectives only.

VOTER APATHY

When citizens are not familiar with the electoral process; the results are manifested by low levels of participation or a large number of improperly cast ballots or an erosion of confidence in the elections integrity or in the legitimacy of the results. Cynicism toward elections may also develop when elected officials or political competitors fail on the past electoral promises. Overcoming voter apathy has proven to be challenging especially in transitional societies. Therefore, programmes designed to raise the level of

awareness and confidence of citizens in the democratic process are often useful and necessary.

VE FOR WOMEN VOTERS

Voter education should specifically target women besides men. It should make clear that suffrage is universal and should help create a culture in which women are encouraged to participate and are welcomed into the electoral process. In some countries it is particularly important to launch special educational campaigns aimed at women, highlighting the fact that they have the right to vote. It is often appropriate to craft special messages for women voters and to take generational issues into account when doing so. Meetings especially geared to educating women as voters may be organized. Arranging childcare so women can attend these sessions may help ensure their success.

Voter and civic education can be critical in enhancing women's participation in elections, particularly in post-conflict countries in which women have not traditionally played an active role in the electoral process. Voter and civic education should therefore be accessible to women as well as to men. The information conveyed should be gender-sensitive and designed to be relevant to women. Civic education can help enhance women's participation in elections particularly through the dissemination of positive images of women as voters, leaders, and participants in all aspects of the political process.

VE: FAMILY VOTING

A particular issue that often affects women and as such deserves attention in voter education efforts is the confidentiality of the vote. According to United Nations standards and international human rights law, each ballot must be secret and independent. Most national laws also have provisions to this effect, though such provisions are not always enforced. Men and women must both understand that "family voting", a practice in which one family member casts ballots on behalf of the entire family, or in which a husband and wife enter the voting booth together, is not an acceptable practice in democratic elections.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Youth participation in the electoral process is of great concern in most democracies today. Reactions such as 'My Vote does not matter' or the complaint that politicians are 'all the same and all corrupt' are expressions of cynical resignation of political disengagement. Across the democracies it has been observed that the young people are less likely to enroll to vote than older groups. Large numbers of non-participating youth have implications for the effectiveness and representativeness of political systems and the trend needs to be addressed effectively for future of the

democracy.

Significant analysis, research and innovative work in this important area of concern have been done by many EMB's. Sharing of knowledge and experience will be important.

VE POST CONFLICT COUNTRIES

In post-conflict countries, voter and civic education may be especially important because electoral processes—and even the system of government—may be new or unfamiliar to many voters. Since post-conflict countries are societies in transition, they provide an unparalleled opportunity to educate citizens on the equality of women and men,

the importance of including women in all aspects of the political process, and the crucial contribution women can make to building democracy and peace.

STAKEHOLDERS IN VOTER EDUCATION

The stakeholders in VE may be shortlisted as follows:
- Election Management Bodies.
- All Eligible Citizens.
- Prospective Electors.
- Political Parties.
- Nonpartisans: NGO's and CSO's
- Media.
- International Organizations.

CONFERENCE ON VOTER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSIVE, INFORMED AND ETHICAL PARTICIPATION

The Election commission of India is organizing an International Conference on Voter Education from 19th to 21st October, 2016. The conference will focus on the following themes during the three day interaction:

Session I Electoral Literacy in Formal Education: Voter Education in Curricula and Extra Curricula

Session II Inclusive Electoral Literacy Through Informal Education Channel: Reaching out to Those Outside Schools and other Marginalized Groups i.e. Persons with Disability (PwD's), Women, People Working in Unorganized Labor Sector, Tribal etc

Session III Enhancement of Participation by Special Categories of Voters:
Outreach for Defence Personnel, Diplomatic Mission Personnel and Overseas Citizens.

Session IV Role of Information and Communication Technology for Voter Education and Feedback: Technology Use for Dialogue With the Stakeholders Including Feedback, Surveys etc

Session V Voter Education for Informed and Ethical Voting: Building Awareness for Qualitative Electoral Participation

Readings which follow in subsequent five sections focusing on each of the above themes respectively provide reference material for supporting the interaction. The intention was to include as many papers from different countries, however, there is much scope for additions that emanate from the conference interactions or otherwise through continued research work.

ii. INDIA: SYSTEMATIC VOTERS' EDUCATION & ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

THE CONTEXT

Systematic Voters Education & Electoral Participation (herein after referred to as SVEEP) is the Flagship voter education programme of the Election Commission of India.

Three good reasons for sharing the Indian experience through this presentation right in the beginning of the conference need to be mentioned out rightly. The first one is the fact that this programme addresses a vast ocean of over 834 million electors spread over 543 constituencies belonging to the House of People or the Lower House namely 'Lok Sabha' and 4120 constituencies belonging to the State Legislatures of 30 States and Union Territories with Assemblies namely 'Vidhan Sabhas'.

The second reason which must be mentioned is the fact of its connect with the grass roots of Indian democracy, its vertical impact going down to the voters connected with 927,553 polling stations located in far flung villages, hamlets in rural areas and its capture of Indian diversity which generates the strength of India's Unity through its democratic polity.

To speak of the third reason it must be mentioned that India, being the host of this conference, as a host it has been felt that we must heartily share with you this rich experience from the largest democracy of the world right away as a gesture of welcome to set the tone for the vibrant interaction that we are looking forward to in this conference.

INTRODUCTION

Essentially an outreach oriented programme, SVEEP has developed as a transformational intervention for strengthening democratic and electoral participation in the country starting from 2009.

SVEEP- I (2009-2013)

SVEEP-I began with the 'Information, Education and Communication' intervention during Assembly elections in the state of Jharkhand in the year 2009 and by the year 2013 the programme had covered 23 State Assembly elections. Gaps in the voter registration and actual voter turnout were seen as the areas of serious concern and the programme was initiated to address these concerns. The IEC initiative of ECI was subsequently revamped in

2010 as a national programme titled Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP). The theme chosen for the Diamond Jubilee Year of the ECI in 2010 was "Greater Participation for a Stronger Democracy".

SVEEP-II (APRIL 2013 TO 2014)

While Phase I essentially covered the elections to the State legislatures, Phase II covered the elections to the House of People that is the 'Lok Sabha'. Drawing strength from the experience, innovation and the best practices evolved, SVEEP-II was initiated in April, 2013 and continued till the General Elections 2014 in the country. It included a planned strategy for a targeted approach on gaps in registration and voting turnout. It also focused on awareness for informed, inclusive, fear free and inducement free voting under a broader framework of civic education. It witnessed institutionalization of its implementation structure along with strengthening of the partnerships for maximizing the impact of the outreach.

SVEEP-III (2016-2020)

SVEEP-III builds upon the earlier two phases through comprehensive, broad based and interactive review of the earlier experience and puts forward inter alia a goal to create a long term sustainable mechanism for all India coverage of inclusive voter education for all. While continuing its outreach based core, it aims at well informed and motivated citizenry ready to participate in the electoral process in an inclusive manner.

MISSION

All SVEEP activities and efforts are aimed at:
- Increase electoral participation through vote registration and turnout
- Increase qualitative participation in terms of ethical and informed voting
- Provide continuous electoral and democracy education

CONCEPT

SVEEP is a multi-intervention programme that reaches out through different modes and media to educate voters in specific and the people in general about the electoral process with a view to increase electoral awareness and participation. The programme is designed keeping in view the socio-economic, cultural and demographic profile besides the past level of electoral participation in each of the states.

OBJECTIVES:

A. Voter Awareness and Encouraging Electoral

Participation: Systematic Focused Interventions

- Planning & Implementation: Strengthen Institutional Mechanism.
- Target inclusion based gaps in registration and voter turnout for all categories of voters such as women, marginalized groups, PwDs and migrant labor besides service personnel and overseas voters (NRI's) for focused interventions.
- Gender sensitisation of electoral machinery besides issues related to marginalised segments of voters.
- Continued targeting of Youth and Urban citizens for registration and voter turnout.
- Campaigns for informed and ethical electoral choices during (Ethical Voting)
- User friendly process of voter registration, modification in records and voting reliable, responsive, simple and convenient (Facilitate Registration)
- Extending services ahead of and on poll day to make voting easy and accessible (Facilitation at polling stations)

B. Continuous Electoral and Democracy education

- Electoral literacy in curricula, training programmes, adult literacy programme and informal education initiatives.
- Make voter education content widely available including through popular media
- Emerge as an international learning and training resource on voter and democracy education
- Electoral Data in Public Domain

C. Building Partnership for wider engagement

- Strengthen existing partnerships and engage Civil Society with elections.
- Recognise and celebrate new voters and long term partners.

STRATEGY AND APPROACH

Based on the situation and gap analysis and understanding the type of voters, the SVEEP strategies are developed and utilized to overcome barriers to voter registration. Spreading awareness for informed, fear free and inducement free voting under the broader framework of civic education, is an integral part of the approach. The overarching strategy for voter registration and participation is IMF (Information, Motivation and Facilitation) comprises of comprehensive systematic interventions to involve the people in the electoral process. To engage specific target groups identified through a rigorous mechanism that takes into account data from each polling station, customized interventions are designed, with focus on gaps. The strategy for achieving the desired objectives of the programme may be stated briefly as follows:

A. Organizational and operational infrastructure

- Formation of SVEEP Core Committees at State and District Level.
- Appointment of Nodal Officers at State and District level
- Training and capacity building of officers
- Situation Analysisthrough KABBP surveys for region specific gap analysis
- Identifying lowest turnout PS and reasons
- Analysis of Gender Gap
- Analysis of gaps in registration
- Analysis of gaps in turnout
- Analysis gaps and reasons for urban apathy/youth disconnect
- Identifying groups and communities that have recorded lowest participation.

B. Planning

Preparation of State SVEEP plans based on state level gaps

Preparation of District SVEEP plans based on district and polling station level gaps for chalking out roadmap to address gaps in participation

Coordination meetings with election staff at State, District, Parliamentary Constituency, Assembly Constituency and Block levels

C. Partnerships & Collaborations

With Educational Institutions:

- Appointment of Campus Ambassadors
- Govt. Departments
- Youth Organizations like National Service Scheme, National Cadet Corps, and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan.
- Media Interaction.
- Civil Society Organisations, Non Governmental Organisations.
- Corporate and Public Sector Undertakings
- Renowned individuals: Appointment of National & State Icons

D. Implementation

Targeted Interventions for Specific Groups

- The identified target group based on polling station level situation analysis
- Bridge gender gap
- Youth disconnect
- Specific to fight urban apathy
- Inclusion.
- IParticipation of tribals and other excluded and marginalised groups

Leadership and Management Structure

- **National Level**
  SVEEP Division at ECI formulates policies, lays down the framework, plans interventions and monitors implementation besides carrying out continuous discourse with voting population, civil society organisations and media from a national perspective.
- **State Level**
  In each of the State CEO's office, an officer is assigned the charge of the SVEEP programme in the state. Core groups comprising representatives from educational institutions, youth organizations, women's organisations and Civil Society Groups guide the State election machinery in evolving and executing the SVEEP plan.
- **District Level**
  At district level the institution of District Collector- the administrative head of the district traditionally plays the key role in election management and spearheads the implementation of the SVEEP programme in the district. A district SVEEP committee is constituted at the District level to help in all activities under the programme.
- **Booth Level Officers**
  The most differentiating part of SVEEP is the involvement of over nine hundred thousand Booth Level Officers to reach out to voters. This human to human interface and exchange is unique and unparalleled. They constitute primary block SVEEP related connectivity with citizens. Booth Level Awareness Groups (BAGs) are formed at every Booth with BLO as the Member Secretary.

ELECTION SPECIFIC VOTER EDUCATION PLANS

Surveys

Baseline surveys were first carried out in 2009 on the following factors: Knowledge, Attitude, Belief, Behaviour and Practices (KABBP) among the voters/ potential voters ahead of elections for determining the nature and design of the interventions with the objective of enhanced electoral participation. Endline surveys were conducted after the election to assess the efficacy of the interventions. Ahead of General Election to the States in 2016, 2nd generation surveys namely the KAP (Knowledge, Attitude and Practices) have also been introduced based on recommendation by TISS (Tata Institute of Social Sciences).

Surveys are conducted to understand the reasons for gaps in electoral participation, both at enrolment stage and voting; to understand the underlying reasons for low voter turnout in last election in the State and to identify the barriers to voting; to identify the demographics of elector segments with lower enrolment, and lower participation during polls; to understand effectiveness of various formal & non-formal media vehicles; to suggest logical and plausible measures to ensure higher enrolment and higher voter turnout based on the outcome of the Survey. KAP Surveys are carried out well in advance, the findings of Baseline survey are available around 6 months ahead of the elections. The Endline survey is carried out within 2 months of the completion of the polls.

State Action Plans

Based on the findings of the KAP survey and situation analysis, the States prepare the State Action Plans specifying the objectives and the implementation plan, based on the IMF strategy (Information, Motivation and Facilitation). Details of interventions for each of the identified major target audience are spelt out in the Action Plan along with the mechanism for monitoring and reviewing of the SVEEP programme in the districts. The Districts submit their plans to the State for approval. The State Action Plans are approved by the ECI. The SVEEP Plans are drawn up with the following components:

Overall Objectives:
- To target an increase in voter turnout in the identified low turnout polling stations and an overall increase in turnout by at least 5-10% over the last assembly election.
- To remove the gender gap in enrolment and turnout.
- Inclusion of excluded groups/communities in electoral roll and in turnout for voting.
- Visible enhancement in the quality of electoral participation in terms of informed, ethical and inducement free voting in tandem with supply side expenditure control measures.
- Increase in postal ballot voting by facilitating and educating service voters and employees.

Situation Analysis
- Identification of 10% of Polling Stations in each district with lowest turnout in last Election and reasons thereof.
- Identification of overall 10% lowest turnout Polling Stations in the State and reasons thereof.
- Identification of lowest turnout Assembly Constituencies and reason thereof.
- Identification of reasons for drop in turnout (if any) between last Assembly election and last LS election in the State.
- Identification of excluded groups, communities at each Polling Station, if any.

Strategy
- The States and District plan include situation analysis, outputs/activities, monitoring and

evaluation mechanism keeping in mind the Indicators as given

- The survey findings are suitably utilized while formulating State and District Plan. The survey data relating to the AC/PC within a district are shared with the concerned DEO for fine-tuning the district plan.
- Targeted campaign on major gaps like Women, Urban, weaker sections, physically challenged etc. also be a part of the State and District plan.
- To overcome the gap in turnout, targeted interventions have are carried out at polling station level
- DEOs innovate at their level and prepare specific operational plan after identifying excluded communities/groups in each polling station. The district plans flow out of the broad State plan, and also contribute to it.
- Emphasis on informed and inducement free voting.
- Appropriate information dissemination on NOTA, continuous on NOTA, continuous EVM awareness combined with VVPAT information, wherever applicable.
- Facilitation of the Voter be a key component besides the range of Informed and Motivation measures.

Planning & Implementation

- The State SVEEP Core Committee headed by the CEO supervise the implementation of the SVEEP Plan in the entire state. The Committee have representation from various Departments, Agencies and organisations.
- The District Core Committee meetings are chaired by DEO/CEO (ZP) to supervise the implementation of the SVEEP plan in the district. Each district appoints a Nodal Officer, in charge of SVEEP. S/he functions as the Member secretary of the District Core Committee. The core Committees are set up sufficiently in advance.
- The network of partnership is developed at State level and also at District level for strengthening the SVEEP programme. In this connection, the framework of partnerships already issued by the Commission in relation to CSOs, PSU/ Corporate and Media and also the scheme of Campus Ambassador's are optimally harnessed.
- CEO and DEO mobilise and brief partner agencies and provide them requisite resources and outreach material at state level and district level respectively.
- DEOs in Naxal affected districts and other violence affected areas involve the SPs in operationalizing SVEEP programme so that the

environment of confidence and fearlessness against any intimidation can be built into the programme.

Outreach Activities:
The activities are planned based on the situation analysis

Voter Registration
- Voter Registration Forms are made available at all prominent Post Offices having large footfall besides in all Colleges, Universities, and High Schools for eligible electors.
  Special registration camps in weekly hats, during festivals and through mobile vans are conducted.
  Corporates are contacted so as to ensure registration of their employees. Alternative registration hubs for corporate employees are also established.

Voter Awareness and Motivation
- Mass mobilization activities are taken up close to elections to motivate people to participate in the electoral process.
- Communication Campaigns are carried out through mass media, folk media and other media vehicles besides direct people-to-people contact.
- Special campaigns are carried out for promoting informed and inducement free voting.
- EVM familiarisation activity combining with NOTA and VVPAT familiarisation, where necessary.
- Copies of Electoral Rolls are provided to SLMA workers at Gram Panchayat besides partner CSOs and political parties.

Voters' Facilitation
- Voter Registration and Education centres are set up at strategic locations for facilitation and awareness generation as well. The Centres are supplied education and awareness material in good quantity.
- Registration of left-out Voters to continue till the last date of filing of nominations of candidates under the provision of continuous updating.
- The EROs and AEROs ensure that EPIC are issued to all those enrolled.
- Ensuring that Voters' Slips are distributed on time.

Post Election Evaluation & Documentation
The DEOs evaluate the interventions carried out in their district and submit a report to the CEO within a month of closing of polls. They focus on the following in their report besides an analysis of the overall turnout:
- analysis of the registration ahead of polls.

- analysis of the comparative turnout among women, urban voters and youth.
- analysis of the turnout of the identified excluded groups/communities at specific polling stations.
- analysis of comparative turnout in the identified 10% of the lowest turnout polling stations.

Informed and Ethical Voting:
The SVEEP Action Plans include a comprehensive component on informed and ethical voting. States and Districts identify expenditure sensitive constituencies and polling stations where focused campaign needs are taken out on ethical voting. Special measures are taken in these identified areas on ethical and informed voting, including wide dissemination on expenditure control guidelines, so that public can inform the election authorities about any violation of the ECI's instructions. At booth level, in expenditure sensitive regions, the BAGs constitute the dissemination hubs for messages on ethical voting.

Awareness Observers:
Central Awareness Observers were first appointed for the Assembly Elections in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram that took place in late 2013 and the practice has continued. They act as the eyes and ears of the Commission during the election and provide direct inputs to the Commission from the field on all matters related to voter education, awareness and facilitation, bedsides media related issues.

Best practices:
Best practices are showcased on the ECI SVEEP portal at http://ecisveep.nic.in/best_practices.aspx. The portal also displays documents, reports and district and state SVEEP plans besides various creatives through the digital library at http://sveepdigitallibrary.nic.in/.

National Voters' Day
ECI initiated the practice to celebrate the National Voters' Day (NVD) on its foundation day, 25th January, in 2011. It is observed every year with the objective of creating awareness for elector registration and electoral participation.

- The NVD are preceded by **'Youth Voters Festival'** to engage youth, specially newly eligible 18-19year age category along with a series of outreach measures like symposiums, cycle rally, human chain, folk arts programmes, mini-marathon, competitions etc. Educational Institutions and youth organisations like NSS, NYKS, Scouts and Guides are the main partners in the outreach.
- Specific campaigns are carried out for creating awareness for focus groups like Women, Marginalised sections, Persons with disabilities and other identified segments.

- Special drive is undertaken for Service personnel utilizing the Army Day that falls on 15th January every year. The Service personnel are engaged with the NVD celebrations as well.

NVD Annual Celebrations
The theme of NVD is shared ahead of NVD celebrations every year. The NVD celebrations engage citizenry at the national, state, district and down below to the polling stations across the country and involves schools and colleges. The celebrations are well designed and include felicitating the senior voters and those who made efforts to maximize registration.

The Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in each polling station area felicitate the newly registered voters on 25th January every year in a brief ceremony/ public function. A badge with the slogan **"Proud to be a Voter - Ready to Vote"** also be provided by the BLOs to the new electors during the felicitation ceremony **along with their EPIC**. The DEOs would arrange for the venue and logistics required for the brief ceremony/ public function, in each polling station area. The AEROs and EROs of the constituency participate in the ceremony/ public function of those Part(s) under their jurisdiction where largest number of newly registered electors would be felicitated.

> **National Voters Day**
> Imagine a 95 year old senior voter from tribal community being felicitated by the Governor of a State at a State function in presence of thousands of voters, school children, and college youth. While the senior voter feels like a champion of democracy, the youth feel inspired to follow and they do not lag behind. They will be champions of tomorrow!

Media including Social Media in Voter Engagement
The state and the district level election officials engage various media - print, audio-visual, outdoor advertisement, troupes etc. ahead of NVD for environment building. FM and Community Radio are widely utilized, besides SMSes, e-mails, messages on social media etc. for propagating the theme. NVD theme also be propagated through schemes and programs run by the Government for non-election going state. The NVD theme and related messages in form of posters and banners are prominently displayed in all election offices down to the village level. Doordarshan (DD), All India Radio (AIR), Directorate of Field Publicity are engaged for wide publicity and coverage of NVD.

COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration with Ministries and Departments

There have been successful collaborations with Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, mainly the Doordarshan and All India Radio, besides the Directorate of Field Publicity and Song and Drama Division. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting extended support by providing airtime and programme content on national channels and regional channels of Doordarshan and All India Radio. Ministry of Railways, Civil Aviation, Department of Posts etc are among others with whom collaborations have been taken up for greater outreach to people.

At State level, CEOs collaborate with State Government Departments like the departments of Health, Education, WCD, Cooperatives, Welfare etc., so that these departments can extend their existing infrastructure and manpower at the grass roots level for electoral education and outreach.

Collaboration with National Literacy Mission Authority

In 2013 ECI has subsisting collaborations National Literacy Mission Authority) which is in charge of Adult Literacy in India, after which electoral literacy has become a component of the Sakshar Bharat Programme of the Government of India. ECI extended support towards the capacity building of NLMA's Key Resource Persons. Electoral literacy content has been developed on all aspects of elections in form of flash cards for neo literates and rural populace. The NLMA-ECI electoral literacy materials are extensively used by the election officials during the elections.

Collaboration with Private Media

Besides Public Broadcaster, Private Media plays a significant catalytic role in disseminating information and enhancing electoral awareness among the people. Successful collaboration with Media Houses yielded results in terms of wider reach. ECI has developed a Framework ofEngagement with Media Organisation.CEOs and DEOs collaborate with private Media Houses within the parameters specified in the Framework for information dissemination and enhancing electoral participation..

Collaboration with CSOs

Recognising the potential of Civil Society Organisations in playing a significant catalytic role in enhancing citizen engagement especially in the areas of reaching out to the last-mile, ECI developed a Framework of Engagement with CSOs.Within this framework, the Election officials in the states collaborate with CSOs for non-partisan, objective, non-political citizen awareness, facilitation and engagement.
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Collaboration with Public Sector Undertakings/ Corporates

Public Sector Enterprises and Corporate Houses can play a significant catalytic role in enhancing citizen engagement by extending support to the SVEEP programme and also fulfill their Corporate Social Responsibility. With this aim a **Framework of Engagement** was developed in 2013 and is followed by the election officials for voter engagement in the related areas.

Icons/Ambassadors

Identifying the ability of inspirational personalities to establish authentic connect with the masses, ECI has associated with renowned apolitical, non-partisan persons of repute from various field enjoying national appeal and appointed them as ECI's **National Icons** to motivate Voters. Similarly renowned individuals in states were appointed as **State Icons and the District level Icons with the approvals of the ECI.**

Best Electoral Practice Awards

Best Electoral Practice Awards are given in different categories such as media, Civil Society Organizations etc every year for voter education and engagement.

CONTINUOUS ELECTORAL LITERACY

Campus Ambassadors

CEOs appoint Campus Ambassadors from among neutral, non-political students in recognised Colleges and Universities to bridge the gap in youth electoral participation. Each Campus Ambassador are in position for one Academic year and appointment are renewed on a yearly basis. In co-educational college two Campus Ambassadors (one male and one Female) can be selected.

Role of Campus Ambassador

- Identification of students, teachers and non-teaching staff and their family members who are not registered in the electoral roll and those without EPIC or with wrong EPICs;
- Facilitating their registration in the electoral roll by providing forms and guiding how to fill the forms and co-ordinating with the electoral machinery for approval of the new applications, correction and distribution of EPICs to the Campus electorate;
- Organising with the help of CEO/DEO office, special drive for registration and also online registration;
- Educating campus electorates about the electoral process i.e. registration, correction of errors, transposition of names, voting process and ethical voting;
- Facilitating inclusion of Voter Education in various co-curricular activities/festivals of the

Campus through different activities such as Slogan writing, Poster making, quiz, debate, essay writing, song, street plays etc;

- Creating core team of students to work as Volunteers for the SVEEP activities in the campus;
- Coordinating with campus related organizations like Scout and Guide, NCC, NSS for enrolment
- Organizing talks/workshop etc for capacity building in Voter Education among student community;
- Organizing National Voters' Day programmes in their campus;
- Acting as an educator and motivator in family and neighborhood and helping them in filling registration forms.

Electoral Literacy Material

The material developed in collaboration with Adult Literacy offices in form of Flash Cards, street play script, slogans and radio play has been shared with CEOs. The materials are translated in local languages and used for electoral awareness and education at the grass root level. Special co-curriculum content is being developed by the Technical Group to target school children.

Edutainment Material for Electoral Awareness

The production and distribution of voter edutainment material for continuous education in an interesting and comprehensive manner was taken up in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2013. Frequently asked questions (FAQ) related to the electoral process are pictorially depicted in the colourful and easy-to-understand picture book *'Garv se banein Matdata'*, meant largely for new and semi literates and children. A series of short cartoon strips *'Wah Election Wah!'* disseminates information of how, where and when, mainly targeted at urban Indians. Set in a train travelling through various parts of the country, the radio programme *'LoktantraExpress'* uses song and speech, adding regional flavours to motivate listeners from different regions. These edutainment materials are disseminated at the grass root level in local language.

Special Interventions

Special initiatives for awareness and voter information and engagement have been brought in place for women,service voters, overseas voters, PwD's, domestic migrants and the marginalised sections of the society by the ECI.

SECTION 1
ELECTORAL LITERACY IN FORMAL EDUCATION:
Voter Education in Curricula and extra-Curriculum

NO VOTER TO BE
LEFT BEHIND

SECTION 1

1.01
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Session 1 of the Conference is dedicated to interaction on Electoral Literacy in Formal Education: Voter Education in curricula and extra curricula.

Voter Education is one of the critical mandates of the EMB's. It has to ensure that voters are well informed, ready, willing and motivated to join the electoral process. It needs to be aimed at enhancing voter confidence in exercise of electoral right with ease and the sense and conviction that they have made a contribution in nurturing of democracy. If voters are not prepared or motivated to participate in the electoral process, questions about the legitimacy, representativeness, and responsiveness of elected leaders and institutions may arise.

Essentially objective, non-partisan and universal in nature VE programmes have to be well designed and targeted at the whole citizenry, eligible voters, future voters and all other stakeholders to address specific electoral events as well as the general electoral process. Voter Education may be supplemented by civic education to emphasize the relationship between active citizenship and a democratic society so that citizens engage the political process in a sustained manner and not just at the time of elections.

Voter education may be supported by legislative mandate in some countries US, Kenya, and Namibia etc.

EMB's in different countries, keeping in view their roles, responsibilities and obligations emanating from the respective Statutes, legislative instruments and the guidance from the UN documents or otherwise, have developed robust voter education systems under curricular and extracurricular domains. Generally, while the Voter Education programmes, (curricular or extracurricular) are operated by the EMB's, the wider civic education programmes may be operated by the respective governments or through the institutional arrangements. Civic society organizations (non-partisans) provide support through partnerships and play an important role in implementation.

Several EMB's have approached the subject by developing comprehensive Voter Education Resources and hosting them on their websites. These resources include detailed voter information which is user friendly, electoral process step wise information coupled with FAQ's. Voters may easily access this information for their guidance on participation in the electoral process. (US, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, India, Kenya etc)

Formal channels include the schools and the universities where the voter education programme has been launched. Voter educational resources in such cases also include regular curriculum based modules for school level with resources for teachers as well as students, modules for mock elections, student vote etc. Hosted on their websites for efficient access by the schools such programmes of the EMB's provide country wide coverage and as such serve as futuristic investments in democracy. Educational curricula are developed in consultation with national level educational institutions to carefully design attractive modules for schools. (US, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Kenya etc)

Campus engagement programmes have been developed by some EMB's for student engagement with the help of networked non-partisans. Youth engagement is a

critical feature. (US, UK, India)

Under the extracurricular programmes, voter education and engagement through powerful partnerships under civic engagement approach has been developed in some countries. SVEEP, India is massive programme which addresses over 800 million voters; Public Forums on Voter Education, Kenya, and Voter Education Weeks for schools, US are some of the examples.

User friendly Voter education guides, voluntary guidelines for voter education resources have been provided especially in the US, UK, Kenya etc.

All voter education resources are as per guidelines of the EMB's and may be subject to the scrutiny of the EMB's when they are carried through the partnerships.

International organizations such as UNDP, NDI, IDEA, IFES, USAID, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), League of Democracies etc have provided support and guidance in developing VE programmes especially in the developing countries and post conflict democracies.

1.02

AUSTRALIA: VOTER AND CIVIC EDUCATION RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMES FOR SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC), established under the Electoral Act, 1984 as an independent organization, is charged with the responsibility of all matters relating to conducting federal elections, referendums and maintaining the Commonwealth electoral roll. The AEC is also responsible for educating and informing the community about participating in the electoral process. AEC has developed comprehensive and well-designed voter information and education resources. While the AEC resources provide comprehensive information and guidance to voters on all election related matters including enrolling and voting, the AEC schools provides free educational resources and programmes for teachers and students.

AEC'S VOTER EDUCATION RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMES

AEC's educational resources and programmes are structured and well designed to suit the needs of students at different levels. Some of these resources, programmes are briefly discussed in the following:

'Get Voting'

'Get voting' is a holistic programme that provides all what is required to run a free and fair election for school level students. The salient features of the programme are as follows:

- It helps to organise a school election conveniently spread over 2-4 weeks.
- It addresses Civics and Citizenship curriculum outcomes by providing students hands on experience of voting.
- It helps in electing suitable student leaders while modelling good democratic practice.

Get Voting programme encourages the school community to value voting, develops students' trust, confidence and motivation to participate in democratic process.

The programme comprises of the following step wise components:

- Get Started: Planning and nomination
- Get Organised: Pre election preparation.
- Get Informed: Voter education and campaigns.
- Get Voting: Election Day participation.
- Get results Counting and announcement.

The exercise for an election can be run through the following steps through the AEC guidance:

- Order election equipment pack.
- Ballot Paper Generator.
- Download Resources.

National Electoral Education Centre

The National Electoral Education Centre in Canberra offers education programs about the federal electoral system. It is an important institution for imparting Civics and Citizenship education and provides the programmes free, though advance reservation for the visit is essential.

Experience at the NEEC:

The programme involves experiential learning to engage and inform. AEC's educators guide the participants

through a 90 minute programme which includes:
- A multi-media presentation that explores the history of Australian democracy,
- Hands-on activities which help students to understand enrolment, voting and representation; and
- Voting in a simulated election followed by counting of votes to generate a result.
- The programme content can be customised to suit different learning levels and different areas of interest. In particular, the extension programmes can be requested for secondary level students of politics or legal studies. The requirements of customisation need to be discussed in advance at the time of registering the request.

'Democracy Rules'
Aims and Objects of the Programme: Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and the Education Systems have identified civics and citizenship education as an important priority for all the students in Australia. The AEC believes it has a significant role to play in the advocacy and practical advancement of this cause with a particular focus on building electoral literacy and encouraging future participation in Australian electoral processes. In this context, the AEC has worked with Curriculum Corporation to develop a new and exciting classroom-based electoral teaching and learning package called Democracy Rules: An electoral education resource.

The Conceptual Framework: Democracy Rules is an enquiry-based electoral education resource of the AEC. It includes a detailed teaching guide, online interactive and printable activities for students. The programme is relevant across the curriculum especially the Australian Curriculum for Civics and Citizenship, Australian Politics and History, Indigenous Studies and Studies of Australia and the Asia Pacific. It provides background knowledge to enable teachers to confidently guide students on the electoral education.

Democracy Rulesaims to explain these facts and themes in an engaging manner and to make a significant contribution to what might be described as the 'democratic life experience' of the students.

The Content: The resources include an 'Introductory for the teachers' for guidance on running the programme. The components are: Introduction to the teacher, How to use this resource, curriculum links and Background Briefings.

The Topics and investigations include the following:
Topic 1: You and me, the decision makers.
- Investigation: What do we mean by democracy?
- Investigation: Can we make all decisions?
- Blackline Masters1-9
Topic 2: Representing everyone!
- Investigation: How do you have your say?
- Investigation: How are we represented?

- Blackline Masters 1-4
Topic 3: What is your worth?
- Investigation: How and why do Australians vote?
- Investigation: How do electorates change over time?
- Blackline Masters 1-8
Topic 4: The voice of a vote in a world of change.
- Investigation: How did Indigenous Australians achieve civic rights?
- Investigation: How did East Timor take the first steps to democracy?
- Blackline Masters 1-8

Further resources:
- Running an election in your school
- Glossary
- Student Animation and Interactive
- Links for Democracy Rules Topics

Sourcing of the Programme: Democracy Rules has been provided to all schools in the country, it can be downloaded from AEC links also.Many investigations in this guide refer to the education section of the AEC website www.aec.gov.au/Education/Democracy_Rules/web_links.html.

Check the Democracy Rules page for navigation pathways on the link to the specific information the students need for upper primary, lower secondary and middle secondary curriculums.

Upper secondary curriculum: The voice of a vote in a world of change, i.e. Topic 4,is suitable for use in upper secondary levels. The two investigations 'How did Indigenous Australians achieve civic rights' and 'How did East Timor take the first steps to democracy?' examine and go into the role of electoral systems and voting in bringing about political change, and develop students' understanding of the symbolic and practical importance of the franchise, before inviting them to consider their own obligation to enroll for vote, and young people's overall civic engagement.

Further Resources for running an election in a school include BLM 1 Ballot paper template, BLM 2 Scrutiny chart CD-ROM, Teacher's Interactive Voting Tool CD-ROM.

Toolbox Checklist: Running an election in your school: Ballot box seals, Ballot boxes, Ballot papers, Candidate name signs, Certified list of electors, Chairs, Pencils, Polling official badges, Scrutineer badges, Tables and Voting screens.

Further Resources for Classroom Elections from the AEC

Australia VotesDVD: This DVD contains 'mock-up polling place' footage showing the stages and procedures of voting in a federal election.

Down for the CountDVD: This DVD explains in straightforward language and clear graphics on how votes are counted for elections in the House of Representatives, the Senate and in referendums. Presented in three individual sections this product is designed for education purposes.

Every Vote Counts video: This video is set against the background of the 2004 federal election and has been designed as an educational resource to explain how an election is organized and conducted. It is suitable for groups from upper primary level onwards; Comprehensive Teachers' Notes that provide many classroom activities are also included.

Making a Nation

This programme focuses on evolution of the Australian democratic system. It comprises of inquiry-based interactive modules designed for students' requirements of 'History for Year 9 and 10 levels' of the Australian Curriculum. The programme covers key features of Australia's democratic system and the student exposure includes a range of evidence in practical and a set of self-contained classroom-friendly activities aimed at developing their own knowledge and understanding of these features.

It helps students develop a range of historical skills as per the curriculum.

Teacher Resources: Teacher resources include professional learning workshops, classrooms activities and other useful information about the electoral system as per topics shortlisted below:

- Federation Factsheets.
- Three Levels of Government
- Voting activities for people with disability and learning difficulties.
- Let Your Electoral Knowledge bloom.
- Constitutional Referendums.
- Voting in Australia
- Constitutional Referendum brochure.
- The Australian Constitution.
- National Electorate Map.
- State specific interactive electorate Maps.
- Counting of Votes.

(The above resources and details can be accessed at website of the AEC at the following link: www.aec.gov.au)

1.03
CANADA: ELECTIONS CANADA ONLINE

INTRODUCTION

Elections Canada (EC) is responsible for conduct of federal elections and referendums in the country. It is an independent, non-partisan agency and reports directly to the Parliament. The main functions assigned to EC may be stated as below:

- Maintenance of electoral rolls for conduct of elections.
- Implementation of the Canada Elections Act.
- Voter education.
- Civic education programmes and resources to

elementary and secondary level students.
- Support to Commission on electoral boundaries.

Elections Canada Online provides all the voter education resources/tools through its web based online operations accessible at: http://www.elections.ca/content2.aspx?

VOTER EDUCATION

Aims and Objects:

Aims and objects of voter education in Canada essentially include educating all categories of voters and as such the public about voter registration, where to vote, when and how to vote, the identification required to vote and the entire electoral process to make them ready to exercise the right to vote. Voter education also encompasses civic education for primary and secondary level students and the teachers, youth engagement, community involvement and through various other means including online services, partnership building etc.

Approach:

EC has developed and provided, at its website, inter alia a series of shareable resources also called as Federal Election resources to help all categories of voters to become fully informed of the entire electoral process and make them fully prepared to exercise right to vote. These resources covering all information that a voter needs to exercise his voting right, may be categorized as below:

- Voter Information Service.
- Voter Identification.
- Ways to Vote.
- Voter Registration.
- FAQ's for Electors.
- Backgrounders on Electoral Process.
- Aboriginal Voters.
- Voters from Ethno-cultural Communities (in 31 languages).
- Voting by Special Ballot by Canadian Forces.
- Information for People with Disabilities.
- Information for New Voters.
- Civic Education for Elementary and secondary Students, Teachers.
- Youth Engagement.
- Partnership with National and Regional Organizations for Voter Education, Civic education and Youth Engagement.

Sub categories under each of these categories provide comprehensive online information to voters and as such for the public for gaining awareness and education on the electoral process. All information can be accessed on the EC's website at http://www.elections.ca/content2.aspx?

EC's outreach programmes, special programmes, blogs, research studies, social media connect on Facebook, Twitter etc also contribute to the electoral engagement and educational programmes in an efficient manner.

Civic Education, Outreach Programmes:

EC's mandate under the Canada Elections Act inter alia covers the following responsibilities through:

- implementation of public education and information programmes for the purpose of making the electoral process better known to students at the primary and secondary levels, and
- by advertising for informing electors about the exercise of their democratic rights.

Strategy:

EC identifies groups for targeted outreach on the basis of electoral participation barriers faced by them especially the barrier of lack of information about when, where and how to register and vote. The identified groups include youth and students, aboriginals, senior citizens in long-term care facilities, ethno cultural communities, and electors with disabilities and electors who are homeless. EC collaborates with national and regional organizations that are able to reach members of these groups for further steps as follow:

- shares information about the electoral process, for distribution by partner organizations to their stakeholders;
- informs groups about EC programmes, including online services and field outreach during an election;
- actively solicits the groups' collaboration to share official voting information and promote EC's initiatives.

EC's Educational Resources: Civic education

Teachers: Teachers would require:

- Lesson plans and resources to teach about democracy, elections, voting, government and citizenship.
- Conduct an election simulation in classroom.
- Way to make the federal election relevant to students.

EC offers educational resources that are:

- free and easy to order,
- delivered directly to the targeted school,
- created to meet your curriculum needs,
- designed to make your work a little easier.

Students: EC resources help students increase political knowledge and interest, encourage them to develop a sense of civic duty, connect them to the world and issues that surround them make democracy, elections and voting relevant to students' daily lives at home and in their community.EC online provides all kinds of resources for students class projects on democracy, elections and voting.

Parents: EC's website is the authentic source of information on Canadian democracy, elections, voting and citizenship. This helps parents to guide their children on the subject.

Youth-serving Organizations: EC's resources provide guidance for youth programming and resources focused on democratic and civic leadership and engagement. It also provides programming ideas and hands-on resources that make young Canadians aware, informed and engaged in civic and democratic education.

Background Resources

EC also provides students with more information on how democracy, elections and voting work in Canada through brief papers called Background Resources. They include Electoral System of Canada (an e-booklet), Political Parties, Ridings and Members of Parliament, Becoming a candidate, Research, Events, Youth Organizations and FAQ's etc.

EC participates in a variety of activities with Youth Organizations and maintains a list of Youth Organizations. EC offers a variety of ways for students to engage as active citizens and different civic engagement programmes. (See Supplement: Elections Canada Program)

Classroom resources

Elections Canada offers vast educational products and resources for elementary, secondary and ESL teachers free educational resources, tools, activities, information and links, all designed for sparking interest in voting in a classroom. These resources aim at appraising the relevance of the country's parliamentary and democratic institutions to the students who are the future voters. These resources may be categorised as below:

- Educational Products for Elementary Level, secondary Level;
- Educational Resources;
- Annual Initiative;
- Election Canada Partners;

Detailed lists of these resources are available on EC's website along with an online order form

Helpful links

EC' online resources also provide 'Helpful Links' for further guidance and operations. A number of organizations are engaged in the work relating to promotion of awareness and understanding of the country's electoral process, democratic and civic engagement, community involvement and active citizenship for elementary and secondary students and for educators.Links to civic and democratic engagement organizations are listed below for ready reference. Students and other youth can find more ways to get informed get involved and help the next generation be ready to vote in their first election when they turn 18.

- Youth Organizations and Programmes;
- Teacher Information;
- Your Province or Territory's Electoral Body.
- Other Resources.

More general information on the electoral process is available at Election Canada's Links. Visit http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?

'About Canada's Democracy Week' see Supplement: Canada: Democracy week

SUPPLEMENT: ELECTIONS CANADA PROGRAM

Student Vote

Since 2003, the Student Vote program has been giving students under the voting age the opportunity to experience the voting process and have a voice in the election.

Bring the 2015 federal election to your classroom. Student Vote is a parallel election for students under the voting age, coinciding with official election periods. The program combines in-class learning, family dialogue, media consumption and an authentic voting experience. Approximately 560,000 students in over 3,800 schools participated in the Student Vote program during the 2011 federal election.

Student Vote is a parallel election program offered to elementary and high schools during official federal, provincial and municipal elections. Participating students learn about government and the electoral process, research the party platforms and local candidates, and participate in an authentic vote for the official candidates in their school's riding.

Registered schools receive all the material necessary to run the program, including educational resources, an election manual, posters, voting screens, ballot boxes and ballots.

The goal of Student Vote is to create life-long voters who are ready, willing and able to participate in their democracy.

Schools can sign up now at www.studentvote.ca or by calling our team toll-free at 1-866-488-8775.

Student Vote is the flagship program of CIVIX, Canada's leading civic education charity. Visit civix.ca to learn more."

Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

Elections Canada works with a variety of organizations that deliver amazing training and learning experiences to teachers of social studies, civics, politics and citizenship.

Coordinated by the Library of Parliament and supported by the Speakers of both the Senate and the House of Commons, the Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy is a unique professional development opportunity for teachers of governance and citizenship education. Each year, the program brings together approximately 85 educators from across the country for an intensive, informative and unforgettable week at Parliament.

The National Democracy Challenge

The National Democracy Challenge invites Canadians aged 14 to 17 to submit a video, image or piece of writing answering the challenge question. Contestants win great prizes for the best submissions in each category. The school with the most entries wins the School Challenge.

- Inside and outside the classroom
- High school students aged 14 to 17
- Submissions accepted as of mid-August 2015

Rep Day

Rep Day is a nationwide civic education initiative that connects elected representatives with high school students for a dialogue on current political issues. Rep Day aims to break down the stereotypes that young people have of politicians and the political process. It helps students develop a better understanding of and a sense of trust in the people and institutions within our democracy.

- Inside the classroom
- High school students
- Contact CIVIX directly for more information

Forum for Young Canadians

Each one-week session gives 120 Canadian high school students a behind-the-scenes look at Parliament Hill in Ottawa, the chance to enhance their knowledge of Canadian politics and public affairs, and an up-close look at running the country.

- Outside the classroom
- High school students aged 15 to 19
- Application deadlines apply

Encounters with Canada

Every week of the school year, 120 to 148 high school students visit Ottawa to learn about Canadian institutions, meet famous and accomplished Canadians, explore exciting career options and develop their civic leadership skills.

- Outside the classroom
- High school students aged 14 to 17
- Application deadlines apply

Be the Change!

Teacher candidates from the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Education conceive, develop and deliver engaging and experiential modules on democratic citizenship at nine Encounters with Canada sessions. Participating youth increase their awareness, understanding of and interest in civic and community responsibility, action and engagement. They leave with an action plan that they can implement in their school or community.

- Outside the classroom
- High school students aged 14 to 17

Rotary Adventure in Citizenship

Each year for four days, 220 Canadian youth meet in the nation's capital. Through meetings with political leaders, senior executives and others, they discover up close the inner workings of our democratic institutions and develop their civic leadership potential.

- Outside the classroom

- High school students aged 16 to 18
- Application deadlines apply

Keystone
The Youth, Democracy and Engagement module of the flagship Keystone program gets youth to experiment with participating in the political system. They become more aware of and involved in the issues of citizenship and democracy in their club and community.
- Outside the classroom
- High school students
- Contact your local Boys and Girls Club for details

SUPPLEMENT: CANADA: DEMOCRACY WEEK

About Canada's Democracy Week
The Story
Canada's Democracy Week 2015
Backgrounder
Get Involved!
Teachers: Get Involved!
In December 2010, a group of Elections Canada's returning officers from across Canada met in Ottawa to crowdsource how Elections Canada could better reach out to Canadians. One idea that emerged was Canada's Democracy Week, dedicated to engaging Canadians about democracy.

Further inspired by the United Nations' International Day of Democracy (September 15), Elections Canada launched its inaugural Canada's Democracy Week in September 2011.

Today, Canada's Democracy Week informs, engages and connects Canadians with the democratic process through a week-long series of in-person and online activities as well as resources and programming for teachers to use in their school.

The Theme for 2015
The theme for CDW2015 is "Let's Get Canada Ready to Vote."
Canada's Democracy Week 2015 will give Canadians tools to start making their plan to vote by identifying where, when and the ways that they can register and vote in the upcoming 2015 federal election.

Canada's Democracy Week 2015 will engage teachers as well as elementary and secondary schoolaged youth with ideas on how they can be part of the week and be part of the 2015 federal election. Our fact sheet "Teachers: Get Involved" lists ways that Canada's Democracy Week can be a great starting point to kick off the school year.

Get Involved
Check out our **Get Involved** and **Teachers: Get In-**

volved fact sheets for some ideas on ways to be part of Canada's Democracy Week 2015.

Planning a non-partisan event or activity to participate in CDW2015 and help Canadians know when, where and ways to vote? Send us an **e-mail** with your event or activity and we'll it put on our calendar of events.

Check out the **previous years' calendar of events** for some ideas of what you could do.

Stay Up to Date
There are several ways to stay up to date on what is happening with Canada's Democracy Week 2015:
- Visit our website for the latest news related to CDW2015 and the National Democracy Challenge.
- Follow us on **Twitter**, **Facebook** and **YouTube**.
- **Subscribe** to our e-Newsletter.
- Send us an **e-mail** with your questions.

1.04
GEORGIA: VOTERS EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION
Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia is an independent body charged with the responsibility of inter alia maintenance of electoral roll and conducting impartial, transparent and professionally administered elections as per the provisions of law. The CEC is also mandated to create an environment where voters and electoral stakeholders can freely exercise their electoral rights.

VOTER AND CIVIC EDUCATION
Civic and voter education is one of the priorities areas under the Strategic Plan (2015-19) of the CEC. It envisages maximizing voter awareness, voter participation and increasing civic engagement in electoral processes. The CEC has undertaken several innovative initiatives to achieve the desired objectives of electoral and civic engagement. Some of the initiatives are briefly discussed as follows:

Electoral Development Schools
A pilot project namely "Electoral Development Schools" for youth was launched in 2015 by the CEC and has been successfully implemented in 10 election districts. The project is being implemented by the CEC in collaboration with its Training Center. The Schools under the project aim at increasing civic engagement, popularization of elections amongst youth besides developing training skills of

the election officials. The project will gradually cover all election districts in Georgia in a well designed manner.

Election and Young Voter

The CEC, in collaboration with its Training Center, implements the information cum learning course "Elections and Young Voter" for engaging youth in public, political life and raising their awareness levels. The course is conducted for the 11th and 12th grade public school students especially in the regions densely populated with ethnic minorities in Georgia.

The project is being implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia.

Courses for Election Administrators

The CEC and its Training Center implement the project "Courses for Election Administrators" for preparing professionally qualified personnel. The course focuses on learning of the voting procedures.

Legal Clinic

The Legal clinic has been operating at the CEC Training Center since 2010. The clinic aims at strengthening the professional knowledge of law students at higher educational institutions, in election law as well as raises their civic awareness and develops practical skills.

Learning Course in Election law at High Education Institutions

The CEC Training Center implements various educational programs including one semester learning course in election law (Study Course in Election Law) for the students of law faculty as well as political and social science faculty (media school) students.

Distance Learning Program

The CEC Training Center promotes distance learning program aimed at increasing awareness and is available for all interested persons. The program includes tests which is additional mean for checking knowledge.

Supporting Civil Society Engagement

CEC Training Center within the framework of the grand competition issues the targeted grants for increasing civic engagement in electoral processes and capacity building of civic sector and political parties.

1.05
INDIA: CHALLENGES AND SUCCESS STORIES

INTRODUCTION

Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation programme, discussed at length in the introductory section has outreach based focused components for electoral engagement of the students in the country. Besides, Election Commission of India has initiated steps under its ongoing project plan SVEEP –III to introduce electoral literacy in school curricula and as extra-curricula besides introducing it in college and university curricula.

Some of the successful outreach based components for electoral engagement of the students in India are discussed in the following section.

Campus Ambassadors

Campus Ambassadors have been appointed from among the students in recognised Colleges and Universities to bridge the gap in youth electoral participation. Around 9000 Campus Ambassadors were in position when the country went to the national elections. States developed guidelines in form of small booklets for the newly engaged Campus Ambassadors with detailed instructions on their roles and responsibilities and distributed the same in various workshops held for them.

One state came up with the novel idea of appointing meritorious college students as Campus Ambassadors to motivate first-time voters in a bid to increase the voting turnout in elections. The Campus Ambassadors were encouraged to use creative endeavours to inform, encourage and motivate students to register for the electoral rolls and to vote.

Edutainment for students

The production and distribution of voter edutainment material for continuous education in an interesting and comprehensive manner was taken up in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2013. Focusing on consistent education and motiva-

tion, this project also takes from the concept of pyscho-social learning. After studying and identifying potential target group for each tool in the initial stage, a field test of the tools was also done to assure their effectiveness. Frequently asked questions (FAQ) related to the electoral process and other topics are pictorially depicted and discussed through the story of the brother-sister duo of *Abha* and *Abhay* in the colourful and easy-to-understand picture book *'Garv se banein Matdata'*, meant largely for new and semi literates, women and children.

A series of short cartoon strips *'Wah Election Wah!'* aims to stir the complacent urban non-voters with wit and humour, while also disseminating information of how, where and when.

Set in a train travelling through various parts of the country, the radio programme *'Loktantra Express'* uses song and speech, adding regional flavours to motivate listeners from different regions, age groups and sections to participate in the task of nation building by practicing their right to vote.

The board games *'Vote Ki Baazi'* and *'Ready Steady Vote'* designed upon the traditional board games using folk art and motifs but with the twist of voter education, imparts education in an interesting and engaging way.

Voter Education Stories in Popular Children's

Magazines

Aiming at engaging the to-be voters and to catch them young, specific stories on voter education were taken up in popular children's magazines Tinkle and Lotpot. While in Tinkle the trope of the jungle was used, popular characters *Motu & Patlu* appeared discussing voting related topics in Lotpot, in a pictorial, colourful and interesting way of cartoon-strip format to attract the readers. The initiative aimed at long term effect of motivating and encouraging children and youth for greater participation in voting.

Schools/Colleges as the hub for voter education

In 2012 provincial elections, Form 6 were distributed along with admission forms in colleges. This practice was adopted by all the States. *Sankalp patras*/Pledge letters were distributed to school children in Primary School, Secondary School, and Colleges and to *Sakhi mandals* (Women Self-Help-Groups). Signed letters pledging to vote were received to the tune of more than 7 million in just one state going for election in 2012. This practice was also followed in other States. These innovative practices were later incorporated into policy and are now adopted across the country as outreach measure among students.

National Voters' Day

Celebrating the founding day of Election Commission ofIndia i.e. 25th January as Voters' Day started as an ini-

tiative in 2011 to mobilize the newly eligible electors to get enrolled. NVD is celebrated at each of the more than 0.6 million polling station area besides at District and State Headquarters. At each of these functions, newly registered electors of the age 18-19 are given their voter card and administered the NVD pledge.

While young citizens attaining 18 years were targeted, the initiative was much more successful and systematic in educational institutions. Secondary Schools and Colleges organized successful enrolment drive along with various competitions to engage students with electoral process. Primary Schools also celebrated National Voters' Day by organizing functions and competitions to inculcate awareness on elections and democracy among its students. Election Offices were closely involved in collaborating with Schools and Colleges for NVD functions.

> **Voters' Pledge**
>
> "We, the citizens of India, having abiding faith in democracy, hereby pledge to uphold the democratic traditions of our country and the dignity of free, fair and peaceful elections, and to vote in every election fearlessly and without being influenced by considerations of religion, race, caste, community, language or any inducement".

1.06
KENYA: VOTER EDUCATION INITIATIVES

INTRODUCTION

The right of citizens to free and fair elections is enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, (IEBC) is charged inter alia with the responsibility of conducting voter Education in Kenya. IEBC believes that access to accurate voter education helps to nurture an informed voter aware of his electoral rights and responsibilities in a democracy. It equips a voter with right skills to participate in electoral process and empowers him in developing and safeguarding democracy.

VOTER AND CIVIC EDUCATION: SCOPE AND THE NEED

Voter education is targeted at the whole citizenry, eligible voters, development partners, stakeholders in a bid to address specific electoral events as well as the general electoral process. In order to achieve the democratic and issue-based participation in an electoral process, Voter Education needs to be supplemented by civic education. The latter provides a broader perspective and enhances the understanding of Voter Education. It is concerned with citizens, rather than voters, and emphasizes the relationship between active citizenship and democratic society. It is understood that citizens must engage the political process routinely, not just at the time of elections. Voter education involves providing information on the entire electoral process that includes eligibility to vote, voter registration, political parties, elective positions, candidates, election campaigns, polling, law and order during elections and national integration and cohesion. In this regard, it is imperative that in every election, Voter and Civic Education are intensively carried out to ensure that the entire citizenry understand their rights, their political system, the contests they are being asked to decide, and how and where to vote. For an election to be successful and democratic, voters must understand their rights and responsibilities, and must be sufficiently knowledgeable and well informed to cast ballots that are legally valid and to participate meaningfully in the voting process.

VOTER EDUCATION: MANDATE OF THE IEBC

Voter Education is a critical mandate of the IEBC. It is intended to ensure that voters are ready, willing, and able to participate in the electoral process. The ideal outcome entails electoral literacy and confidence that the electoral process is appropriate and effective in electing governments and promoting policies that will benefit the individual voter. A well designed Voter Education program ensures that voters can effectively exercise their voting rights and express their political will through the electoral process. If voters are not prepared or motivated to participate in the electoral process, questions about the legitimacy, representativeness, and responsiveness of elected leaders and institutions may arise.

VOTER EDUCATION: APPROACH & STRATEGY

IEBC, keeping in view its responsibilities and obligations arising out of the new Constitution of 2010, has taken up voter education as one of the major thrust areas for nurturing democracy in the country. In this process it has developed a well structured and need based curriculum followed with a number of user-friendly guiding documents on voter education through well designed and comprehensive stakeholder participation process. These documents include audio, video, print booklets with lucid and comfortable easy to read user- friendly illustrated hand books besides use of updated technology options. It has

also developed a comprehensive and a well organized operational system through formal and informal channels to reach the voters at ground level and has launched several new projects in this endeavor.

VOTER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

A Holistic Document Prepared Through Stakeholder Participation

One of the key initiatives taken by the IEBC under the Constitution of 2010 is preparation of a holistic and well structured Voter Education Curriculum (VEC) document with the support and contribution of its partners. The process included support from Kenya Institute of Education, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and comprehensive consultation with different stakeholders including media, academic institutions of repute, nongovernmental organizations, and representatives of Kenya Society for Physically and Mentally Handicapped, National Cohesion and Integration Commission, UNDP, representatives of different ethnic and religious groups etc.

Voter Education Curriculum with module wise objectives may be accessed at IEBC website link http://www.iebc.or.ke/index.php/careers/voter-education

Aims and Objectives

The VEC aims at addressing political and electoral developments as provided under the 2010 Constitution. Informed participation in elections to different offices and other provisions of electoral process necessitate inclusion of relevant voter education areas that enables voters to understand the respective roles of the positions in governance of the country. It also aims at promoting the desired participation of all sections of voters in electoral process viz women, PwD's, ethnic groups and people from all the communities.

Objectives

The voter education curriculum is geared towards:

- a) Arousing public interest in the electoral process and their involvement in the process of electing political leaders.
- b) Informing the public on the link between human rights and voter rights.
- c) Making the public aware of the relationship between elections and democracy.
- d) Enlightening the public on the importance of voting and its impact on transparency and accountability.
- e) Understanding the rationale and importance of boundary reviews in Kenya.
- f) Educating the public on the electoral process, role, responsibilities and rights of voters.
- g) Undertaking voter registration, polling and counting procedures.

- h) Managing conflicts during elections.
- i) Understanding the role and importance of political parties, candidates and observers in elections.
- j) Enhancing voter's participation in the electoral process in an objective and issue based platform.
- k) Ensuring that voter apathy is minimized.

Role and use of Emergent Technologies

The VEC also addresses the role and use of emergent technologies in conduct of elections such as Electronic Voter Registration and Electronic Tallying of results.

VOTER EDUCATION TRAINING MANUAL

A comprehensive Voter Education Training Manual has been prepared and launched by IEBC to complement the use of the Voter Education Curriculum as the primary reference material in voter education.

FORMAL AND INFORMAL CHANNELS FOR VOTER EDUCATION: VOTER EDUCATION PROVIDERS

The voter education is provided through formal and informal channels. Formal channels include the schools and the universities where the voter education programme has been launched. A Directorate of Voter Education and Partnerships has been set up in the IEBC. Voter Education Providers have been accredited by the IEBC in each of the constituencies in sufficient numbers. The list includes a sizeable number of the education providers for women, PwD's, different ethnic groups and communities to ensure that all sections of the society are covered. Voter education providers are expected to use the Trainers manual when planning for and disseminating voter education. Directorate of Voter Education and Partnerships utilizes the services of voter education providers accredited by IBEC for different counties.

USER- FRIENDLY GUIDE 'YES, I CAN VOTE!'

IEBC has produced user- friendly guides in the form of booklets to facilitate educators, trainers and directly, the voters. One of these booklets is titled "YES, I Can Vote!' developed in close collaborationwith stakeholders with the intention of reaching out to all voters in Kenya.

The overall goal of the guide is to demystifythe electoral process and make it more accessible.The approach followed for the document is both direct andpersonal. At the same time, the booklet provides aframework that voter educators or trainers can useand adapt to their individual needs alongside theVoter Education Curriculum, Handbook on ElectivePositions and the Trainers' Manual. While the IEBC is committed to developmentof voter education and information programs suitable for all Kenyans citizens,special effort has been made through this booklet to reach out to those who mayexperience difficulty in exercising their individualright of casting their vote and voting correctly during the General Election. (See Supplement)

PUBLIC FORUMS ON VOTER EDUCATION

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries commission (IEBC) organizes Voter Education Forums in a well designed manner and with comprehensive and relevant content and as per a specific timeframe in each County Assembly Ward on specified venues through Constituency Election Coordinator Office. Wide publicity is given to the programme for information of the electorate and all the Voter Education Providers are directed to follow the programme carefully. The climax of the forums is marked by the simulation of the voting processin designated venues at respective CAWs countrywide. Entry to these forums is free and open to all. Content of such forums is given in Supplement.

VOTER EDUCATION WEEKS

As one of the strategic initiatives IEBC has started Annual Voter Education weeks ahead of elections. The voter education weeks are organised in consultation and in collaboration with all the stakeholders. The first ever Annual Voter Education Week were held countrywide from Monday 18th to Friday 22nd May, 2015.

During this week, IEBC sensitizes the citizens on importance of participation in the electoral process as well boost the continuous voter registration process. This is part of the IEBC mandate of conducting continuous voter education as set out it Article 88(4)(g) of the Constitution.

Other highlights in the Voter Education week cover inclusion and mainstreaming, party lists, political tolerance, dispute resolution mechanisms, electoral technology among others.

The voter education week are implemented nationwide through outreach programmes to schools, electoral technology exhibition, media campaigns, onsite service delivery, open stakeholders' forum and town hall meetings.

In the 2013 General Elections, the overall voter turnout was 85.99%. The Commission intends to improve on this commendable turnout through educating the public on the need to exercise democratic and civic rights through participation in voting.

VOTER EDUCATION FOR SCHOOLS PROJECT: NURTURING DEMOCRACY IN SCHOOLS

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission launched an ambitious voter education project for schools in March 2015. For this purpose the Commission has established a partnership with the Ministry of Education and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to realize the goals of this project.

The project focuses more on the secondary school students because they are about to turn 18 years of age and will therefore be eligible to participate in elections.

The project is funded by the Canadian Government through the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). It is meant to nurture democracy in young Kenyans and includes focus on PwD's besides women voters.

Implementation of the project will include developing a curriculum and curriculum support materials; piloting the curriculum in selected schools; training teachers and students on the curriculum and handbooks; establishing the best platforms to engage the young people in schools; and rolling out the curriculum in schools nationally.

IEBC will work within the existing structures of the Ministry of Education, including County Directors of Education, District Education Officers, Student Government and Student Councils. The Commission will consult all the stakeholders widely and integrate the project with existing initiatives.

The project is forward looking and intends to foster understanding of the electoral process and developleaders of integrity from an early age.

The banners announcing the launch of a new voter education initiative for schools in Kenya, led by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) may be seen at Annex III The project is supported by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development.

SUPPLEMENT: KENYA: BOOKLET

Yes, I can Vote!

The booklet is divided into three sections and teaches the

basics of voting in simple language coupled with necessary illustrations. 'Section I-Election words I need to know' explains qualifications for voting and election words used throughout the guide. 'Section 2- What elections are all about' briefly outlines the electoral process and describes the people involved. It describes offices to be voted for and also explains ballot paper design and how to mark a ballot.' Section 3-Election Day – I make a choice' provides a step-by-step guidance on how to vote. It is a simple good overview of the process, the people involved and election words. 'Section 4- counting Votes' explains vote counting process, rights and duties of voters, Election offences and penalties.

The booklet, user-friendly in nature, was made for all voters, educators and leaders. It makes an attractive reading and makes a voter comfortable and confident about voting. It can be used with the help of a friend, family member or a voter educator. It can be used for organizing mock elections also.

SUPPLEMENT: KENYA: PUBLIC FORUMS ON VOTER EDUCATION

Focus Topic: Peaceful Campaigns
- Elections as a contest of ideas and not reason for conflicts
- Elections Code of Conduct
- Roles of parties, candidates and citizens in upholding peace during elections

Focus Topic: Making Wise Electoral Choices
- What are the elective positions and what is the role of each?
- Why is it important for voters to elect good leaders?
- What are the qualities of a good leader?
- How does a voter assess desirable qualities among candidates?
- What is the role of the voter in promoting issue-based politics and credible leadership?
- What are the risks in electing candidates for other reasons rather than merit?
- Importance of Voting
- Why is it important to vote?
- Does every vote count i.e. are all votes equal?
- Why is it important for women, youth, Persons With Disabilities, minority groups and other special groups to vote?

Focus Topic: Election offences and Penalties
- What are the things to avoid during elections and what are the penalties?
- Where do you report election offences?
- What can citizens do to mitigate/minimize election offences
- What is the number of votes that a presidential candidate must get to be officially declared validly elected?
- What is a presidential runoff and how is it conducted?

Focus Topic: Election Day
- What/whom to expect at the polling station?
- What is the process of voting?
- What is the role of poll officials, agents, observers and security officers?
- How will results be counted, transmitted and tallied?
- What are the assurances that official results will genuinely reflect the choice of voters?
- Voter Turnout
- Why is it important to turnout in large numbers on voting day?
- What is the role of the citizen in ensuring a high turnout?
- Post Elections Peace and Cohesion.
- Acceptance of official results by winner and losers
- Political reconciliation and peaceful coexistence after elections
- Serving winners and losers as their elected leader

Simulation of the Voting Process
- The format and respective colors for each ballot paper
- The importance of voting by secret ballot

SUPPLEMENT: KENYA: BANNERS

Banners Announcing Launch of 'Voter Education for Schools Project' in Kenya

VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the Voter Education programme of ECN has been to foster and promote a democratic culture and good governance, so as to ensure credible election processes and results. Broadly The ECN applied following thematic concepts as a part of its education and training:

- Understanding the condition and requirements for voting.
- Understanding the concepts of multi-party democracy, pluralism, and proportional representation as it applies to the Namibian system of democracy.
- Knowing the Namibian elections Code of Conduct.
- Understanding issues relating to civil rights and freedom of expression, association and movement.
- Knowing Citizenship and the Roles and Responsibilities of citizens pertaining to elections and governance.
- Knowing the type of elections in Namibia and criteria to vote and to be voted for.
- Knowing the process of voters' registration and procedures for the registration of political parties
- Understanding the development of the voter registration.

The programme is generally aimed at raising public awareness on elections, democracy building and political tolerance during the Presidential and National Assembly Elections.

THE NEW LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOTER EDUCATION

The legislative framework of voter education under the Electoral Act, 2010 redesigns and strengthens the entire civic and voter education in Namibia. The new legislative framework is discussed briefly as follows:

Section 4(2)(e) and Part 3 (Sections 49 to 54) of the Act are completely dedicated to civic and voter education. Excerpts from the Electoral Act 2014 are given at Annex I for ready reference.

Section 4(2)(e) empowers the Commission to supervise, direct, control and promote voter and civic education in respect of elections and referenda, including the cooperation with educational or other bodies or institutions with a view to the provision of instruction to or the training of persons in electoral and related matters.

1.07
NAMIBIA: VOTER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The Election Commission of Namibia has been spearheading the voter and civic education for a long time, but the recent interventions have witnessed significant strengthening of the entire voter education system through legislative framework and the new policy framework. Three laudable features of the recent electoral legislation in Namibia are that Voter education has been specifically assigned as one of the statutory duties and functions to the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) under the Electoral Act, 2014; the ECN must establish a permanent division of voter and civic education under the Act; and the ECN has been assigned legal authority under the Act for accreditation of persons providing voter and civic education. Further a Voter Education policy has been brought in place in the year 2014 with clear set of well defined objectives.

Section 49 provides for comprehensive framework of guidance and conditionalities to the ECN while discharging its role in supervising, directing, controlling and promoting voter and civic education. Some of these are briefly stated as below:

- to pursue the objective to make the meaning and purpose of elections well understood by the electorate;
- develop, revise and update voter and civic education materials on a continuous basis;
- establish regional advisory committees and voter and civic education offices to decentralize the distribution of voter and civic education materials and to increase local participation;
- design a multimedia campaign strategy that identifies information channels;
- encourage civic organizations, media and political parties to support the voter and civic education programmes;
- monitor and conduct evaluation research to determine the impact of the voter and civic education;
- ensure that voter and civic education particularly addresses the young population.
- ECN is also expected to keep in view the Constitutional mandate on the subject of fundamental rights and duties of the voters.
- The ECN is expected to coordinate with the concerned Ministry of Education for curriculum development and other related matters.

The mandate of the commission is very wide and lays powerful emphasis not only for voter education, it extends much beyond that to civic education and to ensure that all citizens are educated in these areas fully well as per the mandate of the statute and the principles enshrined in the constitution of Namibia.

Establishment of Division for Voter and Civic Education

Section 50 of the Act provides that the ECN must establish a permanent division of voter and civic education and enhance its activities besides setting of a well-designed regional organization for the purpose. It also provides for training of the officers of the above said staff of regional set up.

Accreditation of persons providing voter and civic education: Partnership development

Section 51 of the Act provides that any natural or juristic person other than registered political party or registered organization (subject to provisions of section 54 of the Act) may apply for accreditation to the ECN for providing voter and civic education. Elaborate provisions have been made for the processing of such applications and for regulation and capacity building of such accredited persons to ensure that the desired objectives of the legislation for voter and civic education are achieved well.

Political parties are also authorized to impart voter and civic education to their members, supporters and sympathizers.

Code of conduct for accredited persons

Section 51 provides for code of conduct for accredited educators/ trainers. Failure to comply with the code may lead to cancellation of accreditation.

Curriculum Development

As per provisions of section 49(i) the ECN, while discharging its functions of supervision, direction, control and promotion of voter and civic education, it must co-operate with the Ministry responsible for education regarding the development of a syllabus for learners which includes material relating to voter and civic education; and the Ministry responsible for information regarding involvement invoter and civic education.

NATIONAL VOTER EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

The new National Voter Education Policy (NVEP) has been launched in October 2014 at the Electoral Symposium by Director of Elections. The ECN has been conducting voter and civic education for fairly long time but the NVEP has been launched with the aim of consolidating the process especially in the wake of the new Electoral Act of 2014, and the underlying philosophy that "An educated voter is our democracy's best citizen". The NVEP at its core, recognizes the famous saying of Franklin D Roosevelt's that **"Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely, the real safeguard of democracy is therefore education."**

Objectives

NVEP has clearly defined objectives (i) to ensure that the electorate is universally informed and that eligible citizens know how to participate in electoral process. (ii) to ensure capacity building of partners and developing their collaborations with ECN to respond to voter education needs in an effective and sustainable manner.(iii) regulation of voting education partners to ensure adherence to qualitative standards and (iv) standardize voter education messages.

Implementation Strategies, monitoring and evaluation

The policy envisages that social, cultural and economic factors shall be taken into account in imparting voter education. The ethnic composition of the country, language, values, beliefs, norms and level of education in the different population group shall also be kept in consideration. CSOs, working for persons with disabilities, shall be engaged to conduct disability relevant voter education programmes.

Dwelling upon the new legislation, the Policy instrument prescribes implementation strategies through accreditation of persons for imparting voter and civic education, partnership developments and capacity building, codes of conduct for accredited persons and the accreditation regulatory framework besides a robust evaluation and monitoring mechanism.

The scope of voter education as envisaged under the Policy and legislation extends to civic education; and the constitutional mandate provides still larger scope for deepening and strengthening democracy in Namibia in the light of past experience and the lessons learnt there from.

(A copy of the NVEP is placed at Supplement: Namibia: National Voter Education Policy)

SUPPLEMENT: NAMIBIA: ELECTORAL ACT, 2014

Excerpts from the Electoral Act, 2014 of Namibia

Powers and functions of Commission:

(1) Subject to the Namibian Constitution and this Act, and inparticular with due regard to Schedule 2 and any other law, the Commission -

   (a) is the exclusive authority to direct, supervise, manage and control in a fair and impartial manner and without fear, favour or prejudice any elections and referenda under this Act; and

   (e) supervise, direct, control and promote voter and civic education in respect of elections and referenda, including the cooperation witheducational or other bodies or institutions with a view to the provisionof instruction to or the training of persons in electoral and relatedmatters;

   (h) undertake and promote research into electoral matters;

   (i) develop and promote the development of electoral expertise and technology in all spheres of government;

   (j) promote knowledge of sound and democratic electoral processes;

   (k) issue and enforce any code of conduct provided for in this Act;

   (l) supervise and control the disclosure and dissemination of information regarding electoral matters and establish and maintain the necessary facilities for collecting and disseminating the information

PART 3 (Voter and civic education):

   49. (1) The Commission must, when supervising, directing, controllingand promoting voter

and civic education -

   (a) pursue the objective to make the meaning and purpose of elections well understood by the electorate;

   (b) create public awareness on elections, democracy building and political tolerance;

   (c) develop, revise and update voter and civic education materials on a continuous basis;

   (d) establish regional advisory committees and voter and civic education offices to decentralise the distribution of voter and civic education materials and to increase local participation;

   (e) design a multi-media campaign strategy that identifies information channels;

   (f) encourage civic organisations, the media and political parties to support the voter and civic education program of the Commission;

   (g) monitor and conduct formative evaluation research to determine the impact of the voter and civic education;

   (h) ensure that voter and civic education particularly addresses the young population; and

   (1) cooperate with the -
   (i) Ministry responsible for education regarding the development of a syllabus for learners which includes material relating to voter and civic education; and
   (ii) Ministry responsible for information regarding involvement in voter and civic education.
   (2) When conducting voter and civic education the Commission must take into account the Bill of Fundamental Voters' Rights and Duties.

Establishment of division of voter and civic education:

   50. The Commission must -
   (a) establish a permanent division of voter and civic education in theDirectorate and enhance the activities of the division;
   (b) appoint electoral education and information staff members in each region and locate them in the office of the chief regional officer concerned; and
   (c) duly train the electoral education and information staff members in relation to their tasks in order to enable them to not only conduct voter and civic education, but also to spread voter and civic education to the grass-roots level.

Accreditation of persons providing voter and

civic education:

51. (1) Subject to section 54, any natural or juristic person, other thana registered political party or registered organisation, may apply to the Commission in the prescribed manner for accreditation to provide voter and civic education to the general public for or in respect of any election or referendum.

(2) The Commission may require further information in support of an application referred to in subsection (1).

(3) After considering -

    (a) an application referred to in subsection (1);

    (b) any further information provided by the applicant under subsection (2);and

    (c) whether -

(i) the services provided by the applicant meets the standards of the Commission;

(ii) the applicant is able to conduct its activities effectively;

    (iii) the applicant or the persons appointed by the applicant to provide voter and civic education -

        (aa) can do so in a manner that is impartial and independent of any registered political party or registered organisation or candidate contesting the election;

        (bb) is or are competent to do so; and

        (cc) will subscribe to the Code of Conduct referred to in section 52; and

    (iv)the accreditation of the applicant will promote voter and civic education and conditions conducive to free and fair elections and referenda, the Commission may direct the Chief Electoral Officer to accredit an applicant to provide voter and civic education for or in respect of the election or referendum, and determine the conditions of accreditation.

(4) If the Commission decides not to accredit an applicant, the Chief Electoral Officer must advise the unsuccessful applicant in writing of its decision.

(5) If the Commission decides to accredit the applicant, the Chief Electoral Officer must -

    (a) enter the name of the applicant in the register of persons accredited to provide voter and civic education for or in respect of elections or referenda;

    (b) issue a certificate of accreditation in the name of the applicant stating –

        (i) the period within which the applicant may provide the voter and civic education; and

        (ii) the conditions of accreditation;

    (c) keep two copies of the certificate at the head office of the Commission;and

    (d) send the certificate to the applicant.

(6) Any person may inspect the register and copies of the certificates of persons accredited to provide voter and civic education for or in respect of any election or referendum.

(7) The Chief Electoral Officer must provide a certified copy of, or extract from, the register or a certificate referred to in subsection (6) to any person who has paid the prescribed fee.

(8) The Commission must prescribe guidelines for the purposes of voter and civic education, and approve all material developed for the purposes of conducting voter and civic education prior to such materials being disseminated accordingly.

Code of Conduct Governing Persons Accredited to Provide Voter and Civic Education:

52. In order to promote voter and civic education, the Commission must issue within three months after the commencement of this Act, by notice in the Gazette, a Code of Conduct Governing Persons Accredited to Provide Voter and Civic Education for or in respect of elections or referenda.

Contravention of or failure to comply with conditions of accreditation or Code of Conduct Governing Persons Accredited to Provide Voter and Civic Education:

53. If a person accredited to provide voter and civic education for or in respect of an election or a referendum contravenes or fails to comply with the conditions of the accreditation or the Code of Conduct referred to in section 52, the Commission may cancel, after having given the person an opportunity to be heard, the accreditation concerned or suspend the accreditation until the conditions are met.

Voter and civic education by registered political parties and registered organisations:

54. A registered political party or registered organisation may provide voter and civic education to its members, supporters and sympathisers in respect of any election or referendum, but is not subject to any condition or Code of Conduct referred to in section 52.

SUPPLEMENT: NAMIBIA: NATIONAL VOTER EDUCATION POLICY

National Voter Education Policy

"Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely, the real safeguard of democracies, therefore education"
Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Background
- 1st elections in independent Namibia were conducted in 1992
- Electoral Act, 1992 (Act No. 6 of 1992)
- Voter turnout in National and Presidential elections is traditionally high since independence.
- Regional and Local Authorities being lower
- 1992 voter education was conducted by the ECN complemented by NGOs.
- Similar approaches were followed prior to the National and Presidential elections in 1994 and 1999 and Regional and Local Authorities in 1998.
- In 2004, National Assembly, Presidential, Regional and Local Authorities elections voter education efforts in the run up to these elections were formalized through an Election Support Consortium (ESC)
- The ESC unfortunately did not survive long due to the unavailability of funding.
- Leaving mainly the ECN to conduct voter education especially prior to the 2009 National Assembly and Presidential and the 2010 Regional and Local Authorities elections.
- For any election to be successful and democratic, voters must understand their rights, responsibilities, sufficiently knowledgeable, well informed and participate meaning full in the entire electoral process.
- Electoral Amendment Act, No.7 of 2009, empowered the ECN to accredit voter educators. Stakeholders consultations
- Stakeholders consultations

Policy and Objectives
- To ensure that eligible citizens know how to participate in electoral process in Namibia
- To enhance the capacity of partners to jointly with the ECN, respond to voter education needs in an effective and sustainable manner and
- To standardize voter education messages
- To ensure that the electorate is universally informed
- To regulate voter education partners to ensure adherence to qualitative standards.

Current Legal and Regulatory Environment
- Voter education is legally one of the duties and functions of the ECN Section 49 of the Electoral Act, 2014 (Act No.5 of 2014
- Provides that the Commission shall in particular supervise, direct, control and promote voter education in respect of elections
- By the ECN or by way of accrediting persons or organizations (other than registered political party)
- Section 51 (1) of the Electoral Act of 2014, subject to section 54, provides for the accreditation of any natural or juristic person to provide voter and civic education.
- In the interest of deepening democracy, enhancing participation and encouraging informed choice, the civic and voter education should be given priority in the SADC region.

Implementation Strategies
- Factors: social, cultural and economy must be taken into account when educating the electorate on electoral matters
- Ethnic composition of the country: language, values, beliefs, norms and level of education in the different population group
- Engage CSOs working with persons with disabilities to conduct disability relevant voter education programs.

Principles underlying the policy
- Accreditation of persons providing voter education, section 51 of the Electoral Act
- Codes governing persons accredited
- Contravention of or failures to comply with conditions of accreditations or code.
- Voter education by political parties.

Accreditation Regulatory Framework
- Application for accreditation to provide voter education
- Certificate of accreditation
- Breach of conditions or code

Monitoring and Evaluation
- Monitored monthly
- Evaluated annually
- Logical Framework Matrix
- Regular Review

SUPPLEMENT: NAMIBIA: REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

> ➜ 'An educated voter is our democracy's best citizen'

How do I register?
To vote in any of the elections, you have to be a registered voter. You can register in your respective local authority and constituency and you only have to register once as a voter.

Who can register?
You must:
- be a **Namibian citizen**
- be **18 years old or above and** to register as a voter you need proof of Identity, Age and Namibian Citizenship by producing one of the following documents:
- your valid **green passport** or **New Namibian ID**, or **Old Namibian ID** or one of the following combinations
- Citizenship Certificate and Old Namibian ID (if you were born outside Namibia)
- Namibian Birth Certificate and New Namibian Driver's License
- Namibian Birth Certificate and two registered deponents
- Proof of Residency

Only original documents are allowed for identification purposes, no copies of any documents are allowed.

Remember:
To register to vote in any local authority council election, take along your Telecom or Municipal/Town/Village electricity and water bills to prove that you have lived in that area for 12 consecutive months. Alternatively bring along one person who is a registered voter in that particular local authority area to make a statement under oath that he/she knows that you have lived there for 12 consecutive months.

1.08
NEW ZEALAND: SCHOOL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION
The New Zealand Electoral Commission has developed civic and voter education resources to guide and help schools deliver engaging activities designed to encourage students' understanding for participation in electoral process including voting. The main objective is to prepare future generation of active, engaged citizens with 'Your Voice, Your Choice teaching units'.

The teaching units are aligned with the vision, principles, values and key competencies of Levels 3 to 5 the New Zealand School education Curriculum with linkage to the social sciences learning area.

The educational material is flexible for different levels. Schools are encouraged to adapt the sequence of learning activities depending upon the specific needs and experiences of the students.

THE PROGRAMMES
Some of the programmes are discussed as follows:

Kids Voting Programme
'Kids Voting' programme has been designed to create awareness among young people about the country's electoral processes. Building first-hand experience of active participation by young people supports their personal understanding, belief and confidence in electoral participation including voting and as such the democracy.

The programme provides a chance to the students to take part in elections. Students vote for real candidates, on a real ballot paper, and compare the results of their classroom election with the results of real election.

Registered schools are provided with all the materials required to conduct various activities envisaged under the programme. The materials include a Teacher's Guide, a ballot box and other resources to support and run the Kids Voting at a school. The ballot papers are sent electronically to teachers from two-and-a-half weeks before Election Day. The classroom elections process has to be completed as per the prescribed timeframe before the Election Day. The entire exercise is completed in one to two sessions (voting and counting the votes). Thousands of students across New Zealand have participated in Kids Voting and gained a firsthand experience of electoral process.

Curriculum-linked teaching units: EC NZ encourages schools to cover material in the, 'Your Voice, Your Choice' resources as aligned with Levels 3 to 5 of the

New Zealand Curriculum. These resources have been developed to help schools deliver engaging activities designed to encourage students' understanding and enthusiasm for participating in their communities and the voting process.

Registration of Schools for Participation in Kids Voting: Schools have to register for Kids Voting online at the time of the election. Following steps are advised at the time of registration:

- Identify one key liaison person at the school for communication with the EC NZ. The liaison person should register the school to participate online. EC NZ sends e copies of the Kids Voting ballot papers directly to the liaison person as per time schedule of the election.
- Decide class year(s) that will take part in Kids Voting at school.
- Decide time frame the school requires to prepare and deliver Kids Voting.
- Consider which curriculum-linked resources a school needs. Teaching units may be downloaded online at www.elections.org.nz and hard copies along with the Kids Voting are supplied by EC NZ at the time of the election.

'Your Voice, Your Choice' Have Your say:
Teaching Units under this programme are aligned to Levels 3 and 4 of the New Zealand Curriculum. This resource is aimed to encourage students to have their say on the decisions that affect their lives. The resource supports students to learn about their rights, duties, and responsibilities in a democracy and to develop understandings of how they can influence what happens in their school and community.

'Your Voice, Your Choice' Be Heard:
Teaching Units under this programme are aligned to Level 5 of the New Zealand educational Curriculum. This resource explores the relationship between voting, system and functioning of government and the issues faced by the local communities and electorates. The focus is on connecting the voting system to students own lives to deepen their understanding about functioning of the government in New Zealand.

'Your Voice, Your Choice' Turanga Mua, Turanga Tika
Teaching Units under this programme are aligned to Level 5 of Te Marautanga o Aotearoa This resource is aligned with Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and is intended for use in Māori-medium classrooms. By exploring the participation of Māori in decision-making in different environments, students will see that Māori have sought and been able to meet their physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs.

'Your Voice, Your Choice': Votes for Women Teaching Resource

Teaching Units in this programme are aligned to Level 4 of the New Zealand Curriculum The EC NZ celebration of 120 Years of Votes for Women provides a connect between the suffragists' achievement in 1893, and voter engagement and participation today.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION SUFFRAGE SCHOLARSHIPS

The EC NZ established scholarships in the year 2013 to celebrate the anniversary of universal suffrage. The scholarship covers fees for post-graduate research in voter participation.

The Electoral Commission is committed to encourage wide-reaching research on voter participation, and the scholarships referred to above aim to contribute to this. The Suffrage Scholarships encourage research that furthers understanding of the factors that motivate voters to take part, and the barriers to voter participation. Community-specific researches in cohorts that experience low turnout are also encouraged.

To find out more and to apply for the scholarships, follow the link to the Election Commission suffrage Scholarships page at the Universities New Zealand Website http://www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/scholarships/sufferage

AVAILABILITY OF BROCHURES AND RESOURCES

Copies of the EC NZ resources and brochures can be obtained by placing order with the EC NZ. Information on users of the resources is sought by the EC for developing the user profile such as a school, any organization, a church, community centre or for a notice board. Details of the resources, brochures are available on the EC NZ website http://www.elections.org.nz/resources-learning

The orders can be placed online. The resources availability in other languages and information on downloading is all made available by EC NZ in a user friendly manner on its website.For illustration the flyer Ready to Vote is available in Chinese, Cook Island Maori, English, Maori, Korean, Samoan and Tongan languages.This convenient method of providing multilingual information is helpful to all sections of society and facilitates faster and broader dissemination.

1.09
USA: VOTER EDUCATION THROUGH FORMAL CURRICULA AND CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

HELP AMERICA VOTE COLLEGE PROGRAM (HAVCP)

Introduction

HAVCP was established by the Electoral Assistance Commission (EAC) of the US in the year 2004 under express provisions of the Help America Vote Act for student engagement in the electoral process. The programme is supported through grants from EAC authorized under HAVA to encourage student participation as poll workers or assistants, to foster student interest and education in the election process, and to encourage state and local governments to use students as poll workers. The grants also aim to relieve poll worker shortages by engaging students as poll workers. The programme also leverages the technology skills of a tech-savvy generation as well as recruits the next generation of poll workers

HAVA/EAC Support for HAVCP

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) established by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 is an independent, bipartisan commission charged with developing guidance to meet HAVA requirements, adopting voluntary voting system guidelines, and serving as a national clearinghouse of information about election administration. Sections 501 to 503 of HAVA provide detailed legislative framework for EAC to administer and provide grants for the programme.

Aims and Objects of HAVCP

The purpose of the HAVA College Poll Worker Program is to:

- Encourage students enrolled at institutions of higher education (including community colleges) to assist State and local governments in the administration of elections by serving as poll workers or assistants;
- Encourage college students to become cognizant of the elections process and civic education, and to assist in the smooth

administration of elections in their community; and

- Encourage state and local governments to use the services of the students participating in the program. EAC is particularly interested in supporting programs that propose partnerships between various student and other university organizations and local election officials in order to
- mobilize college student interest in elections and create meaningful activities for students leading up to and on Election Day.

Grants for HAVCP

EAC administers several grant programs designed to promote improvements to the administration of elections for federal office and increase awareness of elections by addressing critical issues such as research into voting technology, improvements that ensure accessibility for voters with disabilities, the shortage of pollworkers and teaching young people about election processes and the importance of civic responsibility. For this purpose, EAC seeks proposals from colleges (including community colleges), universities, and nonprofit organizations to assist EAC in implementing the HAVCP. EAC established the HAVCP in 2004, and has provided substantial grants to colleges and nonprofits to recruit, train and support students serving as poll workers on Election Day.

EAC encourages applicants to propose development of curriculum, training guides, and best practices associated with both recruiting poll workers with disabilities and making polling places more welcoming to those with disabilities. EAC is also encouraging applicants to recruit student poll workers that speak foreign languages to assist with language accessibility challenges at the polling place. Materials developed by grantees are made widely available to other organizations through the EAC clearinghouse and other distribution mechanisms.

Non-partisan Approach: An Essential requirement for Eligibility

While sanctioning grants under the Programme, the Commission is expected to ensure that the funds provided are spent for projects and activities which are carried out without partisan bias or without promoting any particular point of view regarding any issue, and that each recipient is governed in a balanced manner which does not reflect any partisan bias.

Coordination with Institutions of Higher Learning

EAC encourages institutions of higher education (including community colleges) to participate in the Programme, and is expected to make all necessary materials and other assistance (including materials and assistance to enable the institution to hold workshops and poll worker training sessions) available without charge to any institution which desires to participate in the Programme.

National Student and Parent Mock Election

As provided under Sec 295 of HAVA, the EAC is authorized to award grants to the National Student and Parent Mock Election, a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that works to promote voter participation in American elections to enable it to carry out voter education activities for students and their parents. Such activities may include simulated national elections before the actual election that permit participation by students and parents from each of the 50 States in the United States and US schools overseas. These elections include

- School forums and local cable call-in shows on the national issues to be voted upon in an 'issues forum';
- Speeches and debates before students and parents by local candidates or stand-ins for such candidates;
- Quiz team competitions, mock press conferences, and speech writing competitions;
- Weekly meetings to follow the course of the campaign;
- School and neighborhood campaigns to increase voter turnout, including newsletters, posters, telephone chains, and transportation.
- The National Student and Parent Mock Election present awards to outstanding student and parent mock election projects.

Encourage Institutions of Higher Education

The EAC encourages institutions of higher education (including community colleges) to participate in the Programme, and make all necessary materials and other assistance available without charge to any institution which desires to participate in the Programme.

Many states and counties are organizing Voter Education Weeks for benefit of schoolchildren and their parents. California High School Voter Education Weeks details as an illustration are in the Supplement.

HELP AMERICA VOTE FOUNDATION

Section 601 of HAVA provides for establishing the Help America Vote Foundation as a charitable and nonprofit corporation

Aims and Objects

The aims and objects of the foundation are to:

- Mobilize secondary school students in the US to participate in the election process in a nonpartisan manner as poll workers or assistants
- Place secondary school students as nonpartisan poll workers or assistants to local election officials in polling places across the US
- Establish cooperative efforts with State and

local election officials, local educational agencies, superintendents and principals of public and private secondary schools, and other appropriate nonprofit charitable and educational organizations exempt from taxation.

Non-partisan Approach: An Essential requirement for Eligibility

The foundation is expected to carry out its purposes without partisan bias or without promoting any particular point of view regarding any issue, and shall ensure that each participant in its activities is governed in a balanced manner which does not reflect any partisan bias.

Consultation with State Election Offices

The foundation shall carry out its purpose in consultation with the chief election officials of the States.

Partnerships with non-partisans and non-profits

EAC encourages partnerships with non-partisans and non-profits for implementation of its programmes. Necessary funds are also provided as per prescribed procedures. A large number of such organizations are working for voter education and collaborate with educational institutions, election offices. Standards and the guidelines of EAC and use of technology tools are vital to the partnerships besides non partisan approach. Some illustration of such partnerships are voter education programme of National Education Association of America for school children, Campus Election Engagement Project, League of Women Voters, New America Foundation and like that a large number of organizations.

SUPPLEMENT: CEEP - FOR CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Approach:

Student voting does not just happen by itself. It takes cultivation. CEEP has identified seven key areas in electoral engagement to develop a road map for enhancing the success levels, areas that complement each other as the participants effectively engage their campus in the process. While it is not necessary to do everything described in the list, but it is necessary that all the seven areas are addressed with freedom to choose an approach that fits a campus best. An earlier start is desirable, particularly for approaches that involve considerable amount of institutional planning.

Strategy:
Seven Key Ways to Act

The strategy of getting the nonpartisan campus engage-

ment efforts started includes easy-to-follow roadmap with newly updated **Seven Key Ways to Act**. This roadmap for fully engaging any campus includes contributions from organizers and campus leaders in every state this program has been taken up since 2008 and has over 250 successful approaches that can be adopted. The seven key ways are briefly stated as follows:

- **Build a Team**: No one can engage an entire campus, so create a core group to coordinate engagement efforts, divide up the work and ensure that the key stakeholders communicate.
- **Register Students to Vote**: It is the first step to student electoral participation. Set campus-wide goals and plan ways to implement them.
- **Educate Students on Issues and Candidates**: Offer clear information on where candidates stand, so students can make informed choices.
- **Help Students to Volunteer with Partisan or Nonpartisan Campaign ofTheir Choice:** Early civic involvement patterns tend to sustain, and this makes further participation more likely.
- **Build Election Excitement and Visibility Leading up to Electionday:** use every appropriate channel for this purpose
- **Get out the Vote** Make sure students know where to vote, when to vote and what to bring. Combine face-to-face and online technologies to engage all eligible students.
- **Measure the Impact:** Document the work done in a continued manner so as to judge what works and what does not work, monitor the progress and build a base for the future.

ANALYTICAL ASSESSMENT FOR DEVELOPING STRATEGIC ACTION PLANS FOR ENHANCING CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT:

Introduction:

CEEP has developed a structured Campus Electoral Engagement Self-Assessment aimed at helping campuses identify the existing non-partisan, high-impact electoral engagement practices in their institution, and the need for additional practices or the strengthening as may be required. This is a tool meant to serve as a starting point for different categories of participants to develop an ap-

propriate strategic plan to strengthen student engagement in elections.

Self Assessment Analysis and Goals:
The self-assessment analysis covers four aspects of electoral engagement on campuses:

- campus commitment
- student voter registration
- student education on candidates and electoral issues, and
- mobilizing students to vote.

Each of these four categories includes high-impact electoral engagement practices that many campuses utilize. However, the goal of this self-assessment is to help generating a need based customized plan for strengthening its electoral engagement exercise.

Development of Strategic Action Plans for Enhanced Campus Engagement:
Each campus is unique and has its own culture, it is envisaged that campuses will make an assessment of their current efforts and then explore which specific efforts can be improved and which additional engagement approaches can be implemented. Each campus has to be dedicated to not only helping students register to vote but also to providing them with resources, information, and opportunities necessary to educate themselves on the choices, get involved in the process as volunteers, and ultimately cast their ballot ensuring their voice is part of our democratic interaction. Further, it is assumed that non-partisan electoral engagement is a key element of general civic engagement and that campuses have a responsibility to engage students in processes of democracy. CEEP's core engagement resource: '6 Key Ways to Act' provides concrete ways to achieve this.Self assessment exercise is carried out by the institutions as per suggested analytical tools of CEEP and score cards developed for the key areas as mentioned above. CEEP carries out interactive reviews on the basis of information made available and provides guidance or coaching as necessary depending upon the scores emanating from the analysis and development of strategic action plans for enhancing the campus engagement levels.

HELPING STUDENTS SURMOUNT POLITICAL CYNICISM: "MY VOTE DOES NOT MATTER."

Defining the Problem:
One of the interesting areas addressed by CEEP relates to the political cynicism amongst the students emanating out of complex outcomes of political engagement. Reactions such as 'My Vote does not matter' or the complaint that politicians are 'all the same and all corrupt' are expressions of cynical resignation to political engagement. CEEP initiative attempts to address this problem in an analytical manner and engaging students through resources developed by them with a view to encourage students to register and vote despite their conviction of cynicism to political engagement.

Survey Based Analysis Reports:
CEEP has looked at different survey Reports in this regard. A few illustrations would help appreciate the dimensions of the problem. 'Rock the Vote Survey' shortly before the 2010 election reveals that 59 percent of students said they were more cynical than two years before, 63 per cent of those who doubted they had vote justified their likely withdrawal by agreeing that " no matter who wins, corporate interests will still have too much power and prevent real change". The CIRCLE youth research center reported that four million fewer students participated in 2010 elections as compared to 2008 elections. Youth electoral participation rates then dropped 17% more in 2014, reaching the lowest levels since 18 year olds got the vote. In a Harvard Survey, just 36 percent of 18-29 year olds believed it was honorable to run for a public office. Uncertain job prospects, cuts to higher education, and massive student debt and similar other factors are a cause of students despair about their power to make a difference in the electoral realm through electoral engagement.

CEEP engagement for increase in voter confidence:
CEEP initiative in handling this problem includes inter alia the following action areas:

- Engage the students in registering and elections especially in non-presidential years, organize debates, discussion forums to improve credibility of election engagement and make them realize that their vote does matter.
- Make classrooms and campuses venues for thoughtful debate, reflection, and discussion, bending over backwards to ensure students of all political perspectives feel welcomed.
- Full participation requires creation of a common platforms where the students can reflect on issues and candidates, and providing them a rationale for why their involvement matters.
- Familiarize students with the tool box of social change; explore the way they can reach out on issues they care about and build broad coalitions.

Carefully designed engagement programmes can help enhance voter confidence amongst the students.

CEEP Engagement with Schools:
In 2014 midterm elections CEEP launched a full effort for schools for first time and worked directly with 281schools around the country with a total enrollment of 3.2 mil-

lion students eligible to vote. Through partner organizations and with more peripheral outreach, CEEP also distributed resources to 679 additional schools, with a total enrollment of 4.4 million voting-eligible students. Schools in all 21 states received core materials including our "Six Key Ways to Act," our guides to working with campus newspapers and to creating campus/ community partnerships, and to giving academic credit for election engagement. Most also received and distributed state-specific election rule guides and posters and candidate guides, as well as reusable "Your Vote Matters" banners.

SUPPLEMENT: CEEP VOTER EDUCATION RESOURCES

Students often say they don't vote because they don't know enough about the issues and candidates. Non-partisan voter education efforts can range from candidate debates, to issue-based forums, fliers and emails and political fairs. Here's how to educate them about the political process, candidates, and campaign issues as they relate to their own lives:

Organize candidate and political fairs at which candidates, political groups, or other elected officials come to speak and distribute information. Stage political debates between candidates, campaign representatives, or representatives from partisan organizations.

Design issue forums: Put together events to educate student on major campaign issues and the connections between contemporary policy debates and the electoral process. If you're a residential campus, hold discussions in the dorms. Download and use the Dialogue Guides developed by our Florida affiliates to aid discussion on the four issue areas students tend to say are most important to them: Education, Jobs and the Economy, Immigration, and Health Care.

Host civil dialogues across political lines: Bring students and community members together to find common ground while respecting differing perspectives. The Public Conversations Project offers guidelines and manuals on how to conduct them, as does the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation. Create intimate small group exchanges using these resources and those of Living Room Conversations.

Work with your student newspaper: Encourage them to print or adapt non-partisan voter guides like those of Rock the Vote of the League of Women Voters Encourage them to have in-depth discussion of relevant issues and candidate stands. Encourage them to talk about the historical importance of voting, and the kinds of decisions that effect student lives.

Create a website with information and links to pages that will help educate voters: Create links to candidate web pages and issues-based websites (If you're doing this from a school site you have to link to those of all major candidates). Michigan State University built a website dedicated to voting issues which includes information about voter registration, absentee ballot requests, deadlines and dates, and links to forms. Create a link to the Senate and House pages, listing legislation that concerns students in your area.

Publicize key informational sites like VoteSmart

Publicize sites like VoteSmart that give accurate non-partisan information on candidate stands. Think of creative ways, like those provided by the Annenberg School's Flackcheck.org, to help students question misleading campaign ads and actively challenge their airing.

Host Debate Watch parties: Offer free food and music as an incentive

Pass out handbills on candidate stands (use free templates): Include event information on front and candidate information on the back. Issue based handbills, two candidates on each side and how they stand on a particular issue.

Hold dialogues: Lunch/dinner discussions (this doesn't take a lot, try to designate a table in caf' or rent a room during lunch hour, create signs and wait for the people to arrive). Talk about issues, candidates, address concerns for first time voters, etc.

Hold education seminars: Help students that are unfamiliar with the process get comfortable with being a new voter. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee held a first-year student seminar focused on the election with a particular interest on voting. Ask your county election board to set up sample booths and can provide you with sample ballots. Talk about the things that they should look for in their candidate (not partisan education, but how they'll be affected by a candidate).

Use Guerrilla theater: In 2008, Community College of Denver ordered Obama/McCain masks and gigantic boxing gloves and used them to hold mock fights and break dancing contests all over campus. Students loved it and Colorado Campus Compact got great reactions distributing the masks and gloves to other schools throughout the state. Hold amusing or serious skits about voting. Do flash mobs around issues students care about. Gather visible crowds to entice students who might ignore tables or signs. Use these events to hand out voter pledges and voting information. Be creative and try to entertain as you engage and educate.

Make announcements in unusual places: Halftime of athletic games, Intermission of performances. Post information in the restroom (even in the stalls, especially in freshman dorm building). Combine with voter registration announcements.

Use posters and display boards: Display information on candidate platforms in the student union and other visible locations**,** blown up large enough so it's visible to passing students. Blow up the key info on nonpartisan voter guides, like those of Rock the Vote and the League of Women Voters. Also include information like the League

of Women Voter pamphlets on initiatives, which are likely to be far less high profile and therefore a source of far more confusion. Be creative, use catchy phrases.

ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES

Voter Registration:
Before students can vote, they need to register, so that's the first step in election engagement. Below you'll find some effective approaches for campus voter registration.

↘ ROCK THE VOTE ONLINE REGISTRATION WIDGET

As we move toward 2014 elections and beyond, Rock the Vote (RTV) wants to work with you to deliver this free service to your fans, friends, and community. Start registering voters today – sign up for RTV's on-line voter registration tool, embed the widget on your website, promote your customized tool via email and mobile lists and on your social networks, & more. To download RTV's Registration Widget Guide, click here. For next steps to downloading the widget, click here and get ready to register voters!

Featured Resources:
Best Practices for On-Campus Voter Registration:

Find out Voter Registration Rules and Deadlines In many states, these have changed rapidly, making student registration and voting more confusing and difficult. Schools can play a critical role in ensuring that every eligible student knows what they need to bring to register and vote, and how and when to do it. In many cases schools can supply approved forms of identification, whether particular types of student ID cards, letters from the President attesting that a student is enrolled, or zero-balance utility bills. Nonprofitvote.Org and vote411.org have state-specific information. Your Campus Compact affiliate may also be creating a website section with information and templates. If your school runs into consistent hurdles trying to help your students register and vote, you can call the 1-866-OURVOTE hotline or visit 866ourvote.org to connect with voting rights experts who can advise you.

Distribute Voter Registration Forms
- Check out the non-partisan voter registration and Get-out-the-vote toolkit for University/ Community created by Virginia Commonwealth University!

This guide was developed from a Get-Out-The-Vote effort conducted by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) ASPiRE students and Mosby Court residents. ASPiRE is a living-learning program focused on community engage-

ment. Mosby Court is a public housing development located less than 2 miles from VCU's academic campus. They developed this guide to encourage schools to develop partnerships with their own nearby public housing developments and with other community nonprofits.

- **Northwestern University's Voter Registration Initiative**
  The NU Votes project began as a student initiative to integrate voter registration at Northwestern University through the student registration process. The initiative gained traction with the coordination and support of the University's Center for Civic Engagement, and in 2011, incoming freshmen were all given the opportunity to register to vote as part of the process of receiving their student ID for the first time. Students were able to register in any of the 50 states with each state's mail-in form, and NU Votes staff processed and mailed the completed forms to the appropriate Board of Elections. By the end of orientation week, nearly 90% of incoming freshman at Northwestern University were registered to vote.
- In 2012, Northwestern's **U Vote Project** will be piloting the same integrated voter registration model at several select colleges and universities across the country. If your school is interested in bringing the U Vote model to your campus, contact Rob Donahue at rjd230@northwestern.edu
- Create a link on the university homepage to voter registration widgets from Rock the Vote and Student PIRGs.
- Promote this link through campus email listservs and by having it pop up when students register for classes or to order tickets for entertainment or athletic events.
- Download and distribute the National Mail Voter Registration Form from the U.S. Election Assistance Commision.
- Attach voter registration forms to course registration forms or distribute them with course registration materials.
- Include voter registration information in paychecks, with student loan disbursements, and in course catalogs. See Oxy Votes from Occidental College.
- Mass mail voter registration forms and online registration links to all students.
- Encourage faculty to distribute voter registration materials in class.
- Direct students to LongDistanceVoter for absentee ballot optons.
- Leave voice messages before key deadlines or registration-related events to remind students to register.

- Announce reminders in unusual places (halftime of athletic games, intermission of performances, post information in the restroom (even in the stalls, especially in freshman dorm building) – Download free templates!
- Use community-based service projects as opportunities to register community members. NC A&T reached over 12,000 students, staff, faculty, and community members through these and other efforts in 2008.

Mobilize Your Campus

- Build a coalition to spread out the work, creating a core group of administrators, faculty, and staff to coordinate this and related campus election-engagement efforts and to ensure key people are talking with each other across different departments and disciplines. See **San Francisco State University's program** for ideas.
- Request and obtain on campus polling stations like University of Arizona and University of Akron in 2008.
- Approach key campus leaders to talk about what they can do to register students. Include deans, orientation directors, student affairs officers, service learning coordinators, registrars, IT departments, residence life, campus newspaper advisors, faculty development, coaches, and academic departments.
- See the campaign toolkit from the Non-Profit VOTE›s Campaign Starter Kit to integrate voter engagement into your organization's ongoing activities and services.
- Conduct «dorm storms» where student organizations go door to door to register voters on residential campuses. (This requires residence life, student activities, and campus security coordinating to waive normal security rules.)
- Work with your service learning center to encourage students doing off-campus service projects to register the communities they work with, and to connect the non-profits through which they volunteer with key resources like those offered by nonprofitvote.org.
- Hold a party in which students must register at the door to enter - Have registration tables available, but use clipboards for a more personal, one-to-one approach. Use music to attract attention. If you wear organization t-shirts to events you can just tell people to see the individuals in those t-shirts, for example. Print stickers to identify those who have registered. Download the free sticker template.
- Plan to register students at Fall orientation and move-in day to campus dorms.

SUPPLEMENT: USA: CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL VOTER EDUCATION CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL VOTER EDUCATION WEEKS

Best Practices Shared by County Elections Offices

Below are ideas that have been shared by counties to promote civic engagement in high schools around California. These projects have been used and proved to be successful. If you have ideas that would like to share, please email them to   Steven.Carda@sos.ca.gov so they can be included in future communications.

Political Party and Candidate Forum in a Mock Election Atmosphere (Placer County)

- Select a school or schools that would like to encourage their staff and students to become more civically engaged.
- Contact representatives of political parties and invite them to come make a short presentation to the school about their party and its platform. (set boundaries on subject matter)
- Invite local candidates that may have been elected recently and encourage them to tell their story. Have them explain the process and experience from the time they decided to run for office to the day they were elected. (set boundaries on subject matter)
- Encourage a question and answer period where the students can inquire about the process of a working democracy.
- Allow teachers and students who are eligible to register to vote, to apply on site. ü Create a mock election ballot and give attendees the opportunity to cast their ballot, just as they would on Election Day.

Conduct a Mock Election (Sacramento County)

- Select a school that is enthusiastic about giving students the opportunity to encouraging their students to become involved in their democracy
- Create a mock election ballot with issues relevant to high school students.
- Work with school to provide a "polling place" on campus. Bring voting equipment that students can use to simulate an actual election day

- Use this time to encourage students to become poll workers on Election Day.

Host a Voter Registration Drive on Campus (Plumas County)

- Select a high school with a Government teacher who is passionate about democracy.
- "Elections 101". Present a slide show to Government classes giving the basics of participating in a democracy.
- How to Register.
- Am I eligible to register to vote?
- What to expect after you're registered to vote.
- What the County Election Office does.
- How does the county know which contest I get to vote on?
- Where can I find information on what I am voting for?
- Coordinate a Voter Registration Drive on campus.

Assist High School with Student Body Elections (Plumas County)

- Select a high school with an upcoming student body election.
- Create a schedule with the Student Leadership Instructor, school administration and select a location on campus for the polling place.
- Work with a local ballot printer to have ballots donated to school.
- Provide poll worker training class to Senior class volunteers. (these students were selected because they were not voting on student body officers for the upcoming year.)
- Election Day! Set up a polling place! Provide the roster, badges, voting booths, ballot boxes, polling place signage, "I Voted" stickers and of course the American flag to make it identifiable.
- Allow student poll workers to announce results at school assembly/rally

A Success Story from San Francisco

Voter Education and Outreach in San Francisco, USA: Implementation of Instant Runoff Voting; A Brief Description, Analysis and Evaluation

- San Francisco adopted instant runoff voting (also known as ranked choice voting) for elections to local offices in November 2004. Department of Elections conducted voter education programme and outreach campaign. Following strategy was adopted:
- Focus on voters' role: All education and outreach material showed a visual representation of the actual ballot, so that the voters could learn as to how they would be voting, i.e. ranking their ballots. This reflected an emphasis on the voters' role in voting,

rather than explaining how the ballots are counted or how IRV works;
- Concentrated outreach: Most of the outreach, particularly mass communications methods, was concentrated in October, the final month before the election, focusing limited resources on the time when most voters are paying attention to an upcoming election.

The following is a list of some of the key education and outreach methods that were conducted in San Francisco, as well as a brief analysis regarding effectiveness, efficacy and efficiency

- Direct mail, citywide: The Department of Elections sent out a mailing the size of a large postcard, in multiple languages. This mailing was sent to every registered voter and was one of the primary means for engagement. An exit poll survey showed that it reached many voters, successfully alerting voters to the fact that they would now be ranking their candidates. However, the postcard was not well-designed and hard to read, primarily because of its multilingual format meant all information was repeated four times in four different languages. This made the print too small and left no room for an attractive or eye-catching design. A better approach would have been to sort the mailing by ZIP codes and surnames, mailing postcards with only two languages, one language being English, leaving more room for a better design.
- Voter Information Pamphlet: The VIP, which is mailed to all registered voters before each election, had a separate section in the front of the pamphlet that was devoted to IRV. That section highlighted how to correctly mark the ranked ballot and included a sample IRV ballot showing the exact layout of the contests and the candidates as they appeared on the Official Ballot for the election.
- Bus Advertising: The Department of Elections purchased bus ads on the back of city buses. While this method increased the visibility of IRV, it had limited effectiveness because the ads were not well designed. The ads were multilingual in four different languages, all text being repeated four times, making the print as well as the headlines impossible to read unless one stood next to the advertisement. The bus ads should have been mostly in English with a few slogans in other languages, with a more attractive, eye-catching design.
- Community Newspapers. The Department of Elections purchased ads in community newspapers. The community newspapers have a modest distribution, published every two weeks to every month. The ads had good visibility for an extended period of time.

- Public Service Announcements. The Department of Elections was successful in getting some free public-service announcements placed on various radio stations, including ethnic radio stations with ads in the correct language for each station.
- Community Groups. Community organizations, specifically targeting minority communities, elderly communities, young people, and those with disabilities, were engaged. These organizations hired staff and created materials for outreach and voter education in their particular communities. They organized community forums and also sent speakers to the meetings of other organizations to make presentations. Although this was a much anticipated part of the community education effort, an exit poll revealed that not a large percentage of people were educated via this method. However, the exit poll also showed that those who received education through a personal presentation had a higher level of IRV understanding. Nevertheless, the vast majority of people received their education through the various mass communications methods.
- Ethnic Media. Print ads were purchased in various ethnic media newspapers and radio ads in various ethnic radio stations. New California Media was engaged for creating ads in multiple languages and inserting the same in many different ethnic media newspapers and radio. The exit poll data showed that most voters received their information from various forms of mass communication like this.
- Web Site. The Department of Elections hired an outside consulting firm to create a web site, including a flash animation showing how IRV works, how the ballots are counted, and how voters cast their ballots, i.e. rank their candidates. The web site generally received praise for its presentation of material.
- Brochures and posters. The Department of Elections hired a consultant to design a brochure that received high praise for its presentation and effectiveness. The brochure had a colorful presentation of the actual ballot and how voters rank their candidates. This was a two-fold brochure, with different versions in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian. Large and medium sized posters were created for explaining how IRV works and how voters rank their ballots showing the actual ballot. These posters were distributed around town, especially in libraries and public buildings, and also on the Election Day.
- Election Day: using the polling stations as a final tool for voter education, the Department of Elections gave a great deal of thought to setting up the polling station in a manner that even a voter, who had heard nothing about the IRV from the pre-election methods, would be able to have a successful experience.

Supplementary Efforts:
- Extra training for poll workers. All poll workers were given an extra hour of training specifically about IRV, how to rank the ballot, how to help voters having difficulty, how the equipment handles the ranked ballots, and how to deal with issues that might potentially arise.
- IRV-specific script for poll workers: During their training, each poll worker was instructed to recite the following script to each voter as they handed that voter their ballot cards (San Francisco uses an optical scan system where having four ballot cards per voter for all the various races and ballot propositions is not uncommon):
- "Your top ballot card is for the election to the Board of Supervisors. For that election, you are using ranked choice voting in which you are to rank as many candidates as you wish up to three candidates."
- Making the IRV ballot stand out: The IRV ballot, which was only used for Board of Supervisors races, was printed in a different color. Also, on the optical scan ballot each column representing one ranking carried a slightly different color from the othercolumns/rankings, giving the voter a visual cue about which ranking they were using.
- Educational Posters on the walls and in the voting booth: Large posters explaining the operation of IRV, how to rank ballots and more were placed on the walls of every polling station. The posters were multilingual, and were designed to answer questions. A smaller version of such posters was also placed inside each voting booth, reminding voters how to rank their ballots. Poll workers showed these posters to any voter having difficulty.
- Error notification. The final "line of defense" is that all of San Francisco's optical scanning equipment has what is known as "error notification" – if the voter makes a mistake on his ballot, the machine buzzes as they try to put their ballot into the optical scan reader, and the scanner declines to accept the ballots. The machine then prints an error message which the poll worker reads to the voter. The error messages conveyed things like the voter did not use all of their rankings, or ranked the same candidate more than once, or selected two candidates as their first ranking. The voter then had the option of correcting his ballot,

even if it meant taking a new ballot, or telling the poll worker to override that and accept his ballot as it is.

Other Public Outreach Efforts

- Free Media: The San Francisco Chronicle and the San Francisco Examiner ran a couple of articles about IRV, how it works, how a voter ranks his ballots sufficiently before the election. Local radio stations, provided news coverage as well. Op-eds were published in community newspapers and online web magazines. The San Francisco Bay Guardian, an alternative weekly, also covered the implementation regularly. Most of this free media occurred a month before the election.

- Political Organizations. San Francisco has a number of political organizations and clubs engaged in politics, and within those organizations there was lots of discussion about IRV. That certainly helped to create effective awareness. Some of them even conducted mock elections showing their voters how to rank their candidates. Some of these organizations had articles about IRV in their newsletters.

- Nonprofit organizations: Other community, nonprofit organizations organized their own voter educational events. The Center for Voting and Democracy organized a speakers bureau with a half-dozen volunteers who made presentations to approximately 25 organizations reaching out to people, educating them about IRV, how it works, how to rank the ballot, and showing them the actual ballots.

- San Francisco Youth Commission. The San Francisco Youth Commission and San Francisco's school board of education decided to use IRV for their October 2004 election, just a few weeks before the election. Media coverage of this event helped voters understand about the new method that was to be used for San Francisco elections just a few weeks later.

- Candidates and Campaigns: The candidates themselves had an interest in making sure their voters know how to vote correctly. Thus, many of the political campaigns were telling their voters, "rank me first" and a few of them even said "if I do not win, here is who to rank second," and also explained voters about the ranked ballot.

Multiple Sources of Information

- By the Election Day, given all the activities described above, the information about ranking candidates was widespread. And some of the most effective methods were by public service announcements, news articles

in daily newspapers, outreach from political campaigns and political and nonprofit organizations, all of which was free. Several exit polls revealed the effectiveness of the various educational and outreach efforts. One poll by the Public Research Institute at San Francisco State University found that 87% of voters said that they understood the IRV well. This high self-reporting cut across all ethnic, age and socio-economic lines.

1.10
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

ISSUES:

Efficacy and efficiency existing Curricular VE programmes:

- Needs analysis for different levels of school curriculum. Appropriate integration of voter education with civic education for optimal results for understanding the significance and import of democratic polity and importance of vote.
- Development of resource materials for students and teachers.
- Standardization of resources.
- Easy access to resources. Examine feasibility of developing e resources and use of space technology for dissemination
- Holistic territorial coverage taking into account the social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity.
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Campus engagement for schools and Colleges:

- Efficacy and efficiency of student engagement in electoral process through participation.
- Mock Vote for schools.
- Establish and expand Kids Voting, provide and develop curriculum linked resources.
- Poll Workers for college level students.
- Involvement of Non-partisans (the non-governmental organizations) in partnerships.
- Development and standardization of engagement resources.

Youth Programmes:

- Youth engagement programmes. Sensitization of youth on importance of vote and its value to the democratic polity.

Campaigns and outreach

- Quantitative and qualitative impact analysis on voter turnouts.

- Relevance of vote.
- How to vote?
- Where to vote, when to vote?
- Who votes and why vote?

Maximize registration and maximize turnout:
- Voter segment wise analytical research and study on regular basis to be set up and correctional voter education initiatives developed.

Legislative Support to Voter Education Programmes
- Voter education and campus engagement in many countries is supported by legislative provisions in the election related enactments. Legislations of countries such as US, Kenya, Namibia etc need to be looked at. Experience sharing would help.

Challenges:
- Voter apathy among youth voters. "My vote does not matter!" and similar attitudes. Learn from experience sharing.
- Analysis of youth voter turnout and experience sharing on addressing of the challenge.
- Financing of the VE and Civic education programmes. While the VE programmes have to be controlled and funded by the EMB's, the Civic Education Programmes have to be funded by the Government.
- Models adopted by different countries need to be discussed for experience sharing.
- Monitoring of and evaluation of non partisans, examine the models developed by different countries through experience sharing.

INCLUSIVE ELECTORAL LITERACY THROUGH INFORMAL EDUCATION CHANNEL: Reaching out to those outside schools and other marginalized groups i.e. persons with disability (PwD), women, people working in unorganized labor sector, tribal etc.

NO VOTER TO BE LEFT BEHIND

SECTION 2

2.01
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Session 2 of the interaction focuses on the Inclusive Electoral Literacy through informal education channels reaching out to those outside schools including other marginalized groups such as Persons with Disability (PwD's), women, people working in unorganized labor sector, ethnic groups, aboriginals etc.

We have already discussed the relevance of voter education in the context of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the principal and universal legal instruments as also the guiding principles for voter education in the UNCHR Handbook on Human Rights and Elections (1994). Adoption of the Universal declaration marked the beginning of participation as a human right.

SPECIAL GROUPS: GUIDING PRINCIPLES UNDER SPECIFIC UN

INSTRUMENTS

The issue of participation is discussed in a number of more specific human rights documents, such as the 1966 International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as well as in the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Extracts are as follows:

Article 5 of the UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) (1966)
"States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights: […]
(c) Political rights, in particular the right to participate in elections –to vote and to stand for election – on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, to take part in the Government as well as in the conduct of public affairs at any level and to have equal access to public service; […]"

Article 7 of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979)

"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:
(a)To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; […]"

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006)
Article 21: Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information
"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice, as defined in article 2 of the present Convention, including by:

(a) Providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost;

(b) Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions;

(c) Urging private entities that provide services to the general public, including through the Internet, to provide information and services in accessible and usable formats for persons with disabilities;

(d) Encouraging the mass media, including providers of information through the Internet, to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities;

(e) Recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages.

Article 29: Participation in political and public life
States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others, and shall undertake:

(a) To ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and

opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected, inter alia, by:
(i) Ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;
(ii) Protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate;
(iii) Guaranteeing the free expression of the will of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice;
. . . ."

UN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS GUIDANCE ON VOTER EDUCATION

The United Nations Centre for Human Rights in its Handbook on Human Rights and Elections (1994) has spelt out the following guiding principles for voter education:
"Public Information and Voter Education
124.....................
125. Literature should be widely available and should be published in the various national languages to help ensure the meaningful participation of all eligible voters. Multimedia methods should be employed to provide effective civic education to people with various levels of literacy. Voter education campaigns should extend throughout the territory of the country, including to rural and outlying areas."

The CEDAW, the ICERD, the 1992 UN Declaration onthe Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and LinguisticMinorities and CRPD specify the mandate for inclusion and special attention to women, PwD's and various other disadvantaged groups in society in terms of universal electoral participation. Emphasis on civic and voter education for all is laid down in the UN-CHR Handbook.
The main objective of voter education is to provide in-

formation and accessible to all constituents to achieve universal coverage. While many categories of voters are covered under curricular and extra- curricular programmes, there are special groups (mentioned in the aforesaid UN documents) which need strategically well designed powerful outreach, specially focused campaigns to receive voter information and motivation to participate. Efficacy and efficiency of any VE programme lies in effectively reaching out to such special groups also. Media, Civil Society organizations should be involved as important stakeholders in VE outreach for inclusion of all special groups.

WOMEN VOTERS

VE campaigns should have a pertinent component of gender sensitivity and specifically target women on an equal footing. Suffrage has to be universal and women have equal right to vote should be the underlying philosophy of VE campaigns. They should help create a culture in which women are encouraged to participate in the electoral process. It is necessary to develop special messages, posters and well designed outreach for women voters. Generational issues, women under maternity care, family voting should also be addressed. In post-conflict countries in which security remains a problem, safe resource centers should be established where such gatherings can take place. Carefully targeted voter education can also help alleviate "double discrimination" for women from disadvantaged ethnic minorities.

PwD'S

The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that 15 percent of the world's population has a disability, with 80 percent of these persons living in developing countries. PwD's may also include various ethnic, religious, socioeconomic and gender groups. Elections provide them an equal opportunity, with other citizens, to exercise their preferences and shape political outcomes. The mandate of the UN instruments coupled with the country legislations and the support from the EMB's for participation in the electoral process has made a substantial impact in removal of barriers to inclusion. Pioneering work has been done by international organizations, such as UNDP, WHO, NDI, IFES, USAID etc, to support inclusion and equal access VE programmes in many countries.

OTHER SPECIAL GROUPS

Other special groups may include, First time Voters, Populations with low levels of literacy, Migrant labour, internally displaced persons, Ethnic minorities, aboriginals, tribals etc., Minorities, linguistic minorities.

VE outreach, Campaigns need to address special requirements of such groups.

VE FOR GREATER INCLUSION OF ALL CITIZENS

VE outreach, campaigns should address and motivate voters for maximization of participation and voter turnouts for deepening of democracy.

This section visits the experience of different countries in addressing voter education to the special groups mentioned in the foregoing discussion. The papers also highlight the robust support provided by international organizations, civil society, and nonpartisans to VE campaigns of the EMB's for special groups in different countries. The Introductory Note and the papers contained in this Section are intended to support interaction on the experience sharing by the participants.

2.02

AFGHANISTAN: CONTRIBUTING A VOICE; VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS.

INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan has a total population of about 33 million. Going by the 15% estimate laid down by WHO, the population with a disability is estimated at 5 million. Afghanistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 18 September, 2012.

The democracy and the electoral processes have evolved in Afghanistan in recent past in a sustained manner. The Joint Electoral Management Body followed by the Independent Election Commission, despite the challenges before them, have initiated the voter education process in Afghanistan with the help of international organizations such as IFES, UNDP etc besides the in house activities. Separate Media Commission under the IEC has been established under the law to ensure fair access to the public mass media.

Voter Education

Voter education campaign has been carried out by the EMB in Afghanistan through posters and leaflets. The posters, some of which are discussed as follows, convey a focused message of encouragement to different categories of voters for participation in the electoral process.

Contributing a Voice

The poster illustration shown below is part of a voter edu-

cation presentation that was used to explain as to how a successful vote leads to an elected official joining Afghanistan's government. It was produced by the Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB) and supported by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the 2005 election.

Voting on Election Day:
The inclusive illustration shown below (left) was part of a series of voter education posters produced by the IEC, Afghanistan to support understanding of voting procedures before the Election.

Registered voters
The illustration shown above was part of a series of voter education posters produced by the IEC. It explains as to how to register as a voter before the election in simple yet effective manner.

The poster illustrates the possibility of peace that a stable democracy could bring to Afghanistan
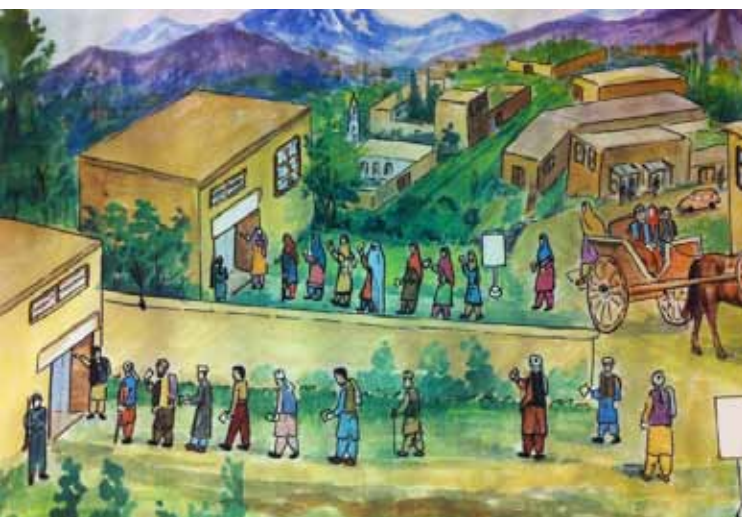
2.03
AUSTRALIA: VOTER EDUCATION FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The Australian electoral system gives equal access to the indigenous people and provides both, guidance and education to the aboriginal voters to ensure that they enroll on time and exercise their right to franchise in a free and fair manner. The Australian Electoral Commission provides resources by way of guides, systematic education and other means to ensure participation by aboriginals.

ENROLMENT AND VOTING

AEC creates awareness through its website by providing efficient information addressed to aboriginals for enrolment and voting in exercise of their electoral rights for federal, state and local elections. The message 'Your vote is your voice on the laws and decisions that affect you and your community.' both in audio and in writing reflects the support that AEC carries for inclusion of the marginalized. AEC provides guidance, information to these voters on:

- Enter the postcode, suburb or electoral division for details on where to vote and to find out about the details of the candidates of the area.
- Entitlement for voting at an early voting center or for a postal vote.
- Visits of the AEC mobile polling teams prior to the election day including hospitals, nursing homes, prisons and remote areas.
- Fact sheets on voting details, three levels of government and voting, what happens on the Election Day and how to make your vote count.

AEC FUTURE FACEBOOK PAGE 'OUR VOTE OUR FUTURE'

AEC maintains its Future Facebook page 'Our Vote Our Future' and calls upon its voters to join the Facebook to stay informed.

WORK AS A POLL OFFICIAL

The AEC encourages the aboriginals to work during the federal elections on a range of temporary positions for the election period. Staff from the AEC's Indigenous and Community Engagement Team is also available to assist aboriginals.

INDIGENOUS ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME (IEPP)

The AEC has established Indigenous Electoral Participation Programme (IEPP) in 2010 to reduce the gap in indigenous disadvantage in electoral participation. The programme operates from each state and the AEC national office. The main objective of the programme includes increasing enrollment, Voter turnout, formality and knowledge of electoral processes for indigenous people of Australia. A number of Indigenous and Community Engagement Officers deliver a range of services under this programme.

Services

AEC aims to deliver effective, culturally customized services as per their needs to Indigenous Australians under this programme. It works directly with the communities or in partnership with other organizations to deliver such services which include the delivery of electoral information sessions, tailored materials for Indigenous voters, partnerships with government and non-government agencies, and a range of other community outreach activities.

Resources

AEC has produced a wide range of resources and materials to support and strengthen indigenous electoral participation. The resources include:

- Posters, brochures and materials promoting enrolment and voting.
- Culturally appropriate videos, images and audio files.
- Publications on history of the indigenous vote and electoral milestones.
- Specific materials on elections and referendums

AEC's Indigenous and Community Engagement Officers provide detailed information and guidance on the subject.

Education and Resources

IEPP provides a variety of videos, products and other resources for schools, community groups and individuals. These include:

- History of Indigenous Vote.
- Electoral Milestones for Indigenous Australians.
- 50th Anniversary of Vote Fact Sheet.
- Class Room resources.
- Democracy rules- an Electoral Education resource.

Fact Sheets

These factsheets are user friendly short guides and useful in understanding the targeted subject matter. The fact-

sheets are as follows:
- Voting is different this federal election.
- Three levels of government.
- Enrolling to vote.
- Voting.
- What happens on Election Day.
- How to make your vote count.

Videos

These videos have been produced by an indigenous creative agency carbon Media featuring well known Indigenous Australians in action on respective topics encourages voters to participate in various electoral activities. AEC's educated videos may be shortlisted as below:
- Find out when and where to vote before election day:
- How to make your vote count.
- Why it is important to vote.
- Voting is different this election.

- Louder than one voice.
- National Indigenous youth parliament.

Classic Poster series

These posters were originally designed by Sydney based Redback Graphics for the AEC in 1988 and reissued in 2012 to celebrate 50th Anniversary of Indigenous Right to Vote.
Vote Enrol and Vote It's Your Australia

National Indigenous Youth Parliament

The National Indigenous Youth Parliament 2014 was organized in Canberra as a one week- long leadership program for young indigenous Australians. The NIYP was earlier organized in 2012. AEC organized this programme in collaboration with IEPP, YMCA and the Museum of Australian Democracy.

(The above resources and details can be accessed at website of the AEC at the following link: www.aec.gov.au)
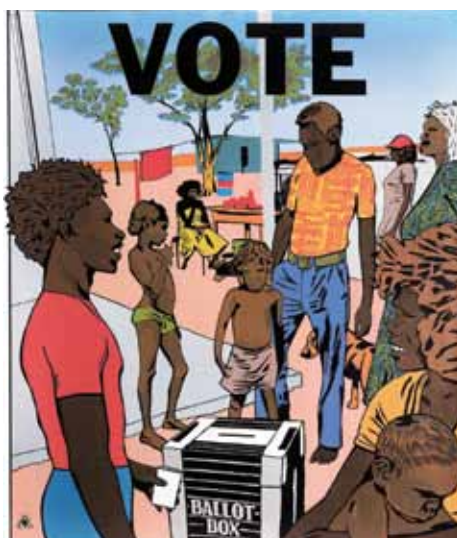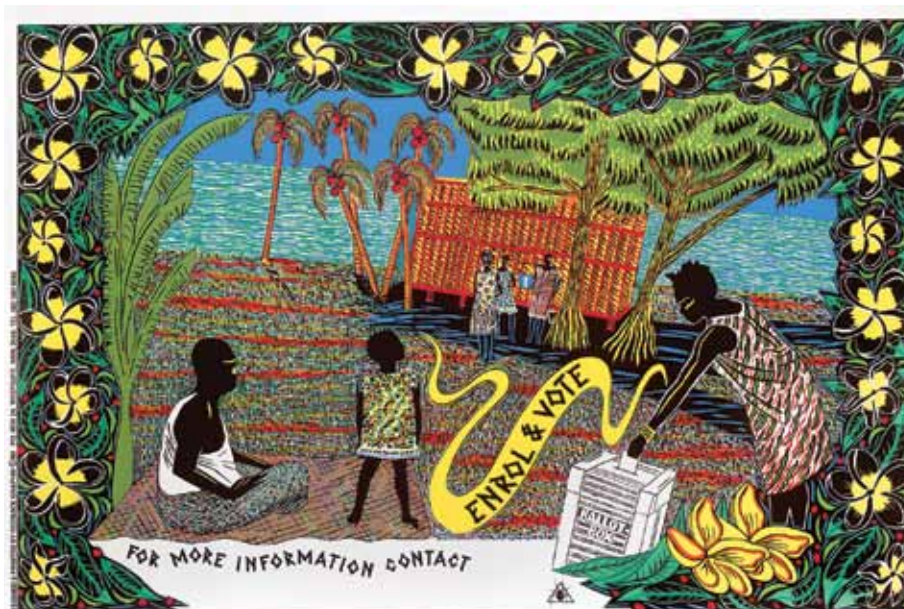
2.04

CANADA: EC: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND SERVICE OFFERING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Elections Canada (EC) is an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to the Parliament of Canada. EC's important responsibilities include conducting federal elections, by-elections and referendums. EC's long-term vision envisages accessibility to be an ongoing process to provide inclusive, universal and flexible services that benefit everyone and in the recent years they have specially focused on reducing barriers for people with disabilities.

POLICY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

EC developed the current policy for People with Disabilities (PwD's) in February 2015 in consultation with EC's Advisory Group for Disability Issues. EC launched this Advisory Group in 2014 to fulfill its commitment to ongoing consultations with groups that represent people with disabilities. An early outcome of this consultation came in February 2015, with the development of an Accessibility policy and Service Offering.

Accessibility

EC is committed to inclusive, universal and varied services that respond to the needs of all electors. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the right to vote in federal elections in Canada. The Canada Elections Act provides for a variety of voting methods and allows the Chief Electoral Officer to advertise the services it offers for assisting voters with disabilities. EC has worked to remove the obstacles voters may encounter by making continual improvements to the electoral process, including communications and administrative processes. To ensure accessibility, the voting process includes the following features:

- Flexible voting methods: voting by mail or at a local Elections Canada office; advance voting days; mobile polls serving facilities for seniors or persons with physical disabilities; and, in special cases, voting at home in the presence of an election officer and a witness.
- As much as possible, level access to local Elections Canada offices, polling stations and other premises used during an election.
- in the event that a polling station does not have level access, provision of a transfer certificate on request and permission to vote at another location.
- If requested in advance, sign language interpreters to assist electors at the polls.
- The ability to have an election officer, a friend or a relative assists an elector with a disability in marking his or her ballot at the polls.
- Voting screens that admit plenty of light, lighted magnifiers to make the ballot easier to read, Braille and large-print lists of candidates on Election Day and tactile and Braille templates that fit on top of a ballot.
- Requisite training to election officers and community relations officers for meeting the accessibility needs of people with varied disabilities.

Policy, a Living Document

EC intends to continue working with the disability community to better understand accessibility issues and reduce barriers. Accessibility policy and Service Offering document has a specific focus on the tools and services that people with disabilities can expect when they vote. This document is intended as a "living" document to be updated following the next general election in light of accessibility best practices, evaluations and as new opportunities for improvements arise. Among other things, the policy describes the mechanism for feedback, complaints and inquiries from individuals concerning accessibility. Elections Canada welcomes any input that will help it to better serve PwD's. Questions or feedback on this policy may be provided to EC online at 1-800-463-6868.

EC'S COMMITMENT

EC is committed to building upon the accessible electoral framework that Canadians trust and use, be responsive to the needs of Canadians of all abilities, to working to accommodate voters and employees with disabilities, to make the voting experience as accessible as possible and to engage people with disabilities about the services that affect them. In this context, EC is committed to adopting the following principles:

- Design for choice and flexibility by thinking inclusively.
- Educate and inform Canadians using plain language.
- Provide Canadians with modern and convenient ways to access information, register and vote.
- Improve the voting experience and make it easier to participate by removing barriers.
- Support the independence, and respect the dignity, of people with disabilities.

ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES

Elections Canada works on a continued basis to remove the obstacles voters may encounter by making improvements to the electoral process, including communication and administrative processes. Since the last general election in 2011, EC has implemented a series of measures to improve the accessibility of the electoral process. These include:

- Enhanced and expanded cross-disability training for both election workers and Elections Canada staff.
- Increased investment in community outreach for people with disabilities.
- Improved signage and voting screens at polling places.
- New voting tools such as magnifiers and Braille lists of candidates.
- A polling place accessibility review process that follows a new checklist of 35 accessibility criteria.
- Improvements to website accessibility (see Link for details).
- A revamped communications campaign that presents information in plain language and in accessible formats.
- Greater consultation and outreach programs to share information. EC works with national and provincial organizations and, through their networks, gain an additional way to reach people with disabilities.

INFORMED BY CONSULTATION AND RESEARCH

Elections Canada's ongoing accessibility initiatives build upon research and consultation undertaken since the last general election in 2011.

In 2011–2012, Elections Canada met with 19 national and provincial disability organizations across Canada. The goal of this exercise was to build better relationships with the disability community and gain a better understanding of its needs and the barriers that people face. In 2014, Elections Canada launched its first ever Advisory Group for Disability Issues.

THE VOTING EXPERIENCE – TOOLS AND SERVICES AT

POLLING PLACES

Polling Places

In consultation with experts and the disability community EC has developed accessibility criteria for polling stations. The returning officers use Accessibility Checklist to evaluate the accessibility of potential sites prior to the election. This checklist contains 35 criteria, 15 of which are mandatory. After an election is called, EC sends out a voter information card to all registered voters indicating the accessibility of polling places with the following information, in one of three ways:

- The site meets 15 accessibility criteria. The accessibility symbol is displayed, along with where to find more information.
- The site is wheelchair accessible. The accessibility symbol is displayed, along with the phone number that you can call for help.
- The site has no wheelchair access. The accessibility symbol is not displayed, but voters are encouraged to call their returning office for alternate location.
- Voter Information Service also provides complete details of accessibility to the concerned voters. EC's help lines also provide guidance.

Tools and Services

EC provides a variety of tools and services for PwD's:

- Magnifiers with light (4x)
- A tactile and Braille voting template that fits on top of a ballot
- Large-print lists of candidates
- Braille lists of candidates (available on election day only)
- Language or sign language interpretation (to be requested in advance)
- Assistance in marking a ballot
- Improved voting screens that let in more light
- Information through video if required.

Language or Sign language interpretation

If a voter requires language or sign-language interpretation on Election Day, he may request Elections Canada to provide the service as per time prescribed. Online service through TTY is also made available

Service Animals

Elections Canada supports the use of service animals to assist voters with disabilities when they go vote at polling places. Election workers are fully aware that service animals are working animals and should not be distracted, spoken to or offered food.

Assistance from Others

Voters with disabilities may require the assistance of a support person to help them vote. Support people provide

assistance to a person with a disability and may be a family member, friend, personal support worker, intervener or sign-language interpreter. The support person will be required to take an oath to respect the secrecy of the voter's choice. A deputy returning officer can also help a voter mark the ballot. This will always be done in full view of a poll clerk.

Assistive Devices
Voters with disabilities, in particular people with a visual impairment, may use a personal mobile device, such as a smart phone, to read their ballot behind the voting screen. All reasonable steps should be taken to preserve the secrecy of the vote.

Community Relations Officers for Accessibility
The Community Relations Officer program was created to reduce barriers to voting faced by certain groups of voters. Officers provide information on when, where and ways to register and vote as well as the tools and services available to voters.

EC has added community relations officers for accessibility across Canada to engage voters with disabilities and local organizations, and to serve as a resource to the returning officer.

Additionally, information on accessibility has been included in a new communications booklet and toolkit provided to all community relations officers.

Training for Election Workers
The training program takes into consideration the time constraints associated with training electoral officers and incorporates in-class and online training. Our online training modules, including videos, are fully accessible and have been tested by people with disabilities.

Elections Canada's accessibility training:
- Makes election workers aware of accessibility tools at the polling place.
- Provides tips on how to maintain these accessibility features.
- Makes election workers aware of various tools available to voters, and
- Educates them on how to approach a voter who may require assistance.

EC'S WEBSITE
The Elections Canada website is compliant with the federal standard on web accessibility, which follows World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) accessibility guidelines (version 2, level AA). EC is always working to improve the website's accessibility.
Details may be accessed at:
http://www.elections.ca/content.
aspx?section=vot&dir=spl/policy&document

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: 'RIGHT TO CHOOSE PROJECT' FOR PERSON WITH DISABILITIES

INTRODUCTION
Dominican Republic has a population of 10 million of which 1.2 million persons are estimated to be with a disability which means 11.9 percent of the population. Dominican Republic ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in August, 2009. This ratification strengthened the regulatory framework and efforts for inclusion inter alia for the equal voting rights.

Legislative provisions
Article 121 of the Electoral law provides for assistance to the electors with disabilities to the extent that an individual trusted by such voter may accompany him to the polling booth and help him in preparing the ballot with the condition that such a person is not permitted to be too close to see or hear whatever is done or said while the ballot is being prepared. Article 23 of the National Law on People with Disabilities, 2013 provides that people with disabilities enjoy and experience legal capacity in equal conditions as the rest of the individuals in all aspects of life.

Plan of the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities in the Dominican Republic (2006-2016).

This plan establishes the responsibility of States to ensure recognition and exercise of the civil and political rights of people with disabilities in all matters of interest to the community.

Barriers to Electoral and Political Participation
In spite of implementation of initiatives by the Dominican Republic, barriers still persisted against people with disabilities in exercise of their civil and political rights. In addition, inclusion may also be hindered due to discrimination and stigma towards people with disabilities. Different types of barriers faced by people with disabilities included mobility, cognitive, sensory, and psycho-social, communications besides information barriers.

'RIGHT TO CHOOSE PROJECT' FOR PWD'S
'Right to Choose Project' was started in April 2012. The project aims at inclusion of PwD's in the Electoral and Political processes of the country and seeks to motivate key

public officials for creation and strengthening the conditions for inclusion in political participation. The main objective was to increase awareness through broad based engagement and consequent improvement in participation of PwD's in political and electoral process.

The project was established by La Red Ibero-americana de Entidades de Personas con Disacapacidad Fiscia (La Red), a Latin American network of organizations of persons with physical disabilities. The project emerged from the context of 2012 presidential elections through coordination of organizations such as the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), La Red, the Dominican Republic Central Electoral Board (JCE) and a host of other sister organizations that played an important role in the project. The National Council on Disability (CONADIS) provided support and collaboration with the implementation of sensitization activities.

Approach

The project approached the challenge through establishment of National Observatory for the project with a vision to assess and oversee the inclusion. It aimed at following objectives:

- Inclusion of people with disabilities in the electoral and political processes.
- To act as a new platform to oversee and monitor best practices and lessons learned from the electoral process.

The Observatory included a team of 20 community leaders who were themselves PwD's from ten provinces in the country. These community leaders received training on the rights of p and the significance of political participation. After the training, these leaders carried out sensitization talks, orientation and awareness visits in their communities, addressing people with disabilities and their families.

Outcomes:

The three main outcomes of the project are:

- Political parties have been sensitized on the importance of including in their agendas, the issue of political participation of people with disabilities in electoral process.
- Increased awareness amongst people with disabilities and improved t knowledge on their voting rights.
- Documentation of Best practices and lessons learned on inclusion in the electoral process.

BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice 1: Design interventions by people with disabilities, for people with disabilities
La Red is comprised of entities for the rights of PwD's, majority of the staff is PwD's only. This provided an opportunity to increase the number of people to participate in the activities and a larger empathetic environment and dedication. The project engaged more staff from amongst PwD's

with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities to be lecture facilitators, electoral observers and technical staff.

Best Practice 2. National Scope Project's Implementation
The institutional platform established by La Red in the project along with hubs established by collaborating entities of FENADID, CIMUDIS and ASODIFIMO at the national level ensured due regional representation in the project. The participants, who were leaders in their hubs from different regions, attended a three-day interactive session on issues and challenges relevant to political participation by people with disabilities, communication and self-esteem. The participants in turn, on return to their communities shared their knowledge and experience gained through awareness lectures and home visits. Further on elections day, they participated in the electoral observation and identified the accessibility of various polling stations.

Best Practice 3. Create opportunities for participation
Creating opportunities to promote participation and dissemination of information to PwD's and their families has a multiplier effect and as such an important step in changing perceptions and behaviors towards political participation. Reflection and participation opportunities have been generated during the project through awareness lectures,

meetings with organizations, and forums with political candidates, visits to political parties and dissemination materials. Spaces already established by the JCE have also been utilized in order to give visibility to people with disabilities in campaigns such as Verifícate. During the awareness campaign, people with disabilities explained as to how the lack of information had affected their lives.

Following comments illustrate the message:

> "I am very pleased with the workshop because I used to feel intimidated in other electoral processes, and now I know that I have the same rights as others."
>
> "I want to assert my vote."
>
> "A blind participant in the lecture expressed that he did not think of voting, because in the past he was not allowed to enter the polls with his companion. Now that he knows the articles, which enable his right to enter with a person of his choice, and use a template to help him vote independently. He will vote in the future, and will do it with the template."

Best Practice 4. Unify inter-agency efforts to achieve a commitment to expansion in the full inclusion of people with disabilities

Agreements with government organizations responsible to regulate and influence the processes of participation were attained with a view to bolster sustainability and achieving visibility for PwD's in State policies andinitiatives. As per framework of the project, an institutional agreement was made amongst JCE, IFES and all the concerned organizations for PwD's, with CONADIS as a witness in its role as a government entity. This integration helped in future actions for holistic achievement of the rights of PwD's. As a consequence of this integrated effort, JCE included information for PwD's in Election Instructions manual. The JCE also included sign language in informative programs on TV and provided access to information for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Best Practice 5. Information Campaigns in Accessible Formats

Following media coverage and impact thereof was achieved:

- A TV slot on the voting rights of PwD's, and
- Participation of several PwD's in radio and TV programs.
- People with disabilities became visible to the public.
- People with disabilities felt encouraged to participate in the electoral process and exercise their right to vote.
- The general public was informed that PwD's have equal right to participation and integration in social and political life.

Best Practice 6. General Population's Awareness and the Awakening of the Sector's Political Participation

For the 2012 elections, IFES and La Red worked together with JCE in order to raise awareness of poll workers, such as executing a Verificate program activity.

"A blind person from Los Mameyes told me that he was prevented from voting in the past elections, and he told the polling station worker that he had the right to vote. He stated 'Law 275 allows me to vote with a person of my choice, and sent his son to find the brochure [from La Red], presented it, and was able to vote."

Best Practice 7. Systematization and Base Line Establishment

Systematic database and baseline creation is vital to documentation for status of political participation of PwD's. During the project period, regional and national inputs have been developed to broaden the field and scope of studies and data on status of people with disabilities, which was hitherto not available. Such studies bring out impact of the project, besides serving as a reference point for course of action on future interventions.
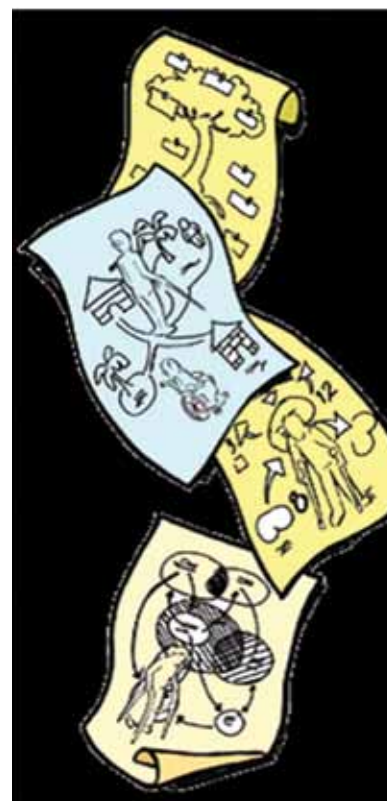
LESSONS LEARNT

- Reliable census for PwD's would prompt government and its institutions to focus on needed resources to ensure the electoral and political rights of PwD's
- Political inclusion activities should be completed sufficiently before election year.

Understanding context limitations:

- The political system in the country has to develop a broad based and a holistic approach for inclusion and aim at guaranteeing the full enjoyment of the rights to PwD's.
- A large proportion of PwD's are without proper identity documents, which poses problems in legitimate recognition and registration in electoral roll.
- Inadequacy of information and education means that many families discriminate against PwD's
- Erroneous perceptions regarding involvement of public agencies in this type of projects
- Adaptation or creating instruments to facilitate the vote of people with disabilities do not always lead to independent voting

Addressing the issues relating to voting rights of people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities: Of the people with disabilities surveyed during the project, 80% expressed motivation to vote as result of their participation in the political rights workshops. However, they also recognized that there are still barriers within the electoral process

Project: ¨Right to Choose¨

Source: Manual for Best Practices and Lessons Learned

VOTER EDUCATION THROUGH POSTERS AND ASSISTIVE DEVICES

A set of 2012 voter education posters in the Dominican Republic to increase their awareness and encourages PwD's to vote. The posters carry a larger educative value since they are in local language and explain the polling process step wise.

Ballot Guide: An Assistive Device for Polling by PwD's

A ballot guide of Dominican Republic Central Electoral Board (JCE) is an assistive device which enables voters with visual disabilities to determine where boxes for each candidate are. It is hinged so that users are able to easily slide the ballot in and out.

Source: Election Access

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: BARRIERS TO ELECTORAL INCLUSION

During the monitoring and assessment of the electoral process, the following observations were made by the project program and technical teams and electoral observers. Following barriers to electoral inclusion are yet to be overcome as per the evaluation studies:

- Lack of informational and orientation material for people with visual and auditory disabilities, barrier to access polling stations and centers (ex: polling stations located on second and third floors, stairs, and/or lack of ramps);
- Low motivation of people with disabilities to be involved in the electoral process (working in polling stations and centers), in an official manner (with the JCE), or to represent political parties;
- Out of the six government plans from the presidential candidates, only two took into consideration issues facing people with disabilities;
- By other people telling them who to vote for, people with intellectual disabilities were being used as a means to obtain an additional vote,

rather than exercising their right to vote and being respected for their participation;

- The JCE incorporated sign language in their citizen's information and orientation television programs;
- While assisted voting is included in the electoral law, there is still unawareness of this right for people with disabilities, their families and polling station workers;
- Lack of knowledge of auxiliary templates for people who are blind or with low vision, as well as family members and polling station workers; and
- Low training and information on the use and existence of the auxiliary templates for people who are blind or with low vision.

2.06
FRANCE: THE CIVIC AND DEMOCRACY ASSOCIATION (CIDEM)

INTRODUCTION
The Civic and Democracy Association (CIDEM) is an independent, neutral and non-partisan organization that operates through partnerships with government and other civil society organizations in France. Founded in 1984 by the League of Human Rights (Ligue des Droits de l'Homme) and the League of Teaching (Ligue de l'Enseignement, CIDEM's net work has expanded to encompass 11 member associations, including the Scouts and several other French youth organizations.CIDEM has a membership of about 4 million covered by 50,000 local groups.

APPROACH FOR CAMPAIGNS
Campaigns through Advertisements
CIDEM runs advertisement campaigns with the objective of encouraging French citizens to register and vote in municipal, regional, European Parliament, presidential and parliamentary elections, besides referendum on the European Constitution. The campaigns are run through:
- television and radio advertisements;
- spots in cinemas;
- visual advertisements in underground stations;
- visual ads on buses;
- flyers placed on parked cars;
- Caravan to community events around the country.

Media and Television Debates
CIDEM works to garner media attention to its activities by sending out press releases and having its director take part in televised debates on analysis of voter turnout in different elections in the country.

Network Operations
CIDEM effectively utilizes its network of member associations for distribution of its materials. For an average campaign it hires an additional 20 campaign organizers on short-term contracts. These people organize the volunteers of the member associations towards coordinated action to ensure the effective dissemination of CIDEM's message.

TARGET GROUPS AND THEMES OF CAMPAIGNS
CIDEM's advertisements are focused primarily at voters of age group 18 to 34. The theme of the majority of its campaigns is that by not voting you let others make your decisions for you.

'Let others not decide for you............vote!'
During the 2002 presidential and parliamentary elections, CIDEM ran a commercial in which a young couple has just had a baby and the doctors, nurses and other patients decide what the baby's name is to be, much to the amazement of the new parents. The scene is followed by the tag line 'Ne laisse personne decider pours vous … votez!' (Don't let someone else decide for you… vote!).

'Use a proxy vote in case you are planning to be away'
Another main theme of CIDEM's campaigns encourages citizens to use a proxy vote if they are planning to be away or on vacation on the day of the vote.

MAGNITUDE OF CAMPAIGNING
Before European Parliament elections of 2004, CIDEM ran over 500 radio advertisements on all national radio stations during the 12 days prior to the vote. Well over 17 million French citizens aged 20–49 are estimated to have heard these advertisements roughly five times. In addition, working together with the Ministry of the Interior and the Association of French Mayors, CIDEM provided 50,000 posters throughout the 36,000 municipalities in France.

INNOVATIONS IN OUTREACH

In collaboration with the Information Office for France for the European Parliament (Bureau d'Information pour la France du Parlement europeen), CIDEM ran an advertising campaign in 286 university restaurants encouraging students to vote in the European Parliament elections. The campaign consisted of distributing posters, brochures and napkins within the restaurants and setting up kiosks at the restaurant exits.

EVALUATION OF CAMPAIGNS

CIDEM does not have any formal mechanism for evaluation of the effectiveness of its campaigns. However, it carries out informal evaluation in terms of voter turnout, commentsby its partners and association members, and the estimated number of people who saw its advertisements.

Its two of the important campaigns coincided with the referendum on the European Constitution and the 2004 European Parliament election. The strong turnout of 70 per cent in the referendum may have been partly attributable to the activities of CIDEM. On the other hand, the European Parliament elections saw a 4 per cent drop in the French turnout, from46.8 per cent to 42.8 per cent. CIDEM maintains that this decrease would have been worse if its campaign had not existed.

FUNDING OF CIDEM OPERATIONS

It is the only organization in France that receives funding from the French Government for the campaigns to encourage people to vote. This gives it a quasi-monopoly over initiatives to improve voter turnout in France. It also receives some funding from private-sector foundations and charitable organizations, but tries to limit such financing in order to maintain its neutrality and independence.

SELF IMPOSED RESTRAINT

CIDEM has not considered activities outside its advertising campaigns in the effort to create higher voter turnout because advertising is the purpose for which it was set up and is the function for which it receives funding from the Government.
Website: <http://www.cidem.org>.

2.07
HAITI: INCLUSIVE VOTER EDUCATION

Haiti has a population of 10.1 million with an estimated 1.5 million persons with disabilities (PwD's) according to WHO's estimation level of 15%. Haiti ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 25 July 2009 and as such provides due recognition to the inclusion of PwD's in electoral and political process.

VOTER EDUCATION FOR PwD'S IN HAITI

Haiti embarked upon a simple yet very effective system of civic and voter education for the Pwd's through attractive posters, signage's in collaboration and support from the International Foundation For Electoral Systems (IFES) under civic education series in 2015 before presidential and legislative elections. The series covers the electoral process stepwise with a clear message for inclusion and encourages the PwD voters to join the electoral process. Some of the posters are as follows:

Pre election Period: All Our Voices Count
With a view to demonstrate inclusion at the time of presidential election in Oct 2015, the Provisional Electoral Council of Haiti (CEP) issued a poster encouraging all voters including persons with disabilities to join the electoral process. The poster in simple terms coveys the message of inclusion in an attractive manner.
Go Vote:
An educative poster captioned 'Go Vote!' was produced by local artist Jerry Bourisquot. The poster conveys an illustrative message to the PwD voters to join the voting process. The poster given below is self explanatory and decisively encouraging to the targeted population.
Go Vote!

At the Election Time: Arriving to Vote

An illustrative poster produced by local artist Jerry Bour-isquot under the civic education series at the time of presidential and legislative elections in the country in Oct 2015 demonstrates inclusion. The poster conveys clearly the help that would be available to PwD's to facilitate entry to the polling station.
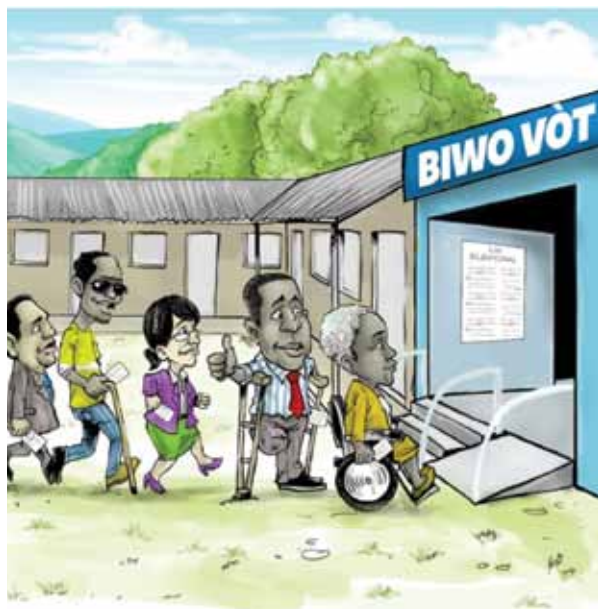
Voting by All Citizens

An educative poster produced by local artist Jerry Bour-isquot under the civic education series at the time of presidential and legislative elections in the country in Oct 2015 reflects inclusion. The poster conveys very clearly the equal opportunity, in presence of Election Observer, to all the voters including PwD's inside the polling station during the elections in the country.

Counting of Votes

The poster produced by the PEC and IFES (Jan 2016) in Haitian Creole explains the process that follows after the ballot has been cast. The poster shows PwD's working as polling/counting workers for processing the polled ballots. While it demonstrates the inclusion at all stages of electoral process, it also builds confidence in PwD's that information on inclusion has been recorded correctly.

Source: Election Access, IFES Website

2.08
INDIA: INCLUSIVE ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

A true and vibrant democracy is based on the bedrock of an inclusive electoral process, whose hallmark is voters' participation. The Election Commission of Indiathus believes in reaching out to all; and this is not just a hollow slogan – it recognizes the need to reach out to marginalized groups like the elderly, transgenders, persons with disability (PwDs), women, migrants, labourers etc. The ECI focuses equally on those outside the formal education system.

Dedicated to democracy, the Election Commission of India has undertaken numerous initiatives throughout India to not only enroll voters from these marginalized sections in the electoral rolls, but also spread awareness on elections and motivate them to exercise their right to vote. These measures have certainly helped in no small measure make India a true democracy.

While the ECI had given certain common directives in this regard, several states and districts went a step further, taking several initiatives for the marginalized, earning kudos and winning hearts. Outlined below are some of the highlights of this outreach.

➜ Special SVEEP quick response teams were formed to help bring differently abled and elderly to the polling stations. People as old as 104 years old Shri Bhikhari Ram Sinha and 109 years old Shrimati Baratnin Verma could thus reach their polling stations and cast their vote.

ELDERLY CITIZENS

- Initiatives taken up by different states in India included sending **personal letters** to Senior Citizens, informing them that they would be getting priority in voting and not required to stand in queues. Express entry was provided to these voters on poll day.
- Boat owners close to polling station were asked to charge subsidized fares on poll day.
- Village awareness groups were formed to promote voting among elderly.
- Young volunteers from colleges (less than 18 years of age), designated as *Matadata Mitra* (Friends of Voters) helped the elderly reach polling booths on wheel chairs/ support as required.
- The elderly were provided with all facilities at the booth like sitting arrangments, drinking water and medical aid for any emergency.
- NO QUEUE SYSTEM was adopted for the elderly in several states.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (PwDS)

- **Single window camps** were organized for people with disability (PwDs) to enroll them as voters. Anganwadi Workers, spread across

all villages of the country, were engaged to undertake a survey to make sure no one got missed out.
- Every PwD voter was also contacted over phone to explain the special facilities at polling booths. This intensive household contact programme helped motivate PwD electors as also their family members.
- Two volunteers were provided at each polling booth to assist PwDs. Besides constructing ramps and providing wheelchairs, special measures like sign language interpreter for the hearing impaired were taken upin certain areas.
- A mission *"Rehbar"* was undertaken in collaboration with District Red Cross Society under SVEEP for providing home to booth services for aged and the differently abled. A village wise survey was done to identify such special voters. Each differently abled voter was assigned one assistant from the same polling booth area for facilitating movement to and from polling booth. District Red Cross Society worked for ensuring electoral participation of these special voters; tricycles were hired for numerous polling stations, vehicles were pressed into service for ferrying differently

➜ **Against All odds...**

Edward Moorthy, one of the brave champions of democracy got his foot inked at a poll booth in Orlem, Malad, Mumbai **(Maharashtra)** on 24th April, 2014. Moorthy lost his arms in a train accident between Mira Road and Bhayander while on his way to work a couple of years ago. Moorthy's wife accompanied him, but being self-reliant, he did not need her help to walk or press the button on the EVM. "I used the stump of my arm to press the button. I think the staff members were awed, judging by the way they were gaping at me. I must add that all of them were extremely cooperative." Moorthy had his foot inked to show that he had voted. He placed his foot on the table with some help and an officer applied the ink while others in the polling booth looked on with a mix of curiosity and admiration

abled voters and their nominated attendants.

- Another initiative included providing a separate link on CEO website where people with physical disabilities could get registered and request for assistance/facilities required by them on the day of poll. Wheel chairs with dedicated volunteers were made available at all the Polling Station locations with the support of Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- A parliamentary constituency in India

A novel initiative was taken upin Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh state in India. A painting/ poster competition was organized for specially-abled titled *'Mera mat bhi dega lok Tantra ko naya aayam aur majbooti'* (My vote too would strengthen democracy). The event witnessed participation of more than 4,000 specially-abled. Many of them painted on the rights and duties of differently-abled. These posters were then displayed at each polling booth of Sitapur district. The competition witnessed numerous differently-abled come forward and speak for democracy. "It feels so good that we have been specially invited by district administration. We are not less than anyone else and we will surely vote," said Ramlal, who walks with an aid.

This was not all. Differently-abled were involved further in election process. About 3,000 differently-abled persons were chosen, one from each polling booth, and crowned as the *'Loktantra-doot'* (Democracy Ambassador), with each getting anidentity card. This added to their prestige and gave them immense confidence.

Moreover, a digital diary giving details of each differently-abled voter was created. The BLO and the District Control room were in touch with them throughout the SVEEP campaign till the poll day. They were motivated and provided necessary facilitation to exercise their right. A no-queue policy was also adopted for the differently-abled.

provided pick and drop facility for the handicapped, aged and infirm voters who needed assistance for visiting the polling station.

- Moreover, special arrangements were made for visually challenged voters. Polling booths provided braille signage for blind voters to assist them in voting.

WOMEN: BRIDGING GENDER GAP

For maximizing women registration, a women-specific SVEEP campaign was made a substantive part of the SVEEP Plan at State and District levels. Socio-cultural interventions were planned to address the lack of awareness among women about electoral process. As a component of BLOs' training, sensitization to issues regarding women's electoral registration was done. Women icons were engaged at regional and national level to engage women in the electoral process. Women groups such as Self Help Groups and Women co-operatives were also roped in for voter education. Street plays, folk songs, drama, cinema slides, posters at places frequented by women such as religious places, ration shops, markets and hospitals were among the communication strategies adopted. Messages on voting were pasted on gas cylinders to give voting information to housewives.

Specific activities to attract female voters to register, such as giving information on registration of married women, were taken up. Grassroots level workers under the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme, ASHA and *Aanganwadi* workers of the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) were trained to facilitate registration of young female voters.

- *Mahila Matdata Chaupals* (Women voter centres) were organized to sensitize women about electoral participation as also register them. *'Bulawa tolis'* (Invitation groups) was a novel concept utilized in different districts where the rozgar sewaks, Aaganwadi workers and ASHA workers of the area were sent door to door on poll day to remind electors to vote. The movement of *Bulawa toli* was supervised

↘ Along with millions of other Indians queuing up to cast their vote, the world's shortest woman Jyoti Amge also exercised her Right to Vote. Amge is just 62.6 cm (a little over two feet) tall. The 20-year-old Amge, a resident of Nagpur, was accompanied by her family members as she cast her vote. "Election machinery in our district was so helpful that I could cast my vote easily" she said.

by the SVEEP control room where voting percentage at each polling booth was being monitored. Any reduction in voting percentage, on the polling booth, especially among women, was conveyed to the *Bulawa toli* of the area, which got activated immediately.

- In another region, pregnant women were sent personal letters informing them that they would be accorded priority in voting and not be required to stand in queue.
- Celebrities and role models for women were nominated as brand ambassadors. These brand ambassadors participated in various events across the state to promote enrolment and voting among women.
- Organizations involved in social and economic empowerment of the rural poor in the state through Self Help Groups (SHGs) were made partners. Given their reach among women who form the majority of these SHGs, these organizations successfully mobilized women at grass root level.
- *Paniharins* (water bearers) carried the message to vote on their earthen pots in desert areas of India. Women have to walk long distances to fetch water. Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) is a Media department of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. DFP, Barmer came out with an innovative idea of putting messages to vote on the earthen pots sold by *Paniharins* and which were then carried by the women in the village and to their households. This reinforced the message to vote every time

a family member came to the pot to drink water.

- "Mother India" campaign was launched with an aim to mobilize women voters and prospective female voters. Under the campaign, electoral literacy material was distributed, voter lists were circulated at household level in villages and electoral participation pledge in local languages was signed by women voters. All Polling Stations in the district were declared as "No Women Queue" with seating arrangements with 200+ chairs made at these polling booths. Women were given a warm welcome, offered token and a place to sit. After every male voter, two female voters were allowed to enter the polling booth to facilitate greater number of women and their timely return to homes. At the Polling Stations, a special "Women Help Desk" was established to help the female voters and facilitate their voting.
- In regions with low EP ratio, low gender ratio and low voter turnout, **special lady officers** were appointed for each Assembly Constituency. These women were supported by other village level women workers such as

Aanganwadi workers, ASHA workers, *Shiksha Mitras*, and girl volunteers of NSS in reaching out to polling stations and talking to women electorate to encourage them to register and vote.

- All women rallies, locally called *"Mahila Matdaan Rallies"*, were organized in predominantly tribal districts. The low female voter turn-out polling stations were already identified in the district, but it was a revelation for the election administration when they found out that women in these PS areas were not even aware that they had a right to vote. Wednesday of every week is the day fixed to immunize young children by Health Workers all over the State, and is known as *Mamta Divas.* Hence these rallies were organized on Wednesdays in the low female turnout areas. The rally would consist of the Health

> → Communication material were developed targeting women specifically.
>
> **A song on Mother Daughter Conversation**
> *Dear mother, don't stop me, I will go to vote*
> *Listen daughter, I will not send you outside*
> *Stay at home and work, I will not send you outside*
> *Dear mother, your aunts would go to vote*
> *Your old grandmother will go to vote*
> *Listen daughter, I will not send you outside*
> *Stay at home and work, I will not send you outside*
> *Dear mother,*
> *Listen to me, pay attention; I have got my voter slip*
> *My name is in the rolls and I am a voter*
> *Dear daughter, how can you be a voter without being married?*
> *Dear mother, I am eighteen years old, my name is in the voter list, the Tehsildar came to school and showed us the voter list*

Workers, *Anganwadi* workers, Self Help Group members, and since it was strategically decided to start the rally from the Health Center (Mamta Kendra), the female beneficiaries present for immunization would join in the rally. These women would then go into the streets of the Polling Station area, shouting innovative slogans and carrying informative banners about the right of women to vote, time and date of polls.

- Rural illiterate women were targeted through the Adult Literacy Programme of Government of India. (See supplement: ECI reaches out to rural illiterate women.

SUPPLEMENT: ECI REACHES OUT TO RURAL ILLITERATE WOMEN

Gaps in information about registration and voting process were wide in rural areas across some states in India, mainly among the women. The literacy rate in the country is around 74.04% (2011 census), with 82.14% among men and 65.46% among women. Certain states had wider gap in literacy among men and women and also matching gender gap in voter turnout.

Aiming to reach out to rural illiterate women,ECI and National Literacy Mission Authority of India signed an MoU in 2013 to impart voter education in identified 500 villages across 15 States/UTs of the country where the Adult Literacy Programme of Government of India was being implemented. The Adult Literacy Programme was targeted at women whereby Literacy Volunteers under the 'Sakshar Bharat' programme imparted functional literacy on identified themes to the rural women. ECI and NLMA developed literacy material on registration process and

voting to be used for enrolment and during elections respectively. The content was designed in the form of Flip-charts which is the common tool used under the Adult Literacy programme. Short and catchy slogans were also created and designed to motivate the target audience. The core creative team worked with ECI to develop content for plays, radio programmes, songs and posters that could be used during elections. The medium of the master copy was Hindi, the widely used language in the country. These were later translated at the regional centres of the NLMA into other regional languages.

The NLMA volunteer is called 'Prerak' which means Motivator. A training programme was organised by NLMA for its Trainers at various regional centres and ECI Officers along with education and communication experts imparted the content and technique training to the Trainers. The Trainers subsequently went to the provinces and imparted training to the prerak. These preraks imparted voter education and awareness to the rural populace using the tools developed. Mass mobilisation activities undertaken by the District Election Machinery widely used the slogans/plays and posters developed under ECI-NLMA partnership. Preraks became an integral part of the information dissemination system of the District Election machinery during the election period.

Initially planned as Flipcharts to be distributed in all the villages covered under the programme, the cost factor gave rise to an innovative solution by converting these Flipcharts to Flash cards of smaller sizes, an effective mode of dissemination.

Outcome: The voter turnout increased in almost all the provinces (400 districts in 27 States/Union Territories) covered under this intervention. The gender gap in voter turnout also reduced remarkably in the national elections 2014.

TRANSGENDERS

Though still in its nascent stages,registration of transgenders as 'others' marked a first in Indian electoral history.

For the first time, the third gender population was counted in Maharashtra state of India. A special campaign was undertaken in various districts to enrol the transgenders and promote voting by them. The electoral process is thus also working as the harbinger of social change.

OTHER MARGINALIZED GROUPS

Other left out groups include tribals, monks, sex workers, people living in welfare homes, new colonies and project affected areas.

- Special registration drives were taken up for **sex workers, homeless, families living in slums and makeshift houses.**
- **Under-trials** and people jailed under preventive detention were covered under a special programme. Under existing legal framework, under-trials cannot exercise their franchise. However, under the programme arranged with help of jail Superintendents, under-trials wrote letters to their family members and relatives encouraging them to vote. They also requested the Election Commission of India to recommend change in existing law and facilitate setting up a polling booth inside the jail.
- Certain regions have a high prevalence of HIV affected people or high density of female sex workers and *Devadasis*. Most of these female sex workers, *Devadasi* and men having sex with men did not cast their votes in last election because of prevailing social stigma. Under SVEEP, health care camps and voter education were combined, covering 17,070 HIV infected people and 729 sex workers and *Devadasis* in all. Taking the oath to participate in voting was a matter of pride for them.
- Similarly **monks** living in monasteries, who had remained unregistered for a long time, got registered in the electoral rolls due to the initiative and efforts of BLOs.
- The campaign also enrolled persons residing at **relocation sites**, and had their names included in the Electoral roll.
- To reach out to **labourers**, SVEEP activity was clubbed with the celebrations on Labour Day (1st May).
- SVEEP programmes in various States were held in the languages spoken by the **migrant** population, with special efforts to register them before the seasonal migration.

PEOPLE AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE AND FEAR

Certain parts of India are affected by extremism. In such regions**,** long distances between the voting centers and residential areas, lack of transportation facilities, fear of dictats of poll boycott and incidents of violence result in low voter turnout. To address these, the administration employed a combination of security measures as well as voter education efforts. They are as follows:

- Reach out through folk art groups, folk songs and *Bhajan Mandlees* (groups which sing devotional songs);
- Publicity was done in local weekly *Haats* (markets);
- *Special Gram Sabhas* were organised and *Village Kotwars* asked to spread awareness;
- Peace march was done by security forces to infuse a sense of security amongst the voters;
- Troupes of local primarily rural artists called *Kala Jathas* who conveyed the message of voting through their artistic performances;
- As open campaigning was not possible, a

> **Giving spirit a face: Voter Mascots for Electoral Awareness**
>
> Puppets, masks, muppets and idols are intrinsic to Indian folk culture, used extensively for communication and telling tales. Election managers made good use of this indigenous treasure by creating special mascots for carrying voter education and awareness messages. With attractive colours and interesting slogans, dressed in regional attire, these mascots had great voter appeal and likeability. The ECI designed its own Voter mascot called 'Babanna' which became very visible and popular during the LS 2014. From Red Panda, Mrigababu to Votuda the ECI came forward with various mascots for different districts. All the mascots germinated from the local cultures and the habitats of the districts and were the primary means of communication with the voters. Similarly, a mascot **'Mr. Votu'** by a CSO was used for programs and road shows to attract public attention in Delhi.

silent strategy, using word of mouth to build up confidence to come out and vote was adopted. This effort was led by village level functionaries of the Women & Child Development and Health Departments;
- *"Vishesh* PRATIGYA *Chaupals"* (Special pledge meetings) were organized to overcome gaps, where the team leader of PRATIGYA went to most interior of the areas and talked to people in extremism affected areas on the importance of voting in a democracy.
- As it is not possible to distribute posters, pamphlets or install hoardings, village headmen were called by the administration

The case of Satipatis of Dangs

Dang is a predominantly tribal district with 94% tribal population. Migration of the landless posed many problems for the district administration while implementing the voter education programs. The other issue is with regards to the *Satipati* sect.

The *Satipati* sect in the district does not participate in any of the government programs, to the extent that they are not registered even for ration cards. They do not believe in the government machinery and believe that nature will provide for them. There are more than 3000 eligible voters of the sect, who do not therefore participate in the election process.

The district administration repeatedly approached them and after some time, was able to get initial success from a few families who were persuaded to get themselves registered as voters. They were convinced that EPIC could also facilitate them obtain benefits of the various government programmes for them.

The administration never tried to touch the sensitive parts of their belief or used any manipulation in getting them enrolled in voter list. Instead, they used the services of the recently appointed government employees who belonged to the sect. When the community members saw the educated young from their own sect improve their economic status once they get a job, they started believing that it is in their interest to accept these changes. With their interest piqued, the outreach efforts bore fruit.

↴ **Unity in Diversity-**
Sarv Dharm Maitri Sangh

Ajmer city, Rajasthan is a symbol of unity of various religions and in keeping with that spirit, religious leaders of all religions came together to appeal to people of Ajmer district to vote. They assembled in a school and went to meet people in the main market to request them to vote. People took pledge to vote with these leaders.

↴ **Confidence Building Measures-**
Vishwas Parchi, Vishwas **SMS and**
Vishwas **Phone**

In Barabanki district, Uttar Pradesh, in pre identified sensitive areas, about 35% of voters- 2,00,000 were delivered a slip called 'Vishwas Slip' (trust or confidence slip) which besides building confidence among voters on security related issues also assured them that their voting records were kept secret. An emergency contact number was given to the voters. Lady police constables called 50 villagers everyday to enquire about safety in their respective villages. Mobile operators delivered messages of confidence to encourage people to vote without fear.

and their cooperation was sought. The village level health and AWC workers took the message for registration from house to house, they also distributed Form 6.

SUPPLEMENT: INDIA: INCLUSION IN PANCHAYAT (RURAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES) ELECTIONS IN JHARKHAND, INDIA

The first Panchayat Elections in Jharkhand were held in Nov- Dec. 2010. Some of the pictures from media coverage of these elections are reproduced below. The common theme that one would note in these media clippings includes:

- Women coming out to vote in large numbers;
- People with disability, old and infirm, turning up for voting;
- Most of these people are tribals in Scheduled areas;
- People exercising their right to vote in a peaceful and fear-free manner despite the fact that most of these areas are extremist affected areas;
- These pictures are from the media coverage done by different newspapers and present an unbiased picture of the ground situation. They are not the coverage by any governmental agency.

It took 32 years to conduct Panchayat and Municipal elections in Jharkhand, the last one being sometimes in 1978. The elections were not held because of socio-political and legislative complexities despite clear Constitutional provisions under Article 243 (73rd Amendment,1993). The state legislature was not able to make appropriate provisions in the enabling legislation, due to which inclusion became one of the major issues and the fight for reservation of seats and posts or offices went upto the Supreme court of India.

The inclusion, what settled ultimately, meant at least 50% seats and posts for women in all categories; proportionate to population representation for weaker sections etc under legislation. Every section of the society emerged a powerful stake holder in the electoral process. The ex-

tremists also joined the mainstream in large numbers. And above all the entire electoral process was completed in a peaceful manner.

The voter education strategies included powerful outreach down to the village level, media leveraging for maximising the impact of inclusion and necessity to vote in order to address the problems faced by people at local levels and the fact that it was the time to form village governments. The average voter turnout was above 70%, something unusual for these extremist affected areas areas. Look at these Pictures which speak for themselves.

A tribal woman carrying her old, ailing and aged father to a polling station for exercising their right to vote in a remote interior village (Fear Vanishes, Village Flourishes).

2.09
KENYA: A ROBUST BEGINNING

IEBC Launches Voter Education Handbooks ahead of General Elections

The *Voter Education Training Manual* was launched at the KICC in October, 2012. The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) launched four voter education handbooks to guide the public ahead of the March, 2013 general elections.

The publications include the *Voter Education Curriculum,* the *Voter Education Training Manual,* the *Gender Guide for the KenyanConstitution* and the *Handbook on Elective Positions.* The books are meant to promote awareness and understanding of voter rights, electoral systems and processes.

The *Voter Education Curriculum* spells out the objectives of voter education and outlines the fundamental changes introduced by the new constitution.

On its part, the *Voter Education Training Manual* is

intended to complement the use of the *Voter Education Curriculum* as the primary reference material in voter education. It provides information on the relevance of voter education and suggests various approaches, activities and methodologies that would make facilitation more experiential and participatory. It also suggests appropriate resources to be used.

The voter education material was the fruition of extensive consultation and research by IEBC with other strategic partners among them the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) and United Nations Women.

Voter Education Week: 'Informed Voter for Informed choices'

The first ever Annual Voter Education Week was held countrywide in May, 2015. During this week, the IEBC sensitized the public on the importance of participation in the electoral process as well as boost the continuous voter registration process. This is a part of the IEBC mandate of conducting continuous voter education as set out it Article 88(4) (g) of the Constitution.

Other issues highlighted in the Voter Education week include inclusion and mainstreaming, party lists, political tolerance, dispute resolution mechanisms, electoral technology among others.

The voter education week was implemented nationwide through outreach programmes to schools, electoral technology exhibition, media campaigns, onsite service delivery, open stakeholders' forum and town hall meetings.

In the 2013 General Elections, the overall voter turnout was 85.99%. The Commission intends to improve on this commendable turnout through educating the public on the need to exercise democratic and civic rights through voting.

IEBC Engages Stakeholders Ahead of Voter Education Week

The IEBC engaged key stakeholders with a view to seek their active participation and support in the Annual Voter Education Week in May, 2015.

The Commission held briefings and consultations with political parties, media and the civil society. This process meant setting up of a platform for dialogue intended to enhance citizen participation in democratic processes.

Under the theme: 'Informed voter for informed choices', IEBC, through the voter education week, aimed at sensitizing the public on the importance of participation in the electoral process as well boosting the ongoing continuous voter registration process. Matters of electoral technology, inclusion of marginalized groups in the electoral process as well as political tolerance were also highlighted.

In this exercise, IEBC is focusing on improving its operations, systems and processes using lessons drawn from the 2013 polls. IEBC intended developing a roadmap for 2017 General Elections as well as finalizing on the 2016-2020 strategic plan. The strategic plan is set to

be launched in less than a month and captures the Commissions aspirations towards institutionalizing sustainable electoral processes in the country.

The voter education week included a series of activities held across the country in all the 290 constituencies through outreach programmes, media campaigns, stakeholder forums, exhibitions, onsite services among other initiatives.

Lessons from the Voter Education Week

The Voter Education Week provided vital lessons for improvement of the Kenyan electoral process. For the first time after the March 4, 2013 General Elections Kenyans got a chance to interact with electoral systems and deliberated on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness in elections management. The exercise also served to boost the voter continuous voter registration process.

The week's theme was **'Informed voter for informed choices'**. IEBC took the opportunity to sensitize members of the public on the importance of participation in the electoral process as well as electoral technology, inclusion of marginalized groups in the electoral process, political tolerance and peaceful co-existence.

The turnout in the various forums held across all the 290 constituencies was encouraging and interest expressed was enormous. The Commission seized the chance to demystify commonly held misconceptions and elaborated on strategies in place for future polls.

IEBC Developing Gender, Disability Inclusion Policy

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission is formulating a policy on public participation, gender and disability inclusion in the electoral process.

The Commission is developing a programme and putting in place measures geared towards enhancing effective participation of youth, persons with disabilities, marginalized groups and other vulnerable persons in political processes.

A three-day workshop was held at Maanzoni, Machakos County to conduct a gender and disability audit in the electoral process as well as collect views that will inform the inclusion policy.

Speaking while officially opening the workshop, IEBC Commissioner Muthoni Wangai pointed out that Kenya trails other East African countries in women participation in the electoral process. "We should aim at having at least 87 women members of the National Assembly directly elected from constituencies as opposed to the current 16," she said.

The workshop was organised by the Voter Education and Partnerships Directorate with the support of UNDP-Kenya. It brings together Regional and Constituency Elections Coordinators from South, Central and North Rift regions. Similar workshops targeting all other IEBC field officers will be held next month in Meru, Kisumu and Mombasa

Banners Announcing Launch of 'Voter Education for Schools Project' in Kenya
The banners announcing the launch of a new voter education initiative for schools in Kenya, led by the IEBC, the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum development (KICD). The project is supported by the IFES and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development.

2.10
MYANMAR: INCLUSIVE VOTER EDUCATION

INCLUSION IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Myanmar has a population of 56 million out of which 8.5 million population of disabled people is estimated to be 8.5 million (as per the 15% estimate of the World Health Organization). Myanmar ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2011. Myanmar made sustained efforts for inclusion in 2015 electoral process.

INCLUSIVE VOTER EDUCATION

The Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI) collaborated with the Union Election Commission (UEC) to develop inclusive voter education posters, brochures, logo and pamphlets etc that provide guidance and instructions for voters with disabilities and the public as such on how to cast their ballot for October 2015 elections. Visuals with simple language and clear message help mitigate communication challenges that may occur especially for people with low literacy levels besides effectively addressing the problem of barriers to inclusion. Use of local language further helped in dissemination. These materials were used as a vital component of the Voter Education Campaign in 2015 elections in the country.

The initiative was supported by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Swiss Agency for development and Cooperation, and the United Kingdom department for International development (DFID).Some of the best practice materials are briefly mentioned step wise in the following:

Encouraging Everyone to Vote: The LOGO
In support of the 2015 elections in Myanmar, UEC and the MILI developed a logo for a voter education cam-

paign. Using a logo for a campaign allows voter education materials to be identified as part of a broader campaign and helps emphasize the importance of election accessibility. The logo was used on several voter education materials, including brochures and for **voter education concert** held in Myanmar.

Supporting the Right to Vote
As the 2015 election approached, UEC of Myanmar and MILI worked to create a campaign in advance, encouraging persons with disabilities to vote and participate in the election. The production of the poster was supported by IFES.

Encouraging citizens to register to vote
This poster was produced by the Myanmar UEC to encourage citizens to register to vote. It was created 2015 elections with support from the IFES

Citizens and voter registration
This poster was produced by the Myanmar UEC with the support from IFES to encourage citizens to register to vote for 2015 elections.
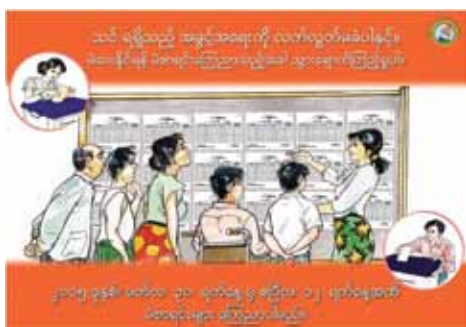
Registering to Vote
This poster provides information on how voters can submit a form to correct their voter registration information or to report that a registered voter may be ineligible to participate in elections.

GUIDELINES FOR VOTING

In support of the 2015 elections Myanmar UEC and MILI developed an inclusive brochure explaining the guidelines for voting. The brochure was printed and distributed with support from the United Kingdom's DFID, the Australian government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the IFES

Providing Guidelines on How to Vote
In support of the 2015 elections the Myanmar UEC and MILI developed an inclusive brochure explaining the guidelines for voting. The brochure was printed and distributed with support from the United Kingdom's DFID the Australian government's DFAT, the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation and IFES.

ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN

This brochure from Myanmar Affairs, a research group, explains the vote process through illustrations along with a sample ballot paper that helps citizens to practice voting. The brochure was distributed at the marketplace and other locales where Myanmar women often visit for effective dissemination and understanding the process properly.

VOTING BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

MILI in collaboration with the UEC developed an inclusive voter education poster that provides instructions for men and women with disabilities on how to cast their ballot in October 2015 elections. The poster was produced with support from IFES, DFID and other agencies referred to above.

2.11
NEW ZEALAND: INCLUSIVE VOTER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

All the New Zealand citizens have right to have their voice heard and as such, equal access to enrollment and voting at elections. In this context, the Electoral commission of New Zealand provides efficient and effective electoral assistance in terms of enrollment and voting to persons with disabilities, aboriginals, other categories requiring voter assistance besides women. The initiatives of EC NZ are supported by the provisions of the Elections Act 1993 and the rules made under this Act.

ACCESS 2020 DISABILITY STRATEGY

EC NZ has developed Access 2020 strategy taking into account the improvements made during last three elections and integrating them into a long time framework. Through this process, the Commission aims to identify and remove the barriers that the PwD's face at the time of enrollment and exercising their right to vote. The focus of the disability strategy of EC NZ is to support persons with disabilities and their families 'whanau and caregivers' for participation in electoral process.

INITIATIVES OF EC NZ

EC NZ continued all of its initiatives from the 2011 general election through 2014. Main initiatives include the following:

- information in accessible formats including Braille, large-print, audio format and screen reader files
- information and consultation opportunities in New Zealand Sign Language
- DVD resource kits and facilitation guides for voters with an intellectual disability
- Plain English resources including posters, booklets and DVDs

SPECIAL VOTERS

Special Voters Defined under the Law
As provided under the electoral legislation of New Zealand, a person who is otherwise qualified to vote may vote as a special voter under inter alia the following conditions:

- a person intends to be absent or is actually absent from the district on the day of polling;
- a person who intends to be outside or is

actually outside New Zealand on the polling day;
- a person is unable to attend to vote at any polling place in the district by reason of illness, infirmity, pregnancy, or recent childbirth;
- a person is unable to vote on the polling day by reason of a religious objection;
- a person satisfies the Returning Officer or the issuing officer that on any other ground it will not be practicable for him to vote at a polling place in the district without incurring hardship or serious inconvenience.

Special vote can be cast only as per prescribed procedure under the law.

Blind, Disabled or Illiterate Voters
An elector who is wholly or partially blind or whether because of physical handicap or otherwise, unable to write or has severe difficulty in reading or writing, or is not sufficiently familiar with the English language to vote without assistance, can vote as per prescribed procedure under the Election laws of New Zealand. The law elaborates the procedure as well as the nature of assistance that may be provided to such voters.

Provision of Telephone Dictation to Blind Voters
EC NZ delivered telephone dictation voting to voters who are blind or visually impaired or have another disability with the result that they are unable to vote independently and in secret at the 2014 General Election.

Enrolling and Voting in Sign Language
The election resources of EC NZ provide information and guidance for enrolling and voting in New Zealand sign language for voters who require this assistance.

Hospital Votes
The electoral regulations define 'Hospital Votes' and provide for electoral assistance to a person who is a patient in any hospital, maternity home etc. Such persons have to apply for a special vote and the assistance is provided as per prescribed procedure to such applicants.

'YOUR VOICE, YOUR CHOICE: VOTES FOR WOMEN'

The programme has been discussed under session 1 as a part of school educational resources of the EC NZ. Here the emphasis lies on the inclusion of women voters in its evolutionary and historical perspective as a major achievement in New Zealand

On 19 September 1893, after a long campaign led by Kate Sheppard and others, changes to the Electoral Act were signed into law and New Zealand became the first country in the world where all adults, including wom-

en, had the right to vote in parliamentary elections.

The Your Voice, Your Choice: Votes for Women teaching resource provides a range of activities designed to develop students' understanding of the suffragists' achievement 120 years ago and to encourage voter participation today. The focus of the resource is on the right to participate and engage in the democratic process.

Votes for Women are aligned with the values and key competencies of The New Zealand Curriculum. The resource is aimed at level 4 of the curriculum. However, the schools are encouraged to adapt the activities to meet the specific needs and experiences of your students.

Votes for Women is designed as a stand-alone resource, but it can also sit alongside EC NZ educational resource Your Voice, Your Choice teaching units.

'MAURI' VOTERS

Mauri voter means a person of the Mauri race of New Zealand. Mauri electoral districts are constituted under the election laws of New Zealand. New Zealand election laws protect the electoral rights of such voters. Voter information and voter education including school resources is provided in their respective language to facilitate voter enrollment and exercise of voting rights of these people.

(Details of the Access 2020 disability strategy and other disability resources of the Electoral Commission, New Zealand can be accessed at its website for voter information, awareness and educative purposes.)

2.12
PARAGUAY: VOTER EDUCATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Paraguay has total Population of 6.8 million of which, population with a disability is estimated at 1million (as per World Health Organization's 15% estimate). Paraguay ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 03 September 2008 and as such recognizes equal access to the persons with a disability for electoral process including voting rights.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES

The Supreme Tribunal of Electoral Justice (STEJ) has done

pioneering work for voter education for PwD's. In this endeavor the STEJ has taken several initiatives in collaboration with civic society organizations. Some of these are listed as below:

VE for PwD's through Posters

In 2015, with assistance from Fundación Saraki and the United States Agency for International Development, the produced a large poster to explain the different types of election accommodations available for people with visual, hearing, intellectual, physical and psychosocial disabilities. During the municipal elections in November 2015, STEJ also produced and distributed posters with large photos and clear instructions to assist/ support all voters, including those with disabilities, in understanding the voting process on Election day.

VE Accessible Voting Guide

In 2015, Fundación Saraki, a Paraguay organization dedicated to supporting the rights of persons with disabilities and their access to elections produced 'The Accessible Voting Guide', which carries a message "a disability doesn't take away the right to vote" on the cover, explains step-by-step instructions to vote, as well as recommendations to make voting processes more accessible to persons with disabilities. This voter education guide educates and informed persons with disabilities of the regulations in Paraguay that support voters with disabilities. (Details may be seen at http://www.saraki.org/)

VE Brochures

Fundación Saraki, a Paraguayan organization dedicated to supporting rights of persons with disabilities, produced a number of brochures on access to elections. The brochures aim at providing learning information on assistive devices for PwD's. This resource also elaborates description for the process of voting at home, including who is eligible to do so. (Details may be seen at http://www.saraki.org/)

Learning about Assistive Voting Devices

During municipal elections held in Paraguay in November 2015, STEJ provided the polling places with a poster that described different accessibility resources available for persons with disabilities. It included a magnifying glass for voters with low vision, a Braille template and instructions for using it in Braille, a pencil grip for voters with reduced mobility in their hands, instructions with graphics and in sign language for voters who were Deaf or hard-of-hearing, as well as priority waiting for pregnant women, nursing mothers and older adults.

2.13
USA: INCLUSIVE ELECTORAL LITERACY

INTRODUCTION

The rights of the voters with disabilities and other marginalized sections are duly protected under the Legal provisions of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Electoral Assistance Commissions has taken several initiatives in the light of said legal provisions to provide equal opportunity to the voters with disabilities and the voters from the marginalized sections in the matters of awareness, voter education and their due engagement in the electoral process.

EAC VOTER RESOURCES

One of EAC's primary mandates under the Help America Vote Act is to serve as a central resource for information about elections. Through EAC's national clearinghouse, the public including persons with disabilities, persons from marginalized sections, can conveniently access information on registering to vote and serving as a poll worker along with studies on how, where and when to vote and all issues related to electoral process. The information can be accessed at EAC website in its resource library. EAC maintains the National Mail Voter Registration Form (in seven languages), which can be used in any state to register to vote and update their registration information.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS UNDER HAVA AND ADA

Section 241 of HAVA provides that the EAC shall, inter alia, conduct studies on studies on election administration issues to the 'Methods of ensuring the accessibility of voting, registration, polling places, and voting equipment to all voters, including individuals with disabilities (including the blind and visually impaired), Native American or Alaska Native citizens, and voters with limited proficiency in the English language.' The studies are made available to the public and are aimed at promoting effective administration of federal elections. The studies are used to develop a framework most convenient, accessible, and easy to use for voters, including members of the uniformed services and overseas voters, individuals with disabilities, including the blind and visually impaired, and voters with limited proficiency in the English language; will be non-discriminatory and afford voters an equal opportunity to vote. The legislative provisions, studies and the framework referred to above also include 'Methods of educating voters about the process of registering to vote and voting, the

operation of voting mechanisms, the location of polling places, and all other aspects of participating in elections.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Help America Vote Act (HAVA) require that all Americans have the same opportunity to participate in the voting process, privately and independently.

Thus law provides equal opportunity to the voters with disabilities besides the voters from the marginalized sections.

VOLUNTARY GUIDANCE ON VOTER EDUCATION FOR ELECTORAL PROCESS

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission, in view of the mandate under Section311 of HAVA, has developed and adopted a series of voluntary guidelines for voter education and election management in collaboration with local election officials and consultative process envisaged under Section 311of HAVA. These guidelines provide valuable guidance on best practices in strengthening the voter education programmes besides managing efficient and effective elections.

Voter education as such, has a significant impact on voter turnout. Well planned and well designed programmes do motivate and encourage electorate to participate in the electoral process in an enlightened manner and in larger numbers.EAC provides specially designed cards for persons with disabilities for easy guidance (See Supplement: USA: Voters with disability)

EAC'S 'A VOTER'S GUIDE TO FEDERAL ELECTIONS'

Voter Guides are highly informative and simple to read and cover all aspects of electoral process and available on EAC website. The guide is intended to help voters including those with disabilities or besides those from marginalized section to successfully navigate the Federal election process in a holistic manner from registering to vote through casting a ballot on Election Day. In addition to providing the basics of casting a ballot, this guide includes information on voter eligibility, early voting, alternative registration and voting processes for uniformed and overseas citizens, and polling place accommodation .The voter guide is available in eleven languages: Cherokee, Chinese, Dakota, English, Japanese, Korean, Navajo, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Yupik so as to maximize the voter coverage from all sections of the society.. The Guides provide relevant links for helpful resources to voters on all matters relating to election

process.. EAC Voter Guides are made available in the Election Resource Library of the EAC on its website.

➜ Did You Know...?

Some States offer "curbside voting" for voters who are not able to easily leave their cars. During curbside voting, a poll worker brings all voting materials, including a ballot, to the voter's car. Check with your State or local election office to see if curbside voting is available in your jurisdiction and for information about who qualifies to use the program.

ACCESSIBLE VOTING TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

The EAC's Accessible Voting Technology Initiative (AVTI) supports accessibility research on transformative technologies and approaches. Through the AVTI, the EAC has produced over 45 solutions for assisting voters with disabilities. The initiatives include the EAC's Military Heroes grant to provide assistance needed for recently injured military personnel to participate in elections.

Resources for Voters with Disabilities

This comprehensive list of resources for voters with disabilities includes links to voting accessibility laws and regulations and the latest best practices and research pertaining to voters with disabilities and elderly voters:

EAC's ' 6 Tips for Making Voting Accessible'

The EAC has collaborated with local election officials to develop a series of helpful tips for voter education and election management. This series provides ideas and suggests best practices to help run efficient and effective elections. (See Supplement)

EAC's '10 Tips for Voters with Disabilities'

Before you vote in the next election, know the voting process in your State. The following tips from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission examine the options available to help voters with disabilities vote privately and independently.

These tips and examples can help to make voting accessible to everyone including inter alia the voters with a disability.(See Supplement)

VOTING ACCESSIBILITY

EAC Commemorates the 25th Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by hearing 'How to Make Voting More Accessible for Individuals with Disabilities' The event was intended to explore ways to make voting more

accessible for individuals with disabilities. Commissioners heard testimony from accessibility advocates, experts, and individuals with disabilities regarding the progress made to ensure HAVA's requirement that individuals with disabilities be given the same opportunity to vote freely and independently as other voters

Accessible Voting Technology Initiative
The EAC's Accessible Voting Technology Initiative (AVTI) supports accessibility research on transformative technologies and approaches. Through the AVTI, the EAC has produced over 45 solutions for assisting voters with disabilities. The initiatives include the EAC's Military Heroes grant to provide assistance needed for recently injured military personnel to participate in elections.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-PARTISANS

HAVA provides for partnerships with non-partisans for electoral assistance to PwD's and marginalized sections of society. There are a large number of non-partisans working in US. LWV is one of such initiatives and the write up on LWV is provided separately.

Supplement: USA: Federal Voting Rights
Supplement: USA: Making Voting Accessible

Supplement: USA: Voters with disabilities

YOUR FEDERAL VOTING RIGHTS

As a Voter with a Disability, you have the right to:

- **Vote privately and independently**
- **Have an accessible polling place** with voting machines for voters with disabilities

you may either:

1. **Seek assistance from workers** at the polling place who have been trained to use the accessible voting machine, or
2. **Bring someone to help you vote**

You may request your **local election officials** to tell you about any **voting aids, voting assistance,** and **absentee ballot procedures** that are available.

Ensure your right to accessible elections
For more information, contact the
U.S. Election Assistance Commission
By phone at 866-747-1471
By email at beready16@eac.gov

6 Tips for Making Voting Accessible

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission has collaborated with local election officials to develop a series of helpful tips for election management. This series provides ideas and suggests best practices to help you run efficient and effective elections.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Help America Vote Act (HAVA) require that all Americans have the same opportunity to participate in the voting process, privately and independently. These tips and examples can help you make voting accessible to everyone in your jurisdiction.

★★★

1 Know the challenge

A disability is a condition (such as an illness or an injury) that damages or limits a person's physical or mental abilities.

Many disabilities are visible, but many others are not.

- From 1998 to 2008, the number of elderly voters doubled.

- 37.6 million adults have trouble hearing. 20.6 million have trouble seeing. 17.2 million have trouble walking. 75.4 million have trouble with at least one basic action.

On a given day in 2012, 273,200 people were enrolled in adult day services centers, 1,383,700 lived in nursing homes, and 713,300 lived in residential care communities.

QUICK CLICK

U.S. Department of Justice on disability rights:
http://www.ada.gov/ada_voting/ada_voting_ta.htm

REMEMBER

Voters with disabilities use smart phones. Develop a communication plan that incorporates online and mobile outreach.

2 Improve outreach

Make sure outreach activities reach all voters, including those with disabilities.

Form a committee of full-time and part-time staff and poll workers. Identify the various types of disabilities. Develop solutions for voters with different types of disabilities. Review every step in the voting process. Critique your current practices.

- Partner with local organizations that serve people with disabilities. Get their help distributing material and collecting feedback.

- Establish a task force of election officials throughout your State. Develop a statewide outreach program to voters with disabilities. Share the program with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

- Register voters and provide election day services at assisted-living and long-term care facilities.

- Post YouTube videos, including in American Sign Language, on how to cast a ballot and use voting equipment. Use Facebook and Twitter to promote your site. Link to online voter registration, the sample ballot, and accessible polling locations.

- On your Web site, tell voters how to request election material in alternative formats, and ask voters with disabilities to notify your office about their election day needs.

- Use plain language in all outreach materials.

6 Tips for Making Voting Accessible

★★

Tip 2 continued

Quick Clicks

Accessibility outreach best practices:

www.plainlanguage.gov

http://www.electioncenter.org/ publications/2014PPP/Kitsap_Co,_ WA_-_Kitsap_Co_Accessible_ Voting.pdf

http://www.electioncenter. org/publications/2014PPP/ Cuyahoga_Co_OH_-_Community_ Partnership.pdf

http://www.electioncenter.org/ publications/2013PPP/Indian%20 River%20Co.%20Ride%20 and%20Register.pdf

http://www.electioncenter.org/ publications/2015PPP/San_ Berdino_Co_CA_MEGateway.pdf

https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=VM24m2n6gw8

http://www.electioncenter.org/ publications/2013PPP/Los%20 Angeles%20Co.%20Mobile%20 Outreach.pdf

http://www.stlelections. com/?page_id=1515

http://civicdesigning.org/ fieldguides/

③ Have an accessibility strategy

Make accessibility a key component of your office's strategy for managing the voting process.

■ The voting process begins with the design of the ballot. Use common, easy-to-understand words. Avoid technical or specialized language. State law may govern the type and size of fonts and mandated voter instructions.

■ Strategically locate early voting and vote center locations to be easily accessible to public transportation. If possible, use the same locations on election day.

■ Ask area organizations that serve people with disabilities to identify accessible buildings or conduct accessibility surveys of possible polling locations.

■ Give poll workers a diagram of the interior and exterior setup requirements for each polling place. Include placement of signage required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Post interior and exterior accessible voting diagrams on your office's site.

■ Post YouTube videos on how to vote on accessible voting equipment. Require poll workers to view the videos so they can assist voters on election day.

■ Post information at the entrance to each polling place that informs voters with disabilities about their right to vote independently and in private. Encourage voters with disabilities to ask for assistance if needed.

■ Train greeters at the entrance to each polling place to provide assistance to voters with disabilities.

■ Include specialized training on accessibility needs as a part of the Supervisor training program.

■ Make sure chairs are available at each polling place for voters who are unable to stand for long periods of time.

REMEMBER

In many States, election laws allow a voter with a disability to request a family member or friend to assist them while voting. Many States also stipulate that two poll workers, of opposite party affiliation, may provide assistance, upon request.

■ Use visual aids. They are easier to understand than posters filled with written instructions.

■ Invest in technology to track lines at voting locations. Use smart phone applications to inform voters with disabilities of peak voting time periods.

REMEMBER

Voters with hearing and visual disabilities often use a smart phone to read the ballot via a sign language or screen reader application.

Quick Clicks

Accessibility strategy best practices:

http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/ Page/EAC_Effective_Election_ Design.pdf

http://www.electioncenter.org/ publications/2015PPP/Franklin_ Co_OH-ADA_survey.pdf

http://www.electioncenter.org/ publications/2012%20PPP/ Wisconsin%20State%20Re-Booting%20Accessibility%20 Compliance.pdf

http://www.ada.gov/votingck.htm

http://www.ada.gov/ada_voting/ voting_solutions_ta/polling_place_ solutions.htm

https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=djWy_xGbo8Q

http://www.electioncenter. org/publications/2015PPP/ Fairfax_County_VA-Braille_Voting_ Instructions.pdf

http://www.electioncenter.org/ publications/2009%20Papers/ Forsyth%20County%20GA-Early%20Voting%20Wait%20 Time%20Dashboard.pdf

http://www.votetravis.com/ lookup/display.do

★★

4 Recruit and train poll workers with disabilities

The election day poll worker team should reflect the community it serves, including its accessibility needs.

- Understand the disabilities of your poll workers and deploy tools to make their work environment accessible on election day.

- Reach out to high school and college students to build a diverse team of workers on election day.

- Recruit poll workers from local groups that serve people with disabilities. Incorporate You-Tube videos.

- Recruit poll workers with specific language skills from area residential neighborhood meetings.

REMEMBER

Poll workers also have accessibility needs. Get their feedback on how to make the voting process more accessible.

- Consider providing inexpensive assistive listening devices for poll workers who need them.

- Make training manuals easy to follow. Incorporate visual aids and checklists.

- Emphasize accessibility features during hands-on training on all voting equipment and electronic poll books.

- Incorporate scripted voter scenarios in training sessions. Include several accessibility scenarios. Encourage poll workers to practice providing assistance as they would on election day.

- Develop a training module devoted to accessibility. Include setting up the polling place, managing lines, providing assistance to voters, using ballot marking devices, and setting up and using the voting equipment accessibility features.

- Print a reminder card for poll workers about accessibility. Encourage poll workers to use it on election day.

Quick Clicks

How to be a poll worker video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJrSEnNw7J4

Suggested practices to improve the accessible voting experience:
http://pacast.com/players/cmsplayer.asp?video_filename=8747_State_ElectionDisability.m4v

http://www.electioncenter.org/publications/2015PPP/Franklin_Co_OH_Practice_Makes_Perfect.pdf

https://www.supportthevoter.gov/files/2013/12/Paraquad_Ten-Tips-to-Improve-Accessible-Voting.pdf

Sample election day picture guide for poll workers:
https://www.supportthevoter.gov/files/2013/12/Election-Day-Picture-Guide-sample.pdf

5 Use technology

Stay informed about innovations that provide better accessibility to voters with disabilities.

- Have your information technology department and Web site developers test to verify that your Web site is accessible.

REMEMBER

Include a phone number and e-mail address under "Contact Information" on your Web site.

- Seek an outside review to ensure your Web site meets accessibility laws and requirements. Common problem areas are screen reader access, semantic organization, skip navigation, keyboard access, contrast, text sizing and scaling, and tab order.

- Ask local organizations that serve people with disabilities to review your Web site's usability and accessibility features.

- Research how handheld mobile devices provide accessibility for voters with disabilities.

Quick Clicks:

Trends in online voter registration:
http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2015/05/online-voter-registration

Accessible Web site guidelines:
http://trace.wisc.edu/world/web/

Creating accessible Web sites:
https://www.forsmarshgroup.com/featured/usability/user%20experience/voting/evaluation/2015/08/14/Making-Websites-Work-For-All-Usability-and-Accessibility/

6 Tips for Making Voting Accessible

★★

6 Look to the future

Keep current on new solutions for making the voting process more accessible for voters.

- Use handheld and mobile technology to invent new ways to connect with and serve the community of voters with disabilities.

- Through collaboration between the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Center for Civic Design, experts have developed a roadmap for improving the usability and accessibility of the next generation of elections.

- The Center for Civic Design has designed a digital ballot for people with low literacy and mild cognitive disabilities.

- Funding through the U.S. Election Assistance Commission Accessibility Grant program has provided more than 45 research and development voting solutions.

Quick clicks

Exciting recent voting innovations:

http://civicdesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Roadmap-V2-15-0715.pdf

http://civicdesigning.org/featured-story/making-voting-accessible-designing-digital-ballot-marking-for-people-with-low-literacy-and-mild-cognitive-disabilities/

http://www.eac.gov/payments_and_grants/accessible_voting_technology_initiative.aspx

http://www.electioncenter.org/publications/2015PPP/Denver_CO-eSign.pdf

http://www.electioncenter.org/publications/2013PPP/Denver%20Co.%20%20iAPP%20Accessibility.pdf

10 Tips for Voters With Disabilities

Before you vote in the next election, know the voting process in your State. The following tips from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission examine the options available to help voters with disabilities vote privately and independently.

★★★

1 Learn more about voting

Call, visit, or e-mail your State or local elections office well in advance of election day. Visit the elections office's Web site for more information about accessible voting. Links to State elections offices are available at http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/contact_your_state.aspx.

Familiarize yourself with:

- The voting laws in your State.
- Voter registration deadlines.
- Other deadlines, such as for early voting and absentee ballot requests.
- The ballot.
- The accessible voting machine.
- Alternative voting options, such as having someone accompany you to the polling place.
- The accessibility of the polling place.
- The candidates.
- Ballot propositions.

2 Register to vote

Your local elections office can help you register and answer any questions you may have. Be aware of registration deadlines.

Contact your local office well before election day. Many States now offer online voter registration on their Web sites. After you register, double-check the accuracy of your registration, such as your address and party affiliation. Links to State elections offices and online voter registration are available at http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/contact_your_state.aspx.

3 Choose the right voting method for you

There are several voting options available:

You can vote at your designated local polling place on election day. Many states also offer early voting, before election day, or absentee voting, so you can receive and return your absentee ballot through the mail. Some States offer permanent absentee voting. If you encounter a registration issue on election day, Federal law allows you to vote with a provisional ballot and vote the ballot independently.

4 Communicate your needs in advance

Identifying your needs may help you and your elections office.

Consider contacting your local elections office about voting options for voters with disabilities. The election office can provide information about accessible machines and other voting methods. On election day, alert poll workers about your accessibility needs.

5 Check the location and accessibility of your polling place

Your State or local elections office can tell you the location of your polling place. It will also have information about polling place accessibility. Inquire about the location's accessible voting equipment. Remember, planning ahead will help you identify possible transportation, parking, and other accessibility needs.

Quick Clicks

An example of a voting location locator tool:

http://www.votespa.com/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=1174087&parentname=ObjMgr&parentid=4&mode=2

6 Know your rights

Under The Help America Vote Act, you have the right to vote privately and independently. The Americans with Disabilities Act has been interpreted as setting the tone for polling place and ballot access in certain situations. Consider reaching out to organizations that support voters with disabilities. Several online resources provided by organizations for people with disabilities exist to assist voters with disabilities. Accessibility resources from EAC are available at http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/resources_for_voters_with_disabilities.aspx.

7 Follow up with the elections office after you vote

Election officials want to hear about your experience with accessible voting. After election day, tell your elections office about your experience voting, whether it was positive or in need of improvement. Many elections offices have committees for voters with disabilities. Consider getting involved.

8 Know who can help if voting is not accessible

Contact your State or local elections office with your specific concerns. You can also contact the Department of Justice Voting Rights Division at http://www.justice.gov/crt/complaint/votintake/index.php.

Also consider speaking with organizations that support people with disabilities.

9 Stay informed

After you vote, sign up for e-ma and text alerts to stay connecte with your local elections office. Consider getting involved direct Join a community engagement committee for voters with disal ities or offer your assistance as poll worker.

10 Get more information

Your local elections office migh be able to connect you with orga izations in your area that suppo people with disabilities. These groups often provide transporta tion to the polls and help identif the accessibility of polling place Internet resources exist to help voters with disabilities find ballc and candidate information. Your local library, newspapers, and other news outlets will also hav information about election day.

SUPPLEMENT: LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The **League of Women Voters (LWV)** is a non-partisan American civic organization formed to help women take a larger role in public affairs as they won the right to vote. It was founded in 1920 by Carrie Chapman Catt during the last meeting of the National American Women Suffrage Association approximately six months before the Nineteen Amendment to the US Constitution gave women the right to vote. It began as a "mighty political experiment" aimed to help newly enfranchised women exercise their responsibilities as voters. Originally, only women could join the league; but in 1973 the charter was modified to include men. LWV operates at the local, state, and national level, with over 1,000 local and 50 state leagues.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

The key aims and objects include educating and engaging Voters. Voting is the most powerful way to have a citizen's voice heard, and it is the core of the democracy. It is a citizen's chance to stand up for what matters most to him and have an impact on the issues that affect them, communities and their future. The League works all year, every year, to empower all eligible voters to participate in the political system.

INCLUSION IN VOTER ENGAGEMENT: KEY OBJECTIVE

LWV's work especially seeks to aid those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved communities, including first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, minorities, and low-income Americans. Hundreds of local volunteer teams work year-round to register, inform and mobilize hundreds of thousands of voters in the lead-up to Election Day. The League also serves millions of voters through its technology driven online service VOTE411.org, as its one-stop elections information hub.

Educating Voters

Educated and informed voters are the key to democracy. Salient features of LWV's voter education programme are:

- LWV works to educate voters about candidates in thousands of federal, state and local elections each year.
- They distribute millions of educational materials about state and local elections rules.
- In an effort to foster civic engagement and provide needed information to voters, League members host hundreds of candidate debates and forums across the country each year and provide straightforward information on candidates and ballot issues.
- Through both print and online resources, including VOTE411.org, they equip millions of voters with essential information about the election process in each state, including polling place hours and locations, ballot information, early or absentee voting rules, voter registration deadlines, ID requirements and more.

Mobilizing voters

In addition to registering and educating voters, the League is committed to mobilizing voters year-round, each and every year, including for local and off-year elections. Through direct outreach, local activities and working with the media across all 50 states, LWV provides accurate and timely information to enable all eligible voters to vote.

Registering Voters

League volunteers hold thousands of voter registration drives across the country each year and actively encourage all citizens to vote. LWV focuses their registration drives at locations that reach large numbers of unregistered voters, including high schools and community colleges, sporting events, naturalization ceremonies and more. They also register thousands of voters through our online registration tool at VOTE411.org.

Partnership with National Voter Registration Day

Since 2012, the League has been the single-largest on-the-ground partner of National Voter Registration Day (NVRD)

Online IT Application for Voter Engagement

VOTE411.org

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a «one-stop-shop» for all election related information including:

- State-by-state voting and registration information, with requirements & deadlines,
- Online registration tool,
- Polling place finder,
- Candidate and ballot information,

- Absentee ballot information
- Ballot measure information (where applicable)
- Early voting options (where applicable)
- Election dates
- Factual data on candidates in various federal, state and local races
- General info on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye
- ID requirements
- Polling place locations
- Registration deadlines
- Voter qualifications
- Voter registration forms
- Voting machines

Online Strategies

LWV operates its online strategies through tools such as Facebook, RSS, Twitter, Linkedin and You Tube. It engages the voters through its web based operations to Find a Local League or Contact the Elected Officials

Media Strategies

LWV operates its media strategies through regular press releases, media library, speeches and testimony, news clips and its blog namely Voice of League.

League Management

WVL manages its activities through Online Discussion Groups, Convention/ Council, Voter Service, Member/ Leader Development and The programme 'Manage Your League'. It has well defined guidelines for Branding and Logo to facilitate partnerships.

(Source: 2011 League of Women Voters. 1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036-4508. This web site is shared by League of Women Voters of the United States and League of Women Voters Education Fund.)

2.14
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

ISSUES

- Do the barriers continue to exist despite considerable efforts?
- Nature of existing barriers to inclusion.
- Whether any survey, feedback and analysis have been carried out on impact of VE initiatives on inclusive participation.
- Efficacy and efficiency of VE for dissemination of informationon inclusive electoral participation.
- Participation, electoral engagement for female

youth voters.

- Inclusive participation by marginalized sections, women voters, gender sensitization through voter education.
- Monitoring and assessment of impact of voter education for facilitating inclusive participation:
- Lack of informational and orientation material for people with visual and auditory disabilities, barrier to access polling stations and centers (ex: polling stations located on second and third floors, stairs, and/or lack of ramps);
- Motivation levels of people with disabilities to work in the electoral process (polling stations and centers) in an official manner or to represent political parties;
- By other people telling them who to vote for, people with intellectual disabilities are often used as a means to obtain an additional vote, rather than enabling them to exercising their right to vote and dignified participation;
- The sign language in citizen's information and orientation media programmes;
- While assisted voting might be included in the electoral law, there is still unawareness of this right for people with disabilities, their families and polling station workers;
- Lack of knowledge of auxiliary templates for people who are blind or with low vision, as well as family members and polling station workers; and
- Removing Barriers to political Participation of Disadvantaged Groups
- To empower women candidates through training and motivate women voters to go and vote;
- Inform ethnic minority voters, who lack knowledge of national or the main language, and need to be oriented in their native language;
- reduce impediments for the voters with various forms of disabilities who have special needs in order to enjoy their right to vote;

CHALLENGES

- Enhance motivation levels of people with disabilities to work in the electoral process (working in polling stations and centers) in an official manner or to represent political parties;
- Support to inclusive participation through appropriate legislations in terms of UN mandate.

VE Post Conflict Countries

In post-conflict countries, voter and civic education may be especially important because electoral processes may be new or unfamiliar to many voters. As post-conflict coun-

tries are societies in transition, they provide an significant opportunity to educate citizens on the equality of women and men, the importance of including women in all aspects of the political process, and the crucial contribution women can make to building democracy and peace.

VE for Women Voters

Voter education should specifically target women besides men. It should make clear that suffrage is universal and should help create a culture in which women are encouraged to participate and are welcomed into the electoral process. In some countries it is particularly important to launch special educational campaigns aimed at women, highlighting the fact that they have the right to vote. It is often appropriate to develop special messages for women voters and to take generational issues into account when doing so. Workshops with special focus on educating women as voters may be organized. Arranging childcare so women can attend these sessions may help ensure their success.

VE: Family Voting

A particular issue that often affects women and requires attention in voter education efforts is the confidentiality of the vote. According to UN standards and international human rights conventions, each ballot must be secret and independent. Most national laws also have provisions to this effect, but such provisions are not always enforced. Men and women must both understand that "family voting", a practice in which one family member casts ballots on behalf of the entire family, or in which a husband and wife enter the voting booth together, is not an acceptable practice in democratic elections.

'Unity in diversity', next-gen voters herald a silent revolution, Puducherry, India 2016

ENHANCEMENT OF PARTICIPATION BY SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF VOTERS: Outreach for defence personnel, diplomatic mission personnel and overseas citizens

NO VOTER TO BE
LEFT BEHIND

SECTION 3

3.01
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

As per the normal procedure electors go to their respective polling stations and exercise their right to franchise through a ballot paper or other means such as an electronic voting machine. However, it may not be possible for some electors to be physically present at the polling station on the date and time fixed for the purpose because of reasons such as a physical disability, illness, absence on account of business or official duty elsewhere in the country or abroad etc.

These electors may be broadly covered under the following categories as per the ACE Project framework:

- election staff
- voters abroad
- absentee voters
- refugees and internally displaced persons
- nomads and migrants
- voters in remote areas
- minorities
- disabled people
- home and hospital bound voters
- traditional prisoners
- political prisoners
- security forces
- women
- young and first time voters

Some of the categories mentioned above appear to have been covered under Section 2 also. However, in this section the coverage relates to the situations when such voter is unable to go to the polling station and special arrangements are made for him for absentee vote. The categorization mentioned above may vary from country to country and there may be other groups requiring special attention depending upon the special needs recognition and the extant legislative regimes in different countries. The electoral rights of persons falling in such groups, as long as they qualify to be electors under the law, remain intact and the EMB's provide appropriate facilities for exercise of electoral rights by such electors for demonstrating superior degree of democratic inclusion.

Voter education needs for such voter groups have to be tailored according to the facilities provided by the respective EMB's to maximize the voter turnout in this segment. At this juncture, it may be mentioned that some of the categories of electors mentioned above have already been discussed in preceding sessions, the discussion in this session is intended to focus on defense personnel, diplomatic mission personnel, polling personnel and overseas electors.

This section visits the experience of different countries in addressing voter education to the special categories of voters mentioned in the foregoing discussion. With this background, analysis of the voter education in Australia, Canada, Kenya, India, New Zealand and US has been provided to facilitate interaction.

3.02
AUSTRALIA: FACILITIES FOR VOTING BY SPECIAL BALLOT

Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) provides for voting in the following ways besides the normal voting (ordinary vote) at a polling station:

- **Absent Vote** - An absent vote is a vote cast by an elector out of their home division but still within their home state or territory on the Election Day.
- **Early Vote** - An elector may vote early in person or by post if on the Election Day he is:
  - Outside the electorate where he is enrolled to vote.
  - More than 8 km away from a polling station.
  - Travelling.
  - Unable to leave his workplace to vote.
  - Seriously ill or due to give birth shortly.
  - A patient in hospital and cannot vote from there.
  - Having religious beliefs that prevent him from attending a polling place.
  - A silent elector.
  - Has reasonable fear for his safety.
- **Early vote in person** - An elector may vote at an early voting center or any AEC divisional office in the weeks leading to election.
- **Early Vote by Post** - An elector may apply for a postal vote online or fill up a postal application form, after an election is announced.
- **Interstate vote on Election Day** - An elector, who is not in his home state on the Election Day, may cast his vote at an interstate voting center.
- **Overseas** - For federal elections, electors who are overseas can vote in person at an overseas voting centre (most Australian embassies or missions) or by post.

Mobile polling

AEC mobile polling teams visit many electors who are not able to get to a polling place. Mobile polling facilities are set up in some hospitals, nursing homes, prisons and remote areas of Australia. Mobile polling is carried out prior to Election Day and on Election Day.

For instance, voters who are blind or have low vision have the options of:
- Casting a vote over the telephone from any location
- Casting a vote with assistance at any polling place or by post.

VOTER INFORMATION/ VOTER EDUCATION

AEC's Guidance for Voter Information

The AEC provides stepwise guidelines on entire voting process through its website link:http://www.aec.gov.au/voting/ways_to_vote/for comprehensive information, educating and guiding the concerned categories of voters. Background Resources, FAQ's at AEC link referred to above clarify all guidelines, instructions and doubts of the voters.AEC also provides on its website email address, helpline numbers including global helpline numbers for online enrollment and assisting the vote process.

AEC Guide: 'How to Vote by Mail'

AEC's voter education Easy English Guide 'How to Vote by Mail' provides holistic and step-wise guidance to mail voters in simple and lucid manner with well done up illustrations and pictures. A voter has to apply for a postal vote by filling up a form. This application can be filled up online or an application on paper can be sent to the designated office for further processing. The entire sequence of steps leading to successful mail voting besides practice on voting is explained in the guide to help a voter. The guide 'How to Vote by Mail' explains the process in the form of simple user friendly questions and answers. Details of the guide may accessed at the link: http://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Publications/easy-english/files/vote-mail-easy-eng.pdf

Overseas Voters: Comprehensive AEC information and Guidance.

AEC website provides complete guidance to all categories of overseas voters on enrollment, vote process in a stepwise manner. The overseas voters may fall under the following categorizations of AEC-

Going overseas for a short period: An elector can enroll and vote if he is going overseas for a short period of time and plans to return to his place in Australia. He has to fill up an online overseas notification form if already enrolled. If not already enrolled, and the elector ids already abroad, a voter is advised to fill up 'Enroll to vote for federal elections from outside Australia. The AEC online guidance 'how to vote while overseas' provides detailed information and guidance.

Electors Living or Working Overseas:

- If a person is **already enrolled**, he can register as an overseas elector in case the person is intending to return to Australia within six years. Such an elector can apply up to

three months before or within three years after such a person leaves Australia. AEC while providing the above information on its website also facilitates online registration process. The application also provides an option to such an elector to become a general postal voter to receive a postal ballot on announcement of elections.

- If a person is **not enrolled** and has been overseas for less than three years, he is entitled to enroll provided he is an Australian citizen above 18 years or is intending to return to Australia within six years.A person cannot enroll for an overseas address; instead he must enroll in the respective electorate he is entitled to before leaving Australia. All the guidance and information has been provided on AEC website as also the facility for online registration besides the vote process in such cases.
- If a person who is registered as an overseas elector, his **children** can enroll and vote in federal elections if:
  - Never been enrolled, and
  - Are Australian citizens.
  - Are 18 years or older and had not turned 18 before leaving Australia.
  - Intend to return within 6 years of attaining the age of 18.

Online enrollment facilities are provided by AEC through filling up the requisite forms. Voting facilities are provided by AEC. Details may accessed at the link: http://www.aec.gov.au/Enrolling_to_vote/overseas/index.html

AEC website provides comprehensive guidance for electors. Guidance and Information on some of the relevant FAQ's is as below:

- *How can I find out when the next federal election is announced?*
  If you subscribe to the AEC mailing list you will receive an email to let you know when the next federal election or referendum is announced.
- *Can I check my enrolment online?*
  You can check your enrolment online to find out your current enrolment details and where you are enrolled to vote.
  To check which electorate you live in, see find my electorate where you can search by suburb or postcode.
  If you need more assistance please contact the AEC.
- *I will be unable to vote while I'm overseas, what do I do?*
  If you are unable to vote you can complete and submit an "Overseas notification form", providing you with the option to be removed from the electoral roll while you are overseas. If you choose to be removed from the electoral

roll, you will need to enroll again to be able to vote in any future federal elections.
Overseas forms:
- Registration as an overseas elector
- Enrol to vote for federal elections from outside Australia.
- Enrol to vote as the spouse, de facto partner or child of an overseas elector.
- Overseas notification form.

3.03
ELECTION CANADA: FACILITIES FOR VOTING BY SPECIAL BALLOT

Elections Canada Online provides well designed facilities for Voting by Special Ballot for voters falling in the following categories:

- Canadian electors temporarily away from their electoral districts during the election or referendum, whether in Canada or abroad
- Canadian electors in their electoral districts who cannot or do not wish to go to an ordinary or advance poll to vote
- Canadian citizens residing outside Canada
- Canadian Forces electors (including civilians employed as teachers or administrative support staff in Canadian Forces schools outside the country)
- Incarcerated electors

> "Voting by special ballot is governed by the Special Voting Rules"
> *- Part 11 of the Canada Elections Act*

VOTER INFORMATION/ VOTER EDUCATION

EC's Guidelines for Voter Information
Elections Canada Online provides stepwise guidelines on entire voting process through its website link http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=vot&dir for comprehensive information, educating and guiding the concerned voters. Background Resources, FAQ's at EC online link referred to above clarify all guidelines, instructions and doubts of the voters. EC also provides on its website email address, helpline numbers including global helpline

numbers, separate TTY number for deaf or persons with hearing impairment for assisting the vote process

Legislative Provisions: Special Voting Rules
This method of voting is governed by the Special Voting Rules (Under Part 11, Rules 177 to 281 of the Canada Elections Act).Any elector who cannot or does not wish to vote at a polling station during an election or referendum may vote using a special ballot. With a special ballot, an elector can vote by mail or in person at the office of any returning officer. If the elector is away from his electoral district, inside or outside Canada, he can also register to vote with Elections Canada in Ottawa. In all these cases, the elector must have a civic address for his or her place of ordinary residence in Canada, for electoral purposes. The elector's vote will be counted for that electoral district.A Special Voting Rules Administrator appointed by the Chief Electoral Officer oversees the administration of the Special Voting Rules.
General principles - To vote under the Special Voting Rules electors, other than Canadian Forces electors and incarcerated electors, must:

- Register to vote by special ballot no later than 6:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before polling day;
- In the case of an election, obtain the names of the candidates in his electoral district (in an election, the elector completes the special ballot by writing the name of the chosen candidate; in a referendum, each referendum question is printed on a separate ballot and the elector checks off "yes" or "no");
- In the case of an elector voting by special ballot outside the electoral district of his or her ordinary residence, ensure that the completed ballot arrives at Elections Canada in Ottawa no later than 6:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on polling day;
- In the case of an elector voting in his or her electoral district, ensure that the returning officer for that district receives the completed ballot before the close of the polls in the electoral district on polling day

Once an elector's application to vote by special ballot is approved, that is the only way can vote. The elector cannot vote at the ordinary or advance polls. The only exception is that Canadian Forces electors may choose to vote in person at a civilian polling station, if they are living in the same electoral district as the address shown on their Statement of Ordinary Residence. They can do so only if they have not already voted under the Special Voting Rules. For further details, consult the backgrounder Voting by Special Ballot for Canadian Forces Electors (EC 90550).

Elections Canada draws up the lists of electors registered to vote by special ballot in each electoral district, and sends them to the returning officers before the advance polls and again before polling day. These lists include the surname, given name, civic address and mailing

address of electors who have applied to vote by special ballot. The returning officers indicate on the list of electors that these electors have registered to vote by special ballot, to prevent them from voting twice.

An elector who votes under the Special Voting Rules uses a special ballot voting kit that includes:

- In the case of an election, a blank ballot on which the elector writes the name of the candidate of his choice; and in the case of a referendum, a ballot on which the referendum question is printed;
- An unmarked inner envelope;
- An outer envelope identifying the elector and his or her electoral district, and a declaration that the elector must sign and date, stating that his or her name is as shown on the envelope, and that he or she has not already voted and will not attempt to vote again in the current electoral event;
- A return envelope;
- An instruction flyer

An elector may vote only once at an election. The elector is only entitled to vote for a candidate running in his electoral district.

While the guiding principals have been discussed above, detailed guidelines are provided for each category of voters for follow up process for registration, manner of voting, procedure for counting and communication of the result (See EC Online link above).

Canadian Forces Electors
Canadian Forces electors are Canadians who will be 18 years of age or older on polling day and are members of the regular force of the Canadian Forces, or members of the reserve force of the Canadian Forces on full-time training or service or on active service, members of the special force of the Canadian Forces, or a person who is employed outside Canada by the Canadian Forces as a teacher in, or as a member of the administrative support staff for, a Canadian Forces school. They can vote by special ballot in any election or referendum in the electoral district in which the address on their Statement of Ordinary Residence is located.People living with members of the Canadian Forces outside Canada are not included in the category of Canadian Forces electors, but may vote as Canadians residing outside Canada.
Registration - The Department of National Defense maintains a permanent register of Canadian Forces electors. When a member enrolls, he completes a Statement of Ordinary Residence that determines the electoral district for which his vote will be counted.
Manner of voting - Canadian Forces electors vote by special ballot. During a general election or referendum, instructions for voting are posted at the polling station in each unit and a deputy returning officer is appointed to issue voting materials. Each polling station has a complete list of candidates.

To vote, the elector must first complete and sign the

declaration on the outer envelope that forms part of the voting kit. The declaration states that the elector's name is as shown on the envelope and that he has not already voted and will not attempt to vote again in the current electoral event. The elector completes the ballot by writing on it the name of one of the candidates in his or her electoral district. The elector inserts the ballot into the series of envelopes as per instructions provided.

The elector is responsible for ensuring that Elections Canada in Ottawa receives the ballot no later than the prescribed time. Electors may mail the ballots themselves or leave them with the deputy returning officer to forward by special arrangement. The ballot must be sent in the envelopes provided. A ballot received by fax cannot be counted.

Instead of voting by special ballot, a Canadian Forces elector who is residing in the electoral district of his address on his Statement of Ordinary Residence may vote at the civilian polling station in that electoral district, provided that he has not already voted in the electoral event and continues to reside in that electoral district until polling day.

3.04
KENYA: INITIATIVE ON DIASPORA VOTERS

The Constitution of Kenya stipulates legislation of a framework for the progressive registration of citizens residing outside Kenya, and the progressive realization of their right to vote (Article 82, section (1) subsection (e). In working to achieve this mandate, Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) is developing detailed regulations and procedures on Diaspora registration and voting and will submit the same to Parliament at least 6 months before the general elections as required by law.

The initiative involves a consultative process that needs the input from Kenyans in the Diaspora, Civil Society Organisations and consensus amongst political parties and consideration of international best practices.

Key considerations for the process includes: costs, the impact of Diaspora voting on domestic politics, logistics and other operational issues. Diaspora voting comes with administrative challenges such as security and transportation of electoral materials, voter education and training.

Some jurisdictions define the eligibility of the Diaspora voter by the number of years spent abroad besides the need to identify agents and observers.

3.05
INDIA: OUTREACH FOR SPECIAL CATEGORIES

Election staff on duty and service voters which includes defence personnel, Indian government officials posted outside the country, vote through Postal Ballots (PBs). Across the country this is has been a group with lowest voter turnout.

Election Staff

Election Commission laid special emphasis since 2012 on voting by government staff on election duty by giving them rigorous training and orientation on the utilization of the Postal Ballot. They also provided information to service voters on how to vote through Postal Ballot. Thus due to these concentrated efforts, the number of Postal Ballots received since the 2012 elections varied from 10 times to 30 times the previous election's return, in various states. The rate of rejection of Postal Ballots was earlier quite high due to errors in the filling of the ballot. Post special workshops the rate of rejection has been brought down to single digit in percentage terms in many states. While working on ensuring higher turnout of Service voters through Postal Ballots, Election Officesfocused not only on officers but also on drivers, cleaners and lower level staff. A new system was put in place to ensure that allowed physical casting of Postal Ballots to prevent any loss or delay of postal ballots in transit. It was ensured that the polling personnel and other electors engaged in election duty applied for Postal Ballot at one point and got it back at the same point, even though s/he may be a voter of an Assembly Constituency falling outside district/ Sub Division.

Defence Personnel

The electoral participation among defence personnel has traditionally been very low in India. There are many reasons for the same including frequent postings, lack of updated information about the posts of defence personnel, transit time for postal ballots and rejected postal ballots.
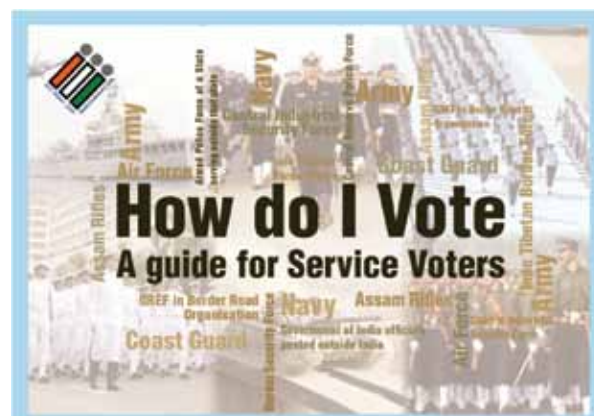
Defence personnel are also given the facility of proxy voting by which they can nominate any ordinary resident of the constituency in which the defence personnel is enrolled, as a proxy who can vote physically at the polling booth.

While for the first time special brochures were created specifically for defence personnel on the registration and voting process, various outreach drives were taken up ahead of national elections in 2014 publicising proxy votes and postal ballot facility for the defence personnel. That the defence personnel can enroll as a general voter at the place of posting if it is a peace posting was also widely publicized to encourage them to participate in the elections.

Under SVEEP-III defence personnel are the focus area for facilitating their electoral participation. Knowledge Attitude Practice (KAP) survey is planned to be taken up among defence personnel to assess their understanding of the procedures of postal ballots and to accordingly prepare messages and awareness material for them so as to plug in the information gaps. Sustained engagement with the Ministry of Defence has been taken in the past one year to coordinate on outreach and awareness on electoral literacy.

Overseas Indians

There has been a lot of discussion and buzz around the voting rights for overseas Indians of late. Taking into account the aspirations of overseas Indians, in 2010, a new Section 20(A) was added in Representation of the People Act 1950 after Section 20 by Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2010. This new Section provides that every citizen of India whose name is not included in the electoral roll, and who has not acquired the citizenship of any other country and who is absenting from his/her place of ordinary residence in India owing to his/her employment, education or otherwise outside India (whether temporarily or not) shall be entitled to have his/her name registered in the electoral roll in the constituency in which his/her place of residence in India as mentioned in his/her Passport is located. The Government of India, Ministry of Law And Justice, Legislative Department notified the consequential amendments to the relevant portions of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 vide Notification,

dated 3rd February 2011. As a result, now overseas Indians can register in the electoral rolls using Form 6A in person, or by post or online.

During Lok Sabha Elections 2014, the largest democratic exercise of the world, a total of 13,039 overseas Indians enrolled in electoral rolls. Names of overseas electors were kept in the relevant part of the elector roll in the last section which was made only for overseas electors. Identity of overseas electors is verified only on the basis of their Passport. EPICs are not issued to overseas electors.

While it is the endeavour of the Commission to get more and more people enrolled, ECI is also aware that it can be difficult for overseas Indians to come to India to vote during elections. There have been demands from various quarters for electronic voting, postal ballots, out of country voting facilities and so on. Election Commission of India is seriously considering all these options.

Election Commission developed brochures for the overseas Indians and shared it with the Indian Missions abroad for dissemination among the target population. Online registration facility has been extended to overseas Indians and the portal is being popularized through various websites. Families of overseas Indians have been targeted in states with high population of overseas electors.

Meanwhile as the first major outreach and engagement initiative an online survey among overseas Indians is being taken up in October-November 2016 to assess the level of awareness among the overseas Indians on the enrolment and voting process. Special registration and awareness camps are planned in countries with higher eligible population of overseas Indians citizens.

3.06
NEW ZEALAND: ASSISTANCE TO OVERSEAS VOTERS

Electoral commission of New Zealand provides efficient and effective arrangements both for enrollment and voting by overseas voters including defence personnel, their families and persons from diplomatic missions etc. EC NZ has provides information on its website for awareness and guidance of the voters falling in this category.

Enrollment as an Overseas Voter:
An overseas New Zealand citizen is eligible to enroll and vote from overseas if he fulfills the following conditions:
- 18 years of age or older.
- Has lived in New Zealand for more than one year continuously at some point of time and is either:
- A New Zealand citizen who has been in New Zealand at any point in the past three years,
- A New Zealand permanent resident who has
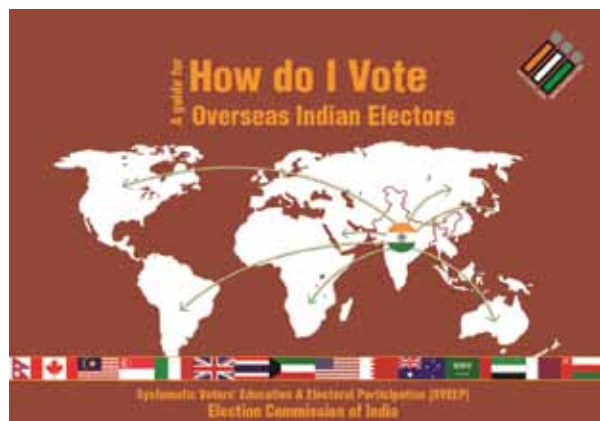
been in New Zealand at any point in the past 12 months

- Electorate will be the one in which a person last lived for a month or more.
- There are exceptions to these time limits for certain people and their families, such as members of the New Zealand Defense Forces or New Zealand diplomats or trade representatives.

The Electoral Act, 1993 provides that New Zealand citizens or permanent residents who are overseas may enroll if they choose to do so, but this is not required by law. If a citizen is eligible to enroll, he can enroll or update his details by:

- Updating or enrolling online.
- Picking up an enrolment form from any New Zealand diplomatic post.
- Within New Zealand by contacting at phone 0800 36 76 56 or from overseas +64 9 909 4182 asking to be sent an enrolment form
- Asking a member of his family or a friend to complete an enrolment form for him.

A person may get someone else to complete his enrolment form for him, provided:

- Such a person is already a registered elector, and
- He must print "Elector Overseas - signed by his direction" on the form next to his signature. Or
- One can have the form completed by someone else with a Power of Attorney for the applicant. In this case one must print "Elector Overseas - Power of Attorney" next to his signature.

Voting in a General Election from Overseas General Conditions - NZ EC provides facilities for overseas voting subject to the following eligibility conditions (with exceptions for certain categories such as defence personnel, diplomats, trade reps etc):

- A person must be enrolled.
- A New Zealand citizen who has visited New Zealand within the last three years, or
- A person is a permanent resident of New Zealand and has visited New Zealand in the last 12 months.

Obtaining Ballot Paper - Voting papers are not automatically sent to the overseas voters. Voters who are overseas will be able to obtain their voting papers from two and a half weeks before Election Day in one of the following ways:

- Download their voting papers from this website
- Apply to the Electoral Commission for postal voting papers
- Vote in person at an overseas post

Return of the Overseas Ballot Papers - The Overseas Voters may return their voting papers in one of the following ways:

- Upload their voting papers at the Electoral Commission's website.
- Fax their voting papers to the Electoral Commission (+64 4 494 2300).
- Post or courier their voting papers to the Electoral Commission.
- Post, courier or hand deliver their voting papers to their nearest overseas post.

All the Overseas ballot papers returned to the EC must reach as per the specified time and date.

Legislative Support - The facilities provided by the EC NZ are supported by the Electoral Act of 1993 and the regulations framed there under.Detailed information can be accessed from the website of the Electoral Commission of New Zealand at http://www.elections.org.nz/

3.07
US: VOTING ASSISTANCE FOR MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS AND OTHERS

INTRODUCTION

USA has well designed legislative framework and technology driven programmes to protect and support the voting rights of its overseas citizens including the Armed Forces personnel and their family members. The essential legislative framework is provided by the relevant provisions of Help America Vote Act(HAVA) and Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). Federal Voting Assistance Programme (FVAP) provides support on the subject. The Voter Guide and the Guidelines of Election Assistance Commission (EAC) provide information, guidance and of educative value to these voters. The support progammes are technology driven.

UOCAVA AND ITS SUPPORT SYSTEM

The voting rights of the millions of U.S. citizens living overseas, as well as Service members and their eligible family members, are protected by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA). About 75 percent of the 1.3 million Service members are eligible to vote absentee through the UOCAVA process since they are stationed away from their voting residence and polling place.

The Overseas citizens and Service members who intend to exercise absentee vote have to, as a first step, fill up and send a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) in a registration and ballot request form accepted by all states. This form is available at FVAP.gov. The voters are expected to fill up and send this form well in time so that they meet the deadlines fixed by different states as per their election calendar.

Voters can visit FVAP.gov for their state's specific voter registration and ballot request deadlines, as well as information on completing their FPCA. Voters can fill out the form by hand or use the online assistance before they print, sign and send the FPCA to their election office.

Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP)
FVAP is a Department of Defense organization that works to ensure Service members, their eligible family members, and overseas citizens are aware of their right to vote and have the tools and resources to successfully register and vote from anywhere in the world. FVAP provides assistance to voters through partnerships with the US Military Services, Department of State, Department of Justice, and election officials from the states. State and local governments administer U.S. elections, including those for federal offices. FVAP supports state and local election officials by providing absentee voting information, materials, training and guidance. FVAP organizes Voter Weeks also at appropriate time to provide timely voter engagement for UOCAVA voters.

FVAP's call center provides assistance in case of any difficulties, issues or questions to the voters at 1-800-438-VOTE (8683), DSN 425-1584 or at vote@fvap.gov. Toll-free phone numbers from 67 countries are listed at FVAP.gov. Find us on Facebook at /Do DFVAP and follow @ FVAP on Twitter.

Help America Vote Act
Help America Vote Act was passed by the U.S. Congress in 2002 to make sweeping reforms to the nation's voting process. HAVA addresses improvements to voting systems and voter access that were identified following the 2000 election. HAVA established the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to generate new mandatory minimum standards for states to follow in several key areas of election administration including voter education, assistance to UOCAVA voters and related subjects and provide funding to help states meet these new standards. EAC is also responsible for maintaining the National Voter Registration form, conducting research, and administering a national clearinghouse on elections that includes shared practices, information for voters and other resources to improve election administration.

Sec 242 of the HAVA provides for Study, Report and Recommendations on Best Practice for facilitating Military and Overseas Voting for developing the facilitating the guidance through voluntary guidelines etc. Sections 701 to 707 provide detailed legislative framework for Absentee Voters.

EAC's 'A Voter's Guide to Federal Elections'
Voter Guides are highly informative and simple to read and cover all aspects of electoral process and available on EAC website. The guide is intended to help voters successfully navigate the Federal election process in a holistic manner from registering to vote through casting a ballot on Election Day. In addition to providing the basics of casting a ballot, this guide includes information on voter eligibility, early voting, alternative registration and voting processes for uniformed and overseas citizens, and polling place accommodation that make voting more accessible to all sections of voters.

The voter guide is available in eleven languages: Cherokee, Chinese, Dakota, English, Japanese, Korean, Navajo, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Yupik so as to maximize the voter coverage. The Guides provide relevant links for helpful resources to voters on registration, military and overseas voting, accessibility, and volunteering as a poll worker. All the EAC Voter Guides are available in the Election Resource Library of the EAC on its website.Different states also publish Voter Guides for the elections in their respective domain.

(Extract from EAC Voter Guide for Uniformed and Overseas Citizens is at Supplement for ready reading)

EAC's '6 Tips for Helping UOCAVA Voters and their Families'
The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) collaborated with the U.S. Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) to develop these tips for working with Service members, their families and citizens residing overseas. Service members, their families and overseas citizens face unique challenges in registering to vote and in requesting, receiving and returning their ballots. These six tips can help you more efficiently navigate the process for this special group of absentee voters. All these guidelines are available on the EAC website for voters and others for information and guidance. All the guidelines documents have **links embedded** for quick follow up on action points.

Accessible Voting Technology Initiative
The EAC's Accessible Voting Technology Initiative (AVTI) supports accessibility research on transformative technologies and approaches. Through the AVTI, the EAC has produced over 45 solutions for assisting voters with disabilities. The initiatives include the EAC's Military Heroes grant to provide assistance needed for recently injured military personnel to participate in elections.

EAC' Research
EAC collects data from states for each federal election on the number of overseas and military voter ballots that are transmitted, returned, and cast. This data is included in EAC's biennial Election Administration and Voting Survey. In addition, EAC has issued several surveys to better understand the process and experience of military and overseas voting. These reports are utilized for developing

guidelines and educative purposes Refer to EAC Resource Library.

EAC Events

EAC holds many meeting and roundtable discussions on issues that affect military and overseas voters. These events bring together top experts in the field to work to solve the problems that affect the voting rights of military and overseas citizens. Refer to EAC Resource Library.

EAC Resources

Further to the EAC resources referred to above, EAC Guidelines on UOCAVA citizen's residency and Frequently Asked Questions are of informative and help citizens in educating themselves on the subject. EAC's interactive websites for Military personnel and overseas voters are extremely helpful to the voters in this category.

SUPPLEMENT: EXTRACT FROM EAC VOTER GUIDE

What is the process for uninformed and overseas citizens?

To register to vote, members of the military and overseas citizens may use the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), available from the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP's) Web portal at www.fvap.gov. The FVAP Web portal offers a step-by-step tool to guide military service members and overseas citizens through the voter registration process. All States and territories accept the FPCA as a simultaneous application for registration and a request for an absentee ballot. Depending on your State of residence, you can return the completed FPCA by e-mail, fax, or mail. If you mail the FPCA, send it in an envelope with proper postage or in an FVAP prepaid return envelope. Go to www.fvap.gov to see how to return your form. If you are already registered to vote, you may still submit an FPCA to request a ballot, ideally early in the Federal election year. Printed copies of the FPCA are available at U.S. embassies, military bases and consular offices. Voting Assistance Officers at those sites can provide any information or assistance you may need to complete the form. If you need help with the absentee voting process, visit the FVAP Web site at www.fvap.gov, contact theFVAP at (703) 588–1584 (toll free at [800] 438–VOTE; also available toll free from 70 countries at www.fvap.gov/contact/tollfreephone.html), or e-mail the program at vote@fvap.gov.

Military service members and overseas citizens may also request the electronic transmission of blank voting materials. Jurisdictions that mail voting materials are required to send them to the requesting voter 45 days before an election to ensure sufficient time to receive and return voted ballots.

3.08
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The scope and coverage under this category varies from country to country. Interactive experience sharing may help developing a holistic picture which may include the following issues:

- Categories of voters covered under the facilities for absentee voting.
- Facilities provided such as online voter registration, pre-requisite procedural formalities and procedures for issue of ballot and return of the marked ballot as per time frames of the electoral process.
- Location of RO's and polling stations especially in case of overseas voters
- Systems of information dissemination and VE followed by different EMB's. Use of interactive websites and internet for Voter education especially for overseas voters in remote areas. The holistic picture may help as guidance for enhanced participation in countries where systems need strengthening.

The challenges:

- Cost effective real time information dissemination and voter education approaches for in such cases.
- Management of effective information dissemination, voter education and outreach especially when the voter populations are sparsely distributed and located in remote areas.

ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR VOTER EDUCATION AND FEEDBACK

NO VOTER TO BE
LEFT BEHIND

SECTION 4

4.01
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The way we vote has changed significantly with the advent of 21st century. Ballot papers and pencils used hitherto have given way to electronic voting machines and e-voting. Online voter registration, biometric voter registration has substituted the conventional methods of registration. Internet and web based voter awareness and educational resources besides citizen especially youth engagement through new media, social media have become an integral part of the electoral process. Information and Communication Technology based options have improved the efficacy and efficiency of the electoral systems to deliver the desired objective of supporting the democratic polity.

EMB website: Voter Information and Education Resources:
The EMB's provide templates and tools on their websites in the form of voter resources to support voter awareness on providing comprehensive information relating to electoral process in an easily accessible manner. The websites are updated especially ahead of the elections. In many cases online voter registration facilities are also provide online. Information resources include all categories of voters including women, PwD's, ethnic and linguistic minorities, overseas voters and absentee voters etc. There is also a frequently asked questions page on the website to address questions and quarries from the voters. Voter guides and easy guides for voters are also provided by some EMB's on websites. As such where, when and how

to vote information for all categories of voters is available on these websites and is of tremendous help to voters in electoral participation.

EMB Websites: e-Electoral Resources for Education and Engagement for School and Colleges:
The websites of EMB's in many cases host school education, mock vote and campus engagement resources also. These resources are easily available for the schools and colleges through e-connect with the websites of the EMB's for curriculum and extracurricular electoral education for youth.Some of the EMB's have developed civic engagement models and hosted them on their websites for follow up through nonpartisans.

New Media:
A number of electoral management bodies (EMBs) and other stakeholders in the electoral process in many countries across the world have demonstrated that social media provide new opportunities for engaging citizens, especially the youth in electoral processes. These opportunities have both *quantitative* and *qualitative* dimensions, as follows-

- The readership, listenership and viewership of traditional media (press, radio and television) are declining among most demographic groups, particularly among young people. In contrast use of social media is increasing rapidly and these forms of media offer increased access to voters and potential voters.
- The social media are interactive; they offer qualitatively improved opportunities in mediated communication. Conventional media

provide one-way transmission of information in top-down flow, social media provide two-way interactive and participative engagement with citizens as they allow citizens to have a say and be heard, they allow citizens to ask questions and seek information directly relevant to their needs and interests, and they afford discussion and participation. Analysis confirms enhanced engagement through social media involving voice and participation hither to missing or much less achieved through one-way information flow.

- Social media offer cost savings compared with use of traditional mass media, as well as access to low-cost and no-cost metrics for measurement and evaluation.
- Youth engagement in electoral processes through social media has been of significance and import to the future of the democracy.

The technology has acceptably become an important and integral part of voter education. In this Section we discuss the robust integration of technology with voter education in several countries like US, UK, Australia, India, New Zealand and Kenya etc to facilitate the interaction on sharing of experiences by the participants.

4.02

AUSTRALIA: MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Background:
The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is charged with the responsibility maintenance of the electoral rolls, conducting free and fair elections, besides all the related matters like voter education etc. The focus of the AEC is on encouraging citizens to:

- Enroll to vote;
- Maintain their electoral enrolment (e.g. when

changing addresses); and;
- Vote formally in elections.

AEC's Technology Based Campaigns:
To achieve these objectives, AEC conducts ongoing and election-specific campaigns with a view to educate citizens in relation to their enrolment and voting responsibilities. These campaigns use a range of direct and mediated communication.

New Policy of the Government for Engaging Citizens through Technology:
Australian Government made a public commitment to engage with citizens through technologies such as social media in order to promote greater participation in Australia's democracy. It expressed its commitment to an open government based on a culture of engagement, built on better access to and use of government information and sustained by the innovative use of technology (Department of Finance and Deregulation, 2010). In line with this policy, the Australian Electoral Commissioner's Advisory Board on Electoral Research (CABER) recommended that the Commission investigate the potential for new forms of social media to contribute to achievement of the objectives of the AEC, particularly in relation to engaging young people.

AEC Commissions Study report:
The AEC commissioned a study report in 2011 to examine as to how social media is being used by election management bodies (EMBs) in Australia and abroad, as well as how other relevant government bodies and agencies are using social media to engage citizens as part of achieving their goals and objectives. Findings will be used to inform future engagement with voters by the AEC through social media. Noting that the AEC must discharge its responsibilities with strict political neutrality, the challenges of maintaining political neutrality in the dynamic environment of Web 2.0-based interactive media, as well as other challenges and potential benefits, have been examined in this study.

CASE STUDY: NSW ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Electoral Management Bodies' e-democracy Initiatives and Learning:

The NSW Electoral Commission is located in Sydney and responsible for the registration of political parties, enrolment of electors, electoral rolls, and the conduct of elections in the State.

Objectives:
The key objectives of the NSW Electoral Commission social media strategy during 2011 were-
- To spread messages virally online via online social networks and direct conversations;
- To hear what people were saying about the election;
- To reach younger audiences what may be missed by traditional communication methods.

Platforms:
NSW Electoral Commission used the following online platforms to reach   targeted audiences during the run up to the 2011 State election.

- Vote NSW Web site
        (http://vote.nsw.gov.au/)
        The Web site carries a large amount of information for NSW voters and has an 'election clock' counting down until the next election. Social media channel icons/links are shown on the page for citizen engagement.

- Facebook Community Page
        Coordinated by NSW Electoral Commission and its advertising agency, the Facebook page was active primarily during the peak period of the election campaign. No significant criticism or conflict between participants was reported. Facebook advertising was employed to increase 'Likes'. This was managed by the advertising agency and was successful in attracting an increased audience. However, it is interesting to note that Facebook and Twitter icons are not currently on the NSW Electoral Commission homepage http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/.
- Twitter
        The platform is used for broadcasting messages and primarily linking to items on the Website.
- YouTube
        Videos posted range from 'How to Vote' to showing new voting innovations such as iVote.
- SMS Reminders
        SMS reminders allowed electors to register for an e-mail and/or SMS to be sent whenever a Local Government or State Parliamentary election event for which they were enrolled was pending. It appeared to be a good 'push' technology, although usage figures were not available.

Planning and strategy:

Interest in online civic engagement had already been building up in several States. In 2011 a national level meeting was held for communication staff from all Australian state electoral commissions. Commission staff looked at legislation, requirements, risks and management issues related to online engagement.

The NSW social media initiative came from the Commission's advertising agency which suggested the use of online engagement channels. This was linked with a project within the Commission to set up its own Facebook account.

The stakeholder group was kept extremely broad. It included the electors of NSW in the age group 18 to 70, the parliament candidates, participants in the election, the registered political parties etc. However, the main focus was younger audience as they are the most disengaged from the electoral process and their engagement through traditional media had declined.

A social media strategy was developed by the advertising agency and integrated into the overall communication strategy. Online platforms were set up. Community guidelines were developed for each platform to ensure non-partisan nature.

Content calendars were developed and three weeks of content was pre-prepared for the kickoff of the platforms. The advertising agency was originally employed to produce content, but the Commission found that, in reality, its staff produced much of the material simply because the agency continually looked to them for guidance. This has implications for resourcing.

Event-based or ongoing conversation:
NSW EC had been planning to review its use of Social Media from simple information transmission to a more interactive use. But the Social media use by NSW EC is predominantly event-based around elections. This is partly a result of resource limitations. Between election periods, the quantum of load is considerably reduced. Therefore the Commission is planning to bring social media channels "back to life" only in the second half of 2012 when the cycle for NSW local government elections begins.

Management – leadership and oversight:
Senior staff of the Commission clearly understands a role for social media and were encouraged by the Commission's advertising agency, which discussed the new channels and their use. NSW Electoral Commissioner was fairly risk tolerantand saw the advantages of it, after the advertising agency put together a brief. However, there is no clear champion or advocate of social media within the organization full time social media officer was the need of the day.

Social Media Policy and Guidelines:
The NSW Electoral Commission did not have a social media policy for staff during the last election. Instead, general guidelines were issued in the form of a "common sense social media reminder". In view of the necessity, a more detailed social media policy is in development.

Training and Resourcing:
The Commission took a partnership approach with its advertising agency during the start-up phase of its social media engagement strategy. The agency trained internal Commission staff and also became actively involved in responding to posts and moderating platforms as part of their retainer agreement during the peak period. The agency was given guidelines based on the telephone call centre response manual so they could quickly respond to questions on the online platforms. But this arrangement was not sustainable in view of lack of efficacy and cost effectiveness. New social media management was necessary.

Monitoring and measurement:
The advertising agency supplied **weekly metrics reports** both qualitative and quantitative regarding each social media platform. The advertising agency also supplied detailed **monitoring** to the Commission, including qualitative analysis such as *sentiment* (positive, negative and neutral). Real-time monitoring was one of the main services the Commission sought and valued during the election. However, post-election, the Commission's staff monitored social media manually. In terms of assessing the overall effectiveness of social media use, the response echoed the E consultancy (2010) report on UK public sector online engagement which concluded in relation to measurement that "success is a lack of failure".

Key Learning:
- **Content** is a critical component of social media and it is vital to have an engaging content. Initially, the Commission used basic content such as 'how to vote', but is now more prepared to look for more interesting content such as photos and videos to increase engagement.
- **Resourcing** includes being prepared for resourcing implications. Social media use is not costly in financial terms, but it is in employee time.
- **The 24/7 nature of social media** highlights the new rules of engagement apply as social media operate 24/7 and response time expectations are rather demanding.
- **Monitoring** stresses even if there is no proactive social media strategy, it is necessary to monitor what is being said.
- **Approval processes** need to be simplified and efficient for success.
- **Learning as you go** what works in social media. The word 'experimental' was used throughout the interview, reinforcing that many learnings were gained through experience.
- Getting the **tone** right within the content is very important. As they felt more comfortable with the new media they agreed with the agency that the tone needed to be more engaging "if you're not getting through the messages you want, what's the point.

Main opportunities:
- Social media has allowed the Commission to **give responses in real-time** to users by simply pointing a link back the back to the Web site. As a customer service style tool it has proved to be very efficient.
- From a financial cost perspective (not employee time), **social media is affordable**. Social media platforms are primarily free and setup costs are not prohibitive.
- Using **social media to reach CALD audiences** if successfully implemented in future would bring another key strength to the online engagement.

Main challenges:
- **Resourcing** – Social media takes a great amount of time and correct levels of staffing are critical.
- **Content** – Having engaging content in the down-period of the election cycle.
- **Metrics** – Having time and expertise to interpret the great volume of metrics that is currently available from internet-based social media. As social media is still relatively new, it is hard to identify key benchmarks for each platform. As the industry matures these should become clearer.
- **Control** – Organisations need to understand that they **do not have control**. Despite mostly self-moderation, the Commission

For the purposes of this project, social media have been defined as "online tools and Web sites that facilitate many-to-many communications between users. Specific examples include Facebook and Twitter, but may also include more regional or niche services, and more longstanding collaborative environments such as web-based forums and wikis" (Australian Electoral Commission, 2011a, p. 3). More specifically, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as internet-based applications built on the technological and ideological foundations of Web 2.0, described by Tim O'Reilly, who coined the term, as a second generation of Web-based services that feature openness for participation, collaboration and interactivity (Boler, 2008, p. 39; O'Reilly, 2005).

reported "troublemakers on the site" (Facebook) and the need for protocols to deal with problem posts. The spokesperson also commented: "On Twitter it's truly the Wild West. I mean, people can say whatever they like and there's nothing you can do.

4.03
UK: E-DEMOCRACY INITIATIVES AND ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT

Background:
In 1950, 84 per cent of the UK electorate turned out to vote. In comparison only 65 per cent turned out in 2010. Among youth, up to 60 per cent do not vote in the UK (Bite the Ballot, 2011). A survey of first-time voters carried out for Radio 1 revealed that 30 per cent did not believe their vote counts and 20 per cent felt that they did not know enough about politics to make a decision. Despite the concerning statistics, more than half claimed they would vote if they could do so online or using text messaging. From the 15.5 million votes cast during the last series of the *X Factor* in the UK, it emerged that the young people do like voting, but they are often not voting in the elections which employ traditional voting methods.

Strategies for Using Social Media and e-initiatives for Electoral Engagement:
Strategies for using social media to engage UK citizens, for *e-government* information and service delivery; e-democracy consultation objectives, were publicised and given momentum by the 2008 UK **Digital Dialogues Report.** Since then, a large number of technology based initiatives at national and local government have been launched for civic and electoral engagement. Some of these are mentioned as follows:

- **FixMyStreet** (http://www.fixmystreet.com) launched by **MySociety**, a project managed under the registered charity,
- **UK Citizens for Online Democracy** (http://www.ukcod.org.uk/UK_Citizens_Online_Democracy)
- **MySociety** also runs a number of other popular UK citizen consultation, engagement and social media sites such as **TheyWorkForYou** (http://www.theyworkforyou.com) which help citizens to track the voting, speeches, statements and house and debate attendance of MPs. Details may be accessed at http://www.mysociety.org/projects/fixmystreet

2010 UK election:
While most research into the 2010 UK election did not specifically examine methods of voter enrolment and information prior to the election, a study of the election campaign by Rachel Gibson and colleagues reported that UK parties and politicians primarily "operated on old-fashioned, top-down broadcasting principles", rather than through interactive dialogue methods. They reported that "the internet has become an organisational necessity for election campaigning but … it has not brought about that strategic change some have argued we should expect."

This echoes concerns of other scholars that governments, political parties, companies and organisations are embracing social media, but not adopting the practices of Web 2.0 social media engagement. Rather, they are applying 'old' mass media practices to new media. As observed by Macnamara (2010a), the "21st media revolution" is about emergent communication practices as much or more than new technologies.

2012 London Mayoral election:
The recent 2012 London Mayoral election saw extensive use of social media to engage citizens generally and young people in particular, with some interesting uses of social media.

One such site is **Bite the Ballot –** the name itself reflective of the informal irreverent tone of social media and youth engagement. A visit to the **Bite the Ballot** site in May 2012 revealed the following invitation:

> "Bite the Ballot, Spirit of London Awards, Up-Rise and media partner Community Channel's London360 are giving you the opportunity to be part of the biggest voting Registration Rally for young people in the UK, in the run up to the London Mayoral Elections on May 3rd 2012. Many youth organisations as well as media partners will be present on the day. Full list of exhibitors and performances will be published later this week!"
> The invitation went on:
> "ON THE SATURDAY 14TH APRIL 2010, THE MINISTRY OF SOUND IN LONDON WILL HOST A DAY OF INSPIRATION AND EDUTAINMENT WITH SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS, ARTISTS, DANCERS, COMEDIANS, CELEBRITIES AND MOST IMPORTANTLY YOUNG LONDERS (Bite the Ballot, 2011) [original emphasis]".

Bite the Ballot describes itself as "a grassroots campaign created by young people to inspire others to speak up and be a part of the decisions that directly affect us" and calls upon UK youth to:

It is significant and relevant to the focus of this study that the Bite the Ballot campaign calls on young people to vote, but also noteworthy that it uses a range of attractors

"Join us, have your say, it's our future! We have now got a direct voice to the people that make the decisions … we can't change the laws but we can have our say and if we come together people will have to take notice! Do not wait for someone else to voice what you are thinking – shout it loud and clear for yourself, do not be counted as part of the masses – be counted as an individual, with individual opinions and most of all do not grumble silently about decisions that are made on your behalf – make the decisions for yourself: VOTE! (Bite the Ballot, 2011)."

such as music, comedy, dance, celebrities and unconventional messages, including its own name and theme.

The site also borrowed the 2008 Obama slogan 'Yes we can' in its campaign for its **YouthVoteLondon** campaign.

The **'Bite the Ballot'** developed a special logo for the **YouthVoteLondon** campaign.

Another major campaign for the 2012 London Mayoral election was conducted by the official site, London Elects (www.londonelects.org.uk).

London Elects is part of the Greater London Authority (GLA), but is an independent body responsible for organising the elections for Mayor of London and the London Assembly. This includes press, radio, TV and online campaigns to urge citizens to vote and tell them how to vote, designing and printing the ballot papers and counting votes. Information about the London Elects campaign is available at http://www.londonelects.org.uk/our-public-awareness-campaign.

The London Elects created a separate Facebook page during the 2012 London Mayoral election.

Independent studies of UK government Online Engagement

A study report by E-consultancy, a London based digital publishing and training company, based on interviews with directors of communication in 20 government departments reported that:

- Information is the area in which government departments have made significant progress in terms of Web sites and use of social media;
- Digital service delivery in all the departments has been set up;
- Digital Engagement and cost effective options be adopted as compared with non-digital engagement options;
- Engagement– departments are starting to move beyond broadcast into true multi-way collaboration with stakeholder.

These findings accord with a previous study by, Nigel Jackson and Darren Lilleker (2009) which concluded that "British political parties have sought to create a 'Web 1.5'" that combines elements of both Web 1.0 and Web 2.0. However, the UK government has moved much

beyond these early approaches to seek more open and fuller engagement online.

Social Media Guidance for Civil Servants:
On 17 May 2012, the UK national government released its **Guidance on the Use of Social Media for civil servants** as part of the UK Government IT Strategy. This document is based on considerable experience by UK government departments and agencies over the past decade. Among major recommendations, the guidelines advocate:

- **Communicate with citizens in places they already are** – this suggests using public social media platforms such as Facebook (which 50 per cent of Britains use), rather than expecting citizens to come to government-hosted sites;
- **Focus on the quality of interaction**, rather than simply numbers, by understanding who are using various platforms and addressing what they are concerned about;
- **Use social media to consult and engage** – not simply to transmit information;
- **Sometimes just listening is as valuable as engaging**;
- **Being present in the conversation** means engaging and a core part of any good conversation is listening(UK Cabinet Office, 2012).

The guidelines propose a social media cycle. They also provide many examples and case studies, such as the **Get Ahead of the Games** Twitter account @GAOTG which had 23,356 followers, as on 18 May 2012. Overall, a feature of the UK government guidelines is that they are open and encouraging, urging civil servants to engage with citizens, build relations, listen and comment online – albeit always mindful of and in accordance with the Civil Service Code.

Other sites of interest for Voter Engagement:
Other key online sites involved in the 2012 London Mayoral election identified were:

- www.bitetheballot.co.uk
- www.londonelects.org.uk
- www.aboutmyvote.co.uk
- www.ukpoliticalinfo/london-mayor-election-2012.htm
- www.citizensuk.org.

Rock Enrol!® : Engaging Young People in Democracy:
Rock Enrol!® is a high quality, interactive resource pack to encourage young people to register, vote and engage them in the democratic processes to be active citizens. The Rock Enrol!® resource pack creates that opportunity by using fun and interactive activities. The sessions aim to develop political and electoral literacy and inspire young people to engage in democratic debate. They encourage

young people to discuss what they care about and why they should register to vote. The pack uses games and activities to get students discussing important issues, whether local or global. There is also an opportunity for students to make their voices heard by registering to vote.

What does Rock Enrol!® include?

The resource pack includes:

- a core 45-minute lesson plan (session 1) with 3 additional lesson plans with more activities (sessions 2-4).
- Supporting audiovisual material.
- Supporting guidance.
- Lesson hand-out.
- Publicity materials (poster and flyer) for running Rock Enrol!® sessions in your school, college or youth group.
- Welsh versions of the Rock Enrol!® resource pack – core 45-minute lesson plan (session 1) with three additional lesson plans (sessions 2-4), supporting guidance and publicity flyer .
- an adapted version of Rock Enrol!® activities for people with a learning disability and supporting guidance developed with Mencap.

The original Rock Enrol!® lesson framework, which includes the 'Vote with your feet' and 'Show me the money' activities, was co-created by the Cabinet Office and youth-led organisation Bite the Ballot. Session 2 and 3 activities – 'Critical issues', and 'Power game' are taken from the Youth Count! Democracy Challenge toolkit developed by UK Youth.

Anyone including teachers, youth group leaders and young people themselves can use Rock Enrol!®. Sessions are straightforward to prepare and run. The resources provide fresh ideas or innovative ways to engage young people. They are flexible and can be tailored to suit different groups and settings. Rock Enrol!® sessions are aimed at students aged 16+ but can be used for younger age groups without the registration element.

Although they are not subject-specific, the sessions are particularly useful for supporting:

- personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the citizenship curriculum programme of study at Key Stage 3 and 4, and with students of GCSE citizenship studies.
- the revised citizenship curriculum's statutory requirements to help pupils learn how citizens actively participate in the UK's democratic system and think critically and debate political questions.
- post-16 learners – for example within tutorial programmes in colleges and school sixth forms and as part of units of work on personal and social development for foundation learners

Snapchat Election Story in the UK:

Follow My Vote is dedicated to improving the elections through innovative technologies such as <u>blockchain tech-</u><u>nology</u> to ultimately enhance voter turnout and transparency. When the Snapchat election story on the day of the <u>UK elections</u> was demonstrated, it was noted with a positive response. This is a blend of new technology and excitement surrounding voter participation.

<u>Snapchat</u> is a fairly new smartphone app that lets users send messages and images to one another. The unique part is that the message gets deleted after being viewed.

One feature that has been added to Snapchat is called "stories". You can choose to send a message to one friend or you can opt to make the message your story. This means all of your friends will be able to view this message for the next 24 hours.

Recently, Snapchat has been producing stories of their own called "Our Stories". These are essentially a culmination of pictures and videos from all the people at one event. Users of the app submit their picture or video to the event story. The event could be a holiday, concert or even a snowstorm. The <u>Snowmageddon</u> snow storm of 2015 story reportedly got 27 million views on the app.

A feedback on this new tech youth voter engagement blog is as follows:

"We were extremely excited to see a Snapchat election story for the UK election. Hundreds of people had submitted photos and videos of their voting experiences. Young voters got to share their first voting experience with the world, while others simply encouraged people to get out and vote. Either way this was an awesome use of technology to support democracy. We also really liked the fact that the app stayed non-partisan. There was only one story topic and the submitted media was from voters. There were no advertisements or stories dedicated to a certain party. Below is one of the pictures we managed to snag from the Snapchat election story." The details may be accessed at followmyvote.com

YouGov : Online Survey and Feedback

Founded in the UK in 2000, YouGov is considered the pioneer of online market research. Its unique fully integrated online model has a well-documented and published track record illustrating the accuracy of its survey methods and in turn the quality of its client service work. The group operates an online panel of over 4 million respondents in 37 countries worldwide, representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types which allow them to create nationally representative samples online.

YouGov involves citizens in electoral feedbacks and surveys and thereby enhances the civic and electoral engagement amongst people. Its recent UKPOLLING "Lat-

est YouGov and TNS voting Intentions Report is briefly introduced in the next Para.

> ➡ Latest YouGov and TNS voting intentions
> 11 Aug 2016
> **'UKPOLLING REPORT**
> A wrote a few weeks ago that in the past the boost enjoyed by a Prime Minister taking over mid-term has often only lasted a month or so. The latest YouGov poll suggests that Theresa May's honeymoon is following the same pattern and has now started to fade. Top line figures are CON 38%, LAB 31%, LDEM 8%, UKIP 13%. It's still showing a healthy Tory lead, but not the towering double-digit leads we've seen in the last few polls. This is, of course, just a single poll and we should wait to see if other polls shown the same trend, but it's the first sign of the May honeymoon beginning to wane
> **UPDATE:** TNS also have new voting intention figures out and they have the Tories still enjoying a double-digit lead. Topline figures are CON 39%, LAB 26%, LD 10%, UKIP 11%, GRN 7% . Fieldwork was over the weekend, so a little older than the Mon-Tues YouGov data, but not by much. A couple of interesting methodological notes here – looking at TNS's tables, it looks like they are including the names of the party leaders in their voting intention question (just the GB leaders in the English question, but also the Scottish and Welsh leaders in their respective areas). Based on the tables, they are also asking preferred party on the economy and preferred leader before asking voting intention.'

SUPPLEMENT: DEMOCRATIC AUDIT

Following is an article for reference:
Highly educated young people are less likely to vote than older people with much lower levels of attainment

Older people are more likely to vote and highly educated people are more likely to vote: these are electoral phenomena common in advanced democracies across the world. The UK stands out from its counterparts in some ways: we have a much wider gap in turnout between young and old, while the gap in turnout based on education is either much smaller or non-existent. *Richard Berry and Anthony Mcdonnell* investigate these trends, highlighting findings from the 2011 census, British Election Study and OECD data on voting patterns.

The low levels of electoral participation by young people – as discussed by Izzy Westbury recently on Demo-

cratic Audit – is a growing concern for UK democracy. According to OECD data, based on post-election surveys, the gap in turnout between older and younger voters is significantly higher in the UK than in any other advanced democracy – at 38 percentage points. See Figure One below.

Figure One: Difference in voting rates between those 55+ years old and those 16-35 years old (percentage points), most recent general election
Source: *Society at a Glance 2011,* OECD, 2011
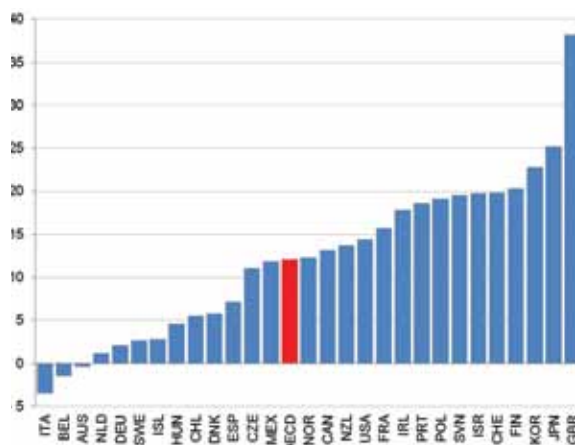
The UK findings are supported by the British Election Study, based on pre- and post-election surveys with voters and non-voters.

Table One shows turnout at the 2010 general election.

Table One: Turnout by age group, 2010 UK general election

Age group	Turnout
18-25	62%
26-35	68%
36-45	75%
46-55	82%
56-65	82%
65+	89%

Source: *British Election Study,* 2010

It might be reasonable to expect the opposite relationship between age and turnout. Electoral participation is strongly correlated with education in most countries – the higher your level of educational attainment, the more likely you are to vote. And in the UK, younger people are more likely to be highly educated, as shown by Census data.
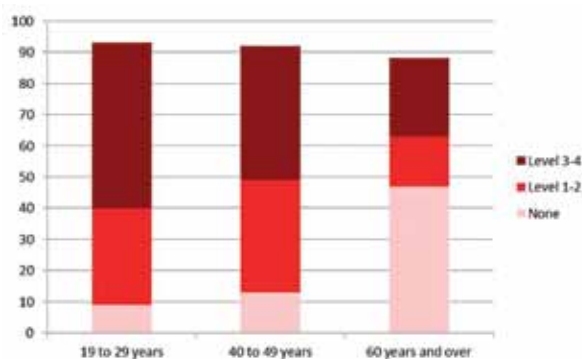
Figure Two: Highest level of educational attainment by selected age groups, England and Wales (%)
Source: *Census 2011*, Office for National Statistics. Other qualifications and apprenticeships are excluded. Levels 1-2 = GCSE; Levels 3-4 = A-Level/Degree

According to the OECD, however, Britain is one of only a handful of advanced democracies where those with degree-level education are less likely to vote than those with only a secondary education (by 1.8 percentage points). See Figure Three for the full comparison.
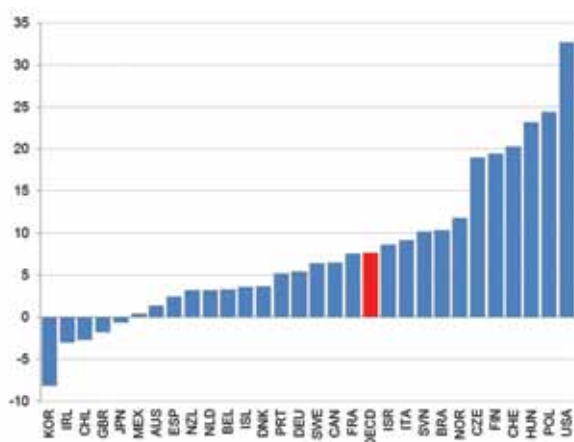
Figure Three: Difference in voting rates between 'high' and 'low' educated people (percentage points)
Source: *Society at a Glance 2011*, OECD, 2011. 'High' indicates university education; 'low' indicates secondary education or lower.

The British Election Study results are less clear-cut on the education effect in the UK, although they also support the view that education has less impact on voting than age does. See Table Two.

Table Two: Turnout by highest level of educational attainment, 2010 UK general election

Highest level of attainment	Turnout
Lower than GCSE or equivalent	68%
GCSE or equivalent	75%
A-Level or equivalent	74%
Degree	81%

Source: *British Election Study*, 2010

When we cross-tabulate the age and education results from the British Election Study, the analysis reveals that within age group, more highly educated people are more likely to vote. However, young people of any educational background are less likely to vote than older people. For instance, while 75% of 18-34 year olds with a degree voted in 2010, this was less than the 83% of over 55s with a secondary education or less who voted. See Figure Four.
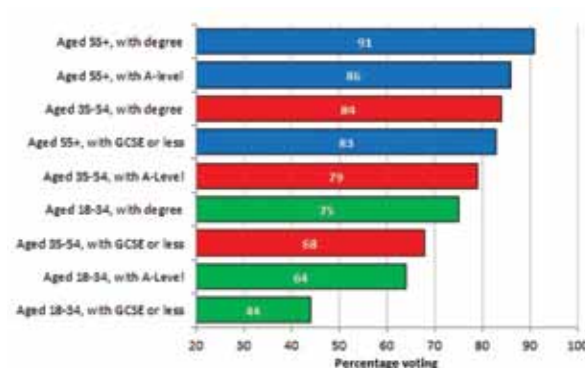
Figure Four: Turnout in 2010 UK general election by age group and highest level of educational attainment
Source: Democratic Audit analysis of *British Election Study*, 2010. Includes equivalent qualifications.

Knee-jerk reactions to low turnout among young people need to be avoided. Some may look at the figures presented above and conclude that Australia's system of compulsory voting is the answer – after all, the country has 95% turnout and no gap between young and old. However, it is possible this solution only masks the problem, rather than solving it. It may even backfire – compulsion would increase turnout, certainly, but what impression would it leave in the mind of a young person, and how would it affect the way they participate between elections?

We need to remember that low turnout among young people is not just a 'young people problem'. It is also evidence of wider problems within our political system, which would discourage a person of any age from vot-

ing. But there may well be reforms that can be tailored particularly for young people that help support their participation: for instance, better provision of online election information, which may suit people that are highly mobile in geographical terms, and accustomed to using the internet in many aspects of their lives.

Britain's older generations have clearly picked up the voting habit at a time when political, economic, even technological circumstances were very different. We have some searching questions to answer before we can expect young people to do the same in large numbers.

The authors are grateful to Professor Jane Green of the University of Manchester for her support in the analysis of British Election Study data. OECD data is derived from: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), Module 2 and 3 of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). Authors Richard Berry and Anthony Mcdonnell.

Note: This post represents the views of the author, not those of Democratic Audit or the LSE.

DEMOCRATIC AUDIT 2016

In January 2016, Democratic Audit UK launches its latest Audit of UK Democracy. Unlike previous audits, each section will be initially released in blog form, ensuring maximum impact. Once all posts have been published the Audit will be released in an e-book and released online.

Informing and engaging citizens:

Research continues to show an alarming lack of interest in, and knowledge of, democratic structures, current events, and political affairs.

Under the previous Government, steps were taken to improve citizenship education, but this has had limited impact thus far. An informed and engaged citizenry is essential in order to ensure a functioning democracy. We are currently seeing voter turnout decrease, which holds its own risks for legitimacy and social cohesion.

Research and articles coming under this theme will look at how we equip citizens to participate in our democratic structures, and then get them motivated to do so.

4.04

CANADA: TAKING ADVANTAGE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

New Technology: Integral to Elections Canada's Functions:

New technology is integral to how Elections Canada manages and delivers elections. Many of its functions and the processes are based on technology applications. Some of these are listed as follows:

- Managing electronic networks and intranets at headquarters and in the field to enable efficient

Audit posts will appear on our homepage, with links collected here after publication.
If you have any questions about this project, please email democraticaudit@lse.ac.uk
How democratic is the UK's 'Westminster Plurality Rule' electoral system? *by Patrick Dunleavy and the Democratic Audit team*
How democratic are the two big reformed electoral systems used in the UK – the 'Additional Members System (AMS)' and the 'Supplementary Vote (SV)'? *by Patrick Dunleavy and the Democratic Audit team*
How democratic are the UK's two fully proportional electoral systems? *by Patrick Dunleavy and the Democratic Audit team*
How effectively is gender equality achieved in the political and public life of the UK? *by Sonali Campion and the Democratic Audit team*
How democratic are the UK's political parties and party system? *by Sean Kippin, Patrick Dunleavy, and the Democratic Audit team*
How democratic is the UK's House of Lords, and how could it be reformed? *by Sonali Campion, Patrick Dunleavy and Sean Kippin*
How democratically accountable are the UK's security and intelligence services? *by Sean Kippin and the Democratic Audit team*
How effective is Parliament in controlling UK government and representing citizens? *by Artemis Photiadou and Patrick Dunleavy*
How democratic is the UK's participation in the European Union? *by Stuart Brown*

communications;

- Maintaining and improving applications supporting the National Register of Electors and the Electoral Geography Database, as well as several other tools that support real-time monitoring of and reporting on electoral processes and events;
- Developing and expanding Elections Canada's social media presence developing customized applications that support key services, such as the Voter Information Service, real-time broadcasting of election results and online reporting for political entities;
- Developing and supporting customized applications that enable political parties, electoral district associations, candidates, nomination contestants and leadership contestants to complete and submit financial returns required by the Canada Elections Act.

Geographic Information System:
Elections Canada's geographic databases provide the framework for locating electors in the National Register of Electors in an electoral district and assigning them to a polling division ("geocoding"), and for readjusting electoral boundaries after a decadal census. Political parties receive digitized versions of electoral maps as well as access to the related web application, GeoExplore, which is used by returning officers for managing elections in their electoral districts. The Elections Canada website allows electors to enter their postal code to obtain information on their electoral district and Member of Parliament and during elections, the location of their polling station and contact information for their local Elections Canada office.

Elections Canada on the Web:
The most up-to-date information on the Canadian electoral process is accessible worldwide on the Elections Canada website at www.elections.ca. The site provides a wealth of information on all aspects of federal elections, including:

- **The Voter Information Service**, which allows electors to enter their postal code and learn how, when and where to register and vote.
- **The Online Voter Registration Service**, which electors can use to find out if they are registered to vote in federal elections, to update their address or to complete their registration.
- **Profiles of individual federal electoral districts** with maps, contact information for the returning officer and a list of all candidates during elections.
- **Voter registration forms** along with instructions for Canadian electors in or outside Canada who cannot or do not wish to vote at a polling station during an election.

- **Sections for political entities** that inform them about their rights and obligations and provide guidance, handbooks and reporting tools.
- **Written opinions, guidelines** and interpretation notes about the application of the *Canada Elections Act* to political entities, issued by Elections Canada on its own initiative or at the request of political parties.
- **A live feed of election results** on election night
- **A searchable section of financial returns** from all political entities media information, publications, teaching resources and materials.
- **Information about federal representation** and electoral boundaries readjustment.

Elections Canada: Continuous Connect with Stakeholders:
Elections Canada is constantly connected with the electorate and the broader environment, including Parliament, the academic community, the media and international organizations. These connections enable it to:

- Refine its knowledge on electoral matters to support the Chief Electoral Officer in developing his recommendations to amend the *Canada Elections Act* and in advising parliamentarians on electoral matters.
- Support strategic planning, monitoring progress in delivering electoral events, and complete corporate projects by conducting regular information gathering and analysis.
- Improve how it delivers elections by establishing links with academics, research institutes, provincial and national bodies, and international organizations involved in electoral matters.
- Keep in touch with public by making information available in a number of ways, including through its website.

EC's Website:
The Elections Canada website is compliant with the federal standard on web accessibility, which follows World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) accessibility guidelines (version 2, level AA). EC works on a continued manner to improve accessibility of its website.Details may be accessed at: **http://www.elections.**

Elections Canada Blogs:
EC's blogs are user friendly, informative and interactive instruments for electoral interactions and communications for voters and the public as such. Excerpts that follow are self speaking.

Following are a few illustrations:

Canada's Democracy Week Blogs

(Chief Electoral Officer Marc Mayrand presents Canada's Democracy Week 2015)

This week marks the fifth edition of Canada's Democracy Week, taking place from September 14–21, 2015. As the federal election is scheduled for October 19, 2015, we chose as our theme: *"Let's Get Canada Ready to Vote."* Canada's Democracy Week 2015 is an excellent time for Canadians to learn about the mechanics of our democratic process and to start getting ready to vote.

Get ready to vote now!

As Canada's Chief Electoral Officer, I encourage all Canadians 18 years and older to visit the **Elections Canada website** to get ready to vote.

It's easy to be ready to vote:

1. Be part of National Registration Day on September 15. Check your **registration online**.
2. If you are registered, watch for your voter information card in the mail in late September. It will tell you where and when to vote and the accessible services available at your polling location. Or use our online **Voter Information Service**: all you need is your postal code.
3. Make sure you have the right ID to vote. Consult our **Voter ID List** online.
4. Choose one of the four options that you have to vote: on election day, at an advance poll, at an Elections Canada office or by mail.

Remember: The Elections Canada website, **www.elections.ca**, is **THE** place for all the information you need to be ready to cast your ballot.

Not 18 yet? You can still be involved in this year's federal election!

As both a parent and Canada's Chief Electoral Officer, I believe there is great potential for Canada's youth to play a more significant role in energizing our democracy and its institutions. Hands-on civic education programs encourage students to discuss politics with friends and family, build their knowledge and understanding of Canada's democratic institutions and awaken their sense of civic duty – all potential precursors to becoming an active voter.

That is why I'm encouraging educators to register their schools in the **Student Vote** program administered by CIVIX. Participating students research the issues, parties and candidates through classroom and school-wide activities. They then experience the voting process firsthand by casting ballots for the official election candidates running in their school's riding. When a school registers for the program, they receive a customized Student Vote campaign package including activity resources, cam-

paign posters, an election operations manual and authentic voting materials (ballot boxes, voting screens, ballots and riding maps). The program is free and open to all schools. Teachers can register their school at **www.studentvote.ca**.

The **National Democracy Challenge** invites Canadian students aged 14 to 17 to submit a video, image or text related to this year's theme: Show Canadians how to get ready to vote! Prizes include bursaries to participate in civic education programs offered by Forum for Young Canadians and Encounters with Canada in Ottawa and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. Students can submit their entry until November 9, 2015, at **democracy-democratie.ca**.

Let's get ready to vote!
October 19, 2015, is our federal election day.

Take advantage of Canada's Democracy Week 2015 to get ready to vote now. Remember: check your registration, watch for your voter information card, prepare your ID and make a plan for voting day.

MarcMayrand
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Canada's Democracy Week 2015 Guest Bloggers Series

Canada's Democracy Week 2015 is excited to have amazing people join our Guest Bloggers Series in the lead-up to and during Canada's Democracy Week 2015.

Starting August 17, bloggers from across Canada will tell us about how they are helping Canadians be informed about the election, specifically where, when and ways to vote, and how they are engaging Canadians under 18 to be involved in the 2015 federal election.

Institute for Canadian Citizenship

In August, we brought you the results of a national survey of 2,300 new citizens. How and why do new citizens participate in the political process, and what does their level of engagement mean? How can we make the process better – for them, and for all of us? If you didn't have a chance to check out the full results, visit ballotsandbelonging.ca.

We brought you the voices and experiences of Canada's newest citizens. But, we also want to be of direct assistance. We've launched #ReadyToVote, a social media campaign to get new citizens ready to vote and out to the polls.

Visit **votequiz.ca** to see if you're ready to vote. If you're not, check out our resources at **readytovote.ca** to get vote ready.

Share the quiz with family and friends, and see you at the polls!

Bryan Buraga director of the youth environmental group Kids for Climate Action

Bryan Buraga is a 16-year-old youth activist from Vancouver. He is the director of the youth environmental group Kids for Climate Action, an organization advocating for greater political action on climate change. In his free time, you can find him playing the ukulele, reading the newspaper, or daydreaming.

My name is Bryan Buraga. I am a second-generation Canadian. My parents came to Canada in the 90s to make a better life not just for themselves, but for their children as well. Over the years, I've grown up with a hybrid upbringing between Canadian and Filipino cultures; however, I can say that I am definitely proud to be a Canadian.

During my childhood, my father would tell me stories of his life back in the Philippines. He was born under the authoritarian regime of Ferdinand Marcos, a dictator who ruled the Philippines in the 70s and 80s. He'd describe to me the fear he felt growing up under martial law. He told me about his sense of responsibility, how he felt he needed to take action to protect the ones he loved and cared for. After Marcos's main political opponent was assassinated, my father and a large mob of people stormed the dictator's residence – the Presidential Palace, guarded by the military – ousting the dictator without a single drop of blood being shed in the process. The army refused to fire on the people because they knew what they were fighting for: democracy and freedom. Most of the people who took action were young people. The lesson my father wanted me to learn was that democracy is important, and that by voting, we honour the sacrifices of others who have fought for the rights we have today.

In the last federal election in 2011, only 39% of eligible youth voted. What does that mean? That means almost two thirds of young people did not have a say in who represents them. My organization, Kids for Climate Action, plans to get the vote out when we begin our federal election campaign in Vancouver. Our strategy is three-fold. First, we will go door to door in a local riding, visit post-secondary institutions, and call people in our database to get them to pledge to vote in this election. Second, we will hold an all-candidates' debate in that riding to hear all the different perspectives and to allow voters to make informed decisions. Finally, when election day comes, we will contact all our vote pledgers to make sure that they actually go out to vote.

A great woman once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Will you be part of the group that changes the world? Your vote will determine that.

Know where, when and the ways to vote. But have opinions as well!
- Antoine Bilodeau
Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Concordia University Researcher, Centre for the Study of Democratic Citizenship Knowing where, when and the ways to vote is essential for exercising your civic duty. But they are not the only things you need. Opinions count as well. One of the findings of a recent study conducted for Elections Canada by me and my colleague Luc Turgeon (University of Ottawa) shows that 18- to 24-year-olds have more difficulty than other Canadians in expressing their opinions on the quality of democracy in Canada, and even about the integrity of Elections Canada!

For example, when we polled Canadians on what they think of the state of Canadian democracy, the proportion of respondents who had an opinion on all five questions asked was 90% among those over 35; 78% among those 25 to 34; and only 69% among those 18 to 24. In comparison, when discussing the major social issues that Canada faces, young Canadians expressed their opinions as readily as their elders (see Figure 1).

Our study also showed that respondents who had opinions on the state of Canadian democracy were more inclined to vote than those who did not. While 92% of the respondents who expressed an opinion on the five questions about the state of Canadian democracy were regular voters, only 69% of those who expressed no opinion on those questions voted regularly, even when interest in politics was taken into consideration. Such a correlation was not observed for opinions on major social issues (see Figure 2). While a positive opinion about the state of our democracy can generate enthusiasm and encourage voting to demonstrate support for the system, and a negative opinion can generate a sense of urgency to change things, a lack of opinion is associated with apathy.

Although knowing where, when and the ways to vote are necessary to exercise your civic duty, opinions on the state of democracy also have a role to play. Therefore, apathy is more than a behaviour; it is a state of mind, a lack of opinion as to how Canadian democracy works. It now remains to be seen whether young people have a lower level of opinion because they lack experience with the Canadian political system or because they are profoundly disengaged from it.

4.05
INDIA: ROLE OF MOBILE AND ICT IN VOTER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Election Commission of India has come a long way in incorporating technology in elections. Use of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and recently introduced Voter-Verified Paper audit Trail (VVPAT) have changed the scenario of elections from paper ballot and manual counting to entire process turning electronic with results available at the click of the button!

Moreover, Low electoral participation in urban centres, which manifests itself in low EP ratio in urban centres and lower turnout in elections, was taken up as a major challenge. The reasons were found to be many, mainly among which are urban apathy, migratory population, information gap and also facilitation issues. While facilitation was carried out through easy information access, Suvidha, Samadhan, Sugam, SMS reminders, name search facility on electoral rolls and online registration, the motivation gap was attempted to be countered through innovative mobilization activities to catch the interest of urban voters. ECI's collaboration with popular Radio and Television channels besides the public broadcaster Doordarshan and All India Radio, also aimed at bridging the urban participation gap.

EVM (electronic voter machine): *Now casting a vote is just a click away…*
Electronic Voting Machines ('EVM') are being used in Indian General and State Elections to implement electronic voting in part from 1999 elections and in total since 2004 elections. The EVMs reduce the time in both casting a vote and declaring the results compared to the old paper ballot system. Indian voting machines use a two-piece system with a **balloting** unit presenting the voter with a button (momentary switch) for each choice connected by a cable to an electronic ballot box. In order to ensure that there is no tampering and security qualms the Election Commission decided to introduce EVMs with Voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT) system. The Voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT) system was introduced in 8 of 543 parliamentary constituencies as a pilot project in Indian general

election, 2014. With this the country has ensured efficient and fair elections, thanks to the innovative technology that was introduced.

Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) system:
Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) is a method of providing feedback to voters. It is completely an independent verification system. For those uninitiated, VVPAT is a printer-like machine attached to every EVM that allows voters to verify that their vote has been cast correctly. Once a voter presses button of his choice in the EVM, a printed paper appears containing the name of the candidate and poll symbol so that he can verify it. After the voter views the receipt it goes inside a container linked to the EVM, which can be accessed only by the polling officers. This latest system is one step further towards prevention of electoral fraud.

During an All Party Meeting in 2010, political parties floated the suggestion of incorporating VVPAT along with the EVMs. Based on the suggestion, an Expert Committee was called into action to examine the possibility of a paper trail. The election commission also asked Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Electronics Corporation of India Limited (ECIL) to create a prototype of VVPAT system.

Going by the overall positive feedback from the voters, the election commission is now keen on increasing the usage of VVPAT devices in the forthcoming assembly elections. Since the device is compatible only with those EVMS manufactured after 2006, the commission is trying to achieve "all India VVPAT coverage" by 2019 elections.

Polling Station Location on Google Map:
The commissionintroduced a web-based module to help users find their polling station location on Google map. Not just this, but also the names of election officials (CEOs, DEOs, EROs, and BLOs along with their mobile Nos.) were displayed for the polling booths. A proper database of the electoral rolls in pdf format of State / UT is also linked with them.

SMS Alert:
In order to ensure that even the most minute notification

or information is not missed by the general public, ECI makes use of SMS alerts by sending information, reminders and acknowledgments about every event that is happening or is on the cards. Be it granting permissions, or filling complaints, or monitoring the progress of daily activities, the ECI's SMS alert initiative has improved its engagement with the public.

Single Window System (SWS, Suvidha)
Acknowledging the innumerable permissions needed by the candidates and political parties, the state of Bihar has come ahead with on-line SWS, which aims to make the electoral process a lot more convenient. Under this, various SWSs, each headed by a nodal officer, with a time limit of 24 hours have been set up at every RO level in each sub division. Putting an end to the earlier manual ways of working, the SWS software has come forward as a blessing for electronic and efficient monitoring, managing, processing and granting of permissions/ applications. One can apply for permission, scan, sign and get their applications accepted, either by logging on to http://ceobihar.nic.in/ and filling up an easy to comprehend on-line form or using the android mobile application. Furthermore, one would receive a confirmation via SMS for the same. The applications are processed and granted through the software itself. The software also enable applicants to monitor application It provides information about pendency, progress and expiry of time to both the applicant as well as the nodal officers. In order to ensure that SWS awareness is achieved, various training and orientation sessions coupled with sufficient adverting are organized.

Public Grievance Redressal system (Samadhan)
giving a revolution to the old system of redressal, which solely depended upon of-line mechanisms , an efficient on-line public grievance redressal system was introduced. This ensured multiple filing, processing, tracking and acknowledgment of complaints. Complaints can also be filed via innumerable other sources like SMS, Email, helpline or even physically to the concerned authority. In order to provide more convenience, a user friendly android mobile app, available on Google playstore has been developed. One of the immensely impressive facility is the provision for forwarding complaints to the Flying Squad. Extensive training and orientation is provided to all the concerned IT officials and functionaries. Under Samadhan all the complaints are processed, submitted and lodged online. The complaint monitoring system is equally efficient which within a fixed time limit ensures that the complainant receives SMS about every single action taken with respect to his complaint. The samadhan system has successfully ensured that the redressal process is speedy and efficient. The ECI has ascertained that proper training and orientation sessions coupled with necessary publicity, are organized in oder to educate the political parties at state and district level.

Vehicle Management System (VMS,Sugam)
The ECI has come ahead with a well planned VMS with an objective of systematizing the process of vehicle registration and allotment for the purpose of election duties. As a result of VMS, scores of vehicles are now registered and released with full/partial payment and crores of rupees have been paid via it till date. The process can be commenced by logging on to www.ceobihar.nic.in and accessing it with a user-name and password on the VMS link. After all this is done, an easy to comprehend form opens up, which is supposed to be filled in properly by the said person. The form enables the user to save a report regarding their vehicle. It also helps them in viewing all the essential details; from verifying the officer's name to the district wise consolidated figures. Conclusively, Sugam has eased the earlier cumbersomeness, which accompanied the concept of traditional vehicle related processes.

Voter Quotient
The importance of IQ (Intelligence Quotient) and EQ (Emotional Quotient) in our social existence is something that just cannot be questioned. In line with this thought the office of Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh state in India, conceived the idea of VQ (Voter Quotient). The idea was to engage the voters in the electoral process and what could have been better than a quiz to make this possible? Termed "Know your VQ" quiz, it was launched months ahead of the polls, and garnered a lot of attention.As part of this online quiz, a person gets to check his/ her Voter Quotient by answering certain questions

related to the voting system. This quiz educated participants about the voting system and also encouraged them to know more about it. The quiz, in all, has around 100 questions and all of them are randomised each time a user logs in to play the quiz. To make it more exciting, the quiz is set in three levels with increasing complexity. Each level has ten questions each and you get to play the next level only when you manage to score 65 per cent in the first two levels. To clear the third level, you have to score a minimum of 75 per cent. The quiz "**Know your VQ**" w was made more engaging by giving mementos (T-shirts, caps and mugs) to the winners, ensuring enthusiastic participation. A gala ceremony was organised to felicitate the VQ winners.

ECI Youtube and Voter Education Channel

Of late, the use of social media in India has seen a wide upsurge. More and more people are turning to the web for information and internet utilities. Commission's Voter Education Channel on You Tube is a first ever effort to utilize this prolific platform to reach out to internet users and create voter awareness. The official Voter education Channel on Youtube aims at spreading awareness for improved electoral participation. The channel hosts numerous videos including those from States and Union Territories on enrolment, ethical voting, National and State Brand Ambassadors' messages, National Voters' Day, use of EVM and so on. Several music videos, songs, anthems, animations and audio-visuals from across the country have been featured at one-point web location. The channel is under continuous updation and one can easily subscribe to it with the click of a button in order to receive updates. Chief Electoral Officers, who head the election offices in each state, have also launched their own state specific channels on the Youtube platform.

National Audio-Visual Campaign

ECI strategically developed and rolled out a national campaign for voter awareness as a part of the SVEEP programme. Under this centrally anchored campaign, Radio and TV spots and jingles entitled *"Vote Zarur Dalein"* and other Radio and TV spots featuring national Icon, were broadcast across the country. Public service broadcasters Doordarshan and All India Radio and other partner media houses such as Zee News and Red FM lent valuable support in taking the message to the target groups. The

audio-visuals that talked about Voting as a precious right and opportunity along with its importance in shaping the future of the nation and individuals were simultaneously disseminated through the ECI Voter Education Channel on Youtube for online viewers. Melodious jingles struck resounding chords with the rural and urban audiences and motivated them to come out and vote in huge numbers.

Different provinces in India adopted different communication techniques, e.g

- An audio-visual music album titled *"Amra Swadhin"* was launched. Shot entirely with common people, the album tapped on common emotions to exhort people to vote. The music video was aired on social media like YouTube, Facebook, TVs installed in metro stations, cable channels, Radio FM channels, partner bank branches, and different shops.
- FM Radio Channel 'Fever 104' launched a campaign, called *"Each One Kheench One"* thaturged listeners to convince at least one more person each, to vote.The campaign aimed at motivating people to vote and also tag along a friend to vote.
- Keeping in mind the wide outreach of social media aFacebook Page of the Election Department, was created where day to day SVEEP activities were updated.
- Taking a cue from the growing role of social media, the e-chain was created which aimed at connecting people virtually on Facebook. The voter had to get a photo clicked holding his/ her EPIC and upload the image on the Facebook page of CEO, and also leave a message for voters, urging them to vote.
- **ECI** entered into a pro bono partnership with the popular FM Channel 'Radio Mirchi' to reach out to youth. This proved to be a very powerful medium for message dissemination.

Partnership with Media & Telecom

Besides the government media, private media, particularly radio played a major role in voter education across India. Private FM channels were roped in extensively in numerous provinces all over India during the elections. Cell phone companies also played a major role in delivering information to voters with government as well as private service providers extending SMS service on poll day. Certain initiatives were as follows:

- In one province, on screen information display system was initiated on the cell phones of BSNL mobile subscribers which had messages on registration and voting displayed on 2,00,000 mobile screens for ten days. Additionally, more than 4,50,000 SMS messages and 2,40,000 prerecorded voice calls were sent to mobile users of all networks.
- At tourist places, events were organized through a Radio Jockey during the peak tourist

season, with the themes of "Stop Complaining and Start voting and Come out to vote".

Often media groups, the newspapers, radio channels and television channels run their own campaigns to encourage voter registration and voting. Media awards in electronic and print category are awarded each year for an outstanding and focused campaign with 360 degree approach to voter awareness thus enhancing electoral participation.

How the Commission combats various challenges with the help of technology:

Challenge	IT Solution
☐ Monitoring Election process at every level.	☐ Observer Management Applications ☐ ECI officers Portal ☐ Election Monitoring Dashboard ☐ Poll monitoring dashboard
☐ Centralised control for placing requirements and maintaining records of EVM distribution.	☐ EVM Monitoring system (EMS) ☐ EMS Mobile App ☐ EMS Training
☐ Manage to create institutional memory from statistical information during elections. ☐ Trends and Results Dissemination ☐ To display candidate affidavits ☐ To display various statistical reports	☐ A General election management System (Genesys) ☐ Pre-Counting AND Counting Application ☐ Trends & Results Portal ☐ Index card data Entry and Statistical report generation ☐ Polling Party Registration ☐ Affidavit display system
☐ Quality services to stakeholders	☐ Electoral Roll Management System (ERMS) ☐ Public Grievance Readdress system (PGRS) ☐ National Voter Service Portal

4.06

KENYA: A MODEST BEGINNING ON TECHNOLOGY IN ELECTORAL PROCESS AND VOTER EDUCATION

A-Web Undertakes ICT Capacity Building for IEBC Staff:
A team from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), ICT directorate has lauded the training programmes undertaken by the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB).

A delegation led by IEBC ICT Director James Muhati underwent a capacity building and training program, conducted in Incheon, Republic of Korea in May-June 2015.

This was the first project to be implemented after the signing of the MoU between A-WEB and IEBC in March, 2015. A-WEB, in signing the MoU with IEBC, has identified key areas especially in Voter Education and ICT which needed strengthening as the Commission prepares

for the 2017 General Elections.

In 2011, Election Management Bodies and international organizations worldwide launched the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) in Seoul, South Korea as an international electoral organization for the development of democracy. A-WEB has since initiated programmes for sharing knowledge and experience, capacity building, empowering electoral legal systems and promoting civic participation in electoral processes.

University Students Learn about Electoral Systems:
University students have been urged to take the lead role in conducting voter education in the community in Kenya.

Speaking at a meeting with Moi University Applied Statistics students, IEBC Commissioner Muthoni Wangai said universities, being hubs of knowledge, should spearhead the inculcation of democratic principles and values in society.

IEBC officials took the students through management of electoral data as well as basics in voter education. The learners got a chance to interact with the **Results Transmission System (RTS), Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) as well as Electronic Voter Identification (EVID).**

Commissioner Wangai called on the students to acquaint themselves with provisions of the constitution and promote the concept of equity in gender representation. The students were on an academic visit to IEBC hosted by the Directorate of Voter Education and Partnerships to learn about collection, tabulation, analysis and interpretation of electoral statistics.

4.07

NEW ZEALAND: THE ORANGE ELECTIONS MAN

Background
The NZ Electoral Commission **(Elections New Zealand)** is responsible for the conduct of parliamentary elections and referenda. It is also responsible inter alia for voter enrolment, support to broadcast of election programmes, advice, reports and public education on electoral matters and induction of new technology in the electoral process on a continued basis.

Communication Strategy: Objectives
The key objectives for the communication strategy, 2011 were to:
- Inform people about the need to be enrolled to vote, to be correctly enrolled, how and when to do it;
- Contribute to achieving the maximum number

of enrolments and accuracy levels;
- Contribute to voters knowing and understanding how, when and where to vote;
- Help make it as easy as possible for people to vote;
- Help ensure political parties, candidates and others know their rights and obligations as per law;
- Provide information on election and voting system for referendum in a coordinated manner;
- Strengthen public confidence in the electoral system;
- Contribute to lower compliance costs for voters, parties, candidates and third parties.

'ORANGE ELECTIONS MAN OR 'ORANGE GUY'

A key feature of the Elections New Zealand online communication was **Orange Elections Man** character – or simply **Orange Guy,** designed by an ad agency Y & R. The character was not named so officially by the Elections NZ. It was the media coverage and public discussion that gave the character its popular name as 'Orange Elections Man'. The 'Orange Man' gained enormous popularity and public attention. People were charmed by this character in a big way. *New Zealand Listener* carried following write up to reflect this popularity:

"Not since fictional US banker Ira Goldstein charmed Kiwi hearts has an advertising creation entered the New Zealand consciousness as effectively as the Orange Elections Man. As ubiquitous in election year as immigrant bashing, Orange-man is everywhere – in your letterbox, on television, the Internet, your cell phone, billboards and the backs of buses. He's also a reason that New Zealand has one of the highest rates of electoral enrolment in the world. Now that the election date has been set,

Figure 1. *The 'Orange Elections Man' character developed for and used by Election, New Zealand.*

he talks to the Listener about democracy, castration and poor employment conditions for computer-animated figures………….."

PLATFORMS

Elections New Zealand used the **Web site:** http://www.elections.org.nz/ as an online platform to reach the target audiences. The Web site carries all the necessary information for NZ voters including New Zealand **Maori language information.** The site prominently displays RSS and Facebook icons as well as their **ambassador Orange Man**. A relatively high level of interactivity on the site is evident in Figure 2 below which shows single click links to 'enroll', 'have your say' on the MMP referendum, access maps and election results, etc.

Figure 2. *'Elections New Zealand' Web site home page.*

Facebook Community Page – https://www.facebook.com/IvoteNZ

The Facebook Page is hosted by the NZ Electoral Commission *Orange Man* character on the Web site, in advertising and in educational videos.

The page was promoted during peak periods via Facebook advertising and Search engine advertising. The key objective for Facebook was to engage directly with people and answer questions. During the 2011 general election campaign, all online advertising targeted at **young people** pointed to the Facebook page.

Interesting Feedback

The feedback identified two distinct and diverse users of the Facebook page – 'Newbie voters' (a key target audience) and 'political junkies' (scientists, commentators, psephologists etc), though the two groups have very different needs in information and participation.

YouTube – http://www.youtube.com/user/ReferendumNZ?ob=0

The channel was used intensively during the 2011 general election. It primarily stored television commercials,

innovative tools such as an interactive tool to help voters decide the electoral system they wanted in the referendum, and specific videos on topics such as the Single Transferable vote

Planning and strategy

Starting with Bebo in 2008 as a first step**, Elections New Zealand** approached its online engagement as "reactive and iterative" and event based for evolving a formal communication strategy. The EC NZ advertising agency took the lead in social media.

The EC NZ's overarching communication strategy lists its key audiences as:

- Voters and non-voters in New Zealand and overseas;
- First time enrollees;
- Enrolled but shifted to new place; and
- Yet to enroll.

Special emphasis was made on the groups traditionally difficult to reach with electoral information including:

Maori people;

- Pacific Peoples *(Pacifica);*
- 18–24 year olds;
- People from other ethnic backgrounds;
- People with disabilities; and
- Those who have changed their address and not updated their enrolment details.

Event-based or ongoing conversation

The EC NZ approach has been **primarily event-based** focusing on elections and referenda. Based on trial and error, the EC NZ developed their inference on stakeholder engagement and the time cycle

Social media policy and guidelines

The EC NZ has a social media policy which includes 'Rules of Engagement' for managing activities through outsourcing, the 'black ban' on political comment on Election Day careful management of discussion on the Election Day. This included advice to bloggers and political Web sites about 'do's and don'ts' under the law on Election Day.

Training and resourcing

Starting with the "valuable knowledge sharing" at senior levels, EC NZ utilized its younger staff as 'digital natives' "coming through the organisation who knew how to negotiate social media efficiently. The main activity covered the peak periods of the 2011 general election for the agency managing the Orange Man, to monitor and respond to public questions and comments on its Facebook page.

Measurement and monitoring

Google Analytics and platform analytic programs are used and the advertising agency sends reports through with overall metrics. Nevertheless, the EC NZ feels its use of social media has been successful.

Key learnings

- **Posting too regularly in periods of low electoral activity causes people to leave sites** such as a Facebook page. This indicates low interest levels and low relevance of information during non-election periods. The EC NZ does not plan regular social media activity until the next election period.
- **Provide content that is relevant your key audience** – The Commission noted that 'political junkies' can move the conversation on platforms such as Facebook in a direction that is not relevant to wider audiences. Being aware of this and steering the conversation is vital or, alternatively, provide separate 'rooms' and forums for different audiences.
- **Jump in** – social media move rapidly and warranting quick and efficient response system. Be flexible and responsive.
- **Get the tone right in social** – use of *Orange Man* meant that the Commission's tone was able to be informal, slightly colloquial and even slightly irreverent and which the Commission could not normally be.
- **Choose platforms wisely**. It is not necessary to use all platforms. Develop resource audience linkages for desired objectives.

Main opportunities

- Higher engagement levels for rather inaccessible Maori and Pacifica citizens.
- Utilise more user generated content (UGC) and storytelling on all platforms (i.e. encouraging people to upload videos about how they vote and why is it important to them).

Main challenges

Resourcing – Social Media takes a lot of time and appropriate levels of staffing are critical. Higher resource commitments are a challenge.

ORANGE GUY, THE MASCOT OF ELECTORAL COMMISSION, NEW ZEALAND

Orange Guy is the mascot used in electoral related advertising by the Electoral Commission NZ. He is an amorphous orange blob who usually takes on a human form, but can transform into any object as the situation warrants. His face is a smiley, and his chest sports the logo of the Electoral Commission. For radio and television, he

is voiced by actor John Leigh. Both the Electoral Commission logo and Orange Guy icon are trademarked to the Electoral Commission

4.08
VOTER EDUCATION IN THE US

INTRODUCTION:

The voter education system in the US is characterized by robust voter information system, vast voter resources, voter guides, voluntary guidelines, campus engagement programmes for universities and colleges, schools and involving students into the electoral process, mock election programme and achieving desired objectives through partnership building with non partisan, non profit organizations. Its strengths lie in strong technological base and its integration into each of the electoral processes besides the support from legislative framework.

Help America Vote Act:

Help America Vote Act was passed by the U.S. Congress in 2002 to make sweeping reforms to the nation's voting process including improvements to voting systems and voter access that were identified following the 2000 election. HAVA established the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to generate new mandatory minimum standards for states to follow in several key areas of election administration including voter education and related subjects and provide funding to help states meet these new standards. Section 101 of HAVA inter alia provides that the States shall utilize funds provided by the EAC for Educating voters concerning voting procedures, voting rights, and voting technology. EAC is also responsible for maintaining the National Voter Registration form, conducting research, and administering a national clearinghouse on elections that includes shared practices, information for voters and other resources to improve election administration.

Strategic Interventions for Voter Education:

Backed by the HAVA legislative provisions, EAC's strategic interventions for voter information and education focus broadly on the following thrust areas:

- Prescribe Minimum standards for electoral administration through consultative process and ensure compliance. Comprehensive Voter Resources and Library
- Comprehensive and easy to access Voter Information for all categories of voters.
- User friendly informative and web based voter registration, National Mail Voter Registration Form.
- Voluntary voter education Guidelines prepared through consultative process
- Voter Education Guides in different languages
- Engage students through Help America Vote College Programme for campus engagement for universities and colleges.
- National Student and Parent Mock Election.
- Help America Vote Foundation
- Partnerships with non-partisans and non-profits for achieving the desired objectives.
- Media including Social media
- EAC funding for inter alia above areas.
- Powerful Technology driven base and tools for entire electoral process including voter education.

Each of these areas is discussed in brief in the following:

EAC Voter Resources: One of EAC's primary mandates under the Help America Vote Act is to serve as a central resource for information about elections. Through EAC's national clearinghouse, the public can conveniently access necessary information about topics such as registering to vote and serving as a poll worker along with studies on how, where and when to vote. EAC maintains the National Mail Voter Registration Form (in seven languages), which can be used in any state to register to vote and update their registration information for a federal election. EAC also provides information about registering to vote and contact information for the state election offices. Resources for Voters may be listed as follows

- Register and Vote in Your State.
- National Mail Voter Registration Form
- Become a Poll Worker
- Overseas and Military Voters
- Voting Accessibility
- Election Calendar
- Election Resource Library
- Helpful Links
- Voter Guides
- Social Media Sites of Election offices
- The Electoral College

The entire information and guidance for action on any of these resource areas is just a few clicks away for the voters on EAC website.

Voter Information:

- EAC is mandated to establish and maintain a clearinghouse of inter alia the following information to be available to the public on:
- Voluntary guidance adopted by EAC regarding the following HAVA mandates: voting system standards, provisional voting and voting information requirements, computerized statewide voter registration list requirements and requirements for voters who register by mail
- Information on the experiences of state and local governments in implementing the voluntary Voting System Guidelines and in operating voting systems in general.
- The Help America Vote College Program.
- EAC's responsibilities under the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) which includes the development and maintenance of the national voter registration form.
- Studies regarding election administration issues and other activities to promote the effective administration of Federal elections
- Compilation of federal and state laws and procedures regarding election administration and voting.

Relevant extract of Section 206 of HAVA regarding information dissemination is reproduced below for reference:

SEC. 206. Dissemination of Information. In carrying out its duties, the Commission shall, on an ongoing basis, disseminate to the public (through the Internet, published reports, and such other methods as the Commission considers appropriate) information on the activities carried out under this Act.

(Easy access to the relevant electoral information is of significant educative value to the voter and facilitates in making informed choices.)

Register and Vote in Your State: e Spatial:
EAC provides on its webpage an interactive map to facilitate voters to quickly access requisite information in their state about registering to vote, where to vote, what is on the ballot and all other relevant information. This webpage is created with e Spatial mapping software and is helpful to the voters both as an educative and an informative tool in the electoral process.

College and High School Student Engagement Programmes for Voter Registration:
College and High school voter registration programmes are an effective means of increasing electoral participation among young people. To address low turnout among youth, a number of states, counties, and cities across the country have adopted laws, administrative rules, and mandates to increase youth participation through college and high school voter registration programmes. These programmes help in educating youth in civic and electoral process and are supported by legislative framework of HAVA and appropriate funding by EAC

A Voter's Guide to Federal Elections:
Voter Guides are highly informative and simple to read and cover all aspects of electoral process and available on EAC website. The guide is intended to help voters successfully navigate the Federal election process in a holistic manner from registering to vote through casting a ballot on Election Day. In addition to providing the basics of casting a ballot, this guide includes information on voter eligibility, early voting, alternative registration and voting processes for uniformed and overseas citizens, and polling place accommodation that make voting more accessible to all sections of voters.

The voter guide is available in eleven languages: Cherokee, Chinese, Dakota, English, Japanese, Korean, Navajo, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Yupik so as to maximize the voter coverage. The Guides provide relevant links for helpful resources to voters on registration, military and overseas voting, accessibility, and volunteering as a poll worker. The EAC Voter Guides are available in the Election resource Library (e- library) of the EAC on its website.Different states also publish Voter Guides for the elections in their respective domain.

Voter Education Handbook 2015 Primary Election in Philadelphia
This voter education handbook issued by the Office of City Commissioner, Philadelphia in May 2015, is designed to provide information to voters who wish to participate in the 2015 Primary Election. It contains useful information on registering to vote, how to vote, as well as the offices up for election that voters may choose from for the upcoming election.
Additional information is available at www.philadelphiavotes.com or by calling the Philadelphia Board of Elections at 215-686-1590.

Voluntary Guidance on Voter Education for Electoral Process:
The U.S. Election Assistance Commission, in view of the mandate under Section311 of HAVA, has developed and adopted a series of voluntary guidelines for voter education and election management in collaboration with local election officials and consultative process envisaged under Section 311 of HAVA. These guidelines provide valuable guidance on best practices in strengthening the voter education programmes besides managing efficient and effective elections.

Voter education as such, has a significant impact on voter turnout. Well planned and well designed pro-

grammes do motivate and encourage electorate to participate in the electoral process in an enlightened manner and in larger numbers. EAC has suggested seven tips to help strengthen the voter education programmes. The guidelines covered under the caption '7 Tips' have exhaustive lists of the areas to be covered for voter education.

'7 Tips To Strengthen Voter Education Programs':

- Understand your voters.
- Keep your Web Site current.
- Try Social Media as an educational tool.
- Rely on a variety of media.
- Give voters personal attention.
- Create a voter toolkit.
- Coordinate education across platforms.

The guidelines suggest development ofeducational programmes inter alia based on review and analysis of the past voting data and integration of high-grade technological tools for voter information and education.

Informed voters are empowered voters: The EAC document provides answers to 14 common questions from citizens about voting in Federal elections. The questions range from registering to vote through casting a ballot on Election Day.

EAC's '10 Tips To Enhance Your Voting Experience':

The EAC document titled 'Know the voting process in your State before you vote in the next election' provides 10 tips from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission and is intended to enhance voting experience.

EAC's '6 Tips For Helping UOCAVA Voters and their Families':

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) collaborated with the U.S. Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) to develop these tips for working with Service members, their families and citizens residing overseas.

Service members, their families and overseas citizens face unique challenges in registering to vote and in requesting, receiving and returning their ballots. These six tips can help you more efficiently navigate the process for this special group of absentee voters. Some of these documents fall under the category of Quick Start Management Guides

All these guidelines are available on the EAC website for voters and others for information and guidance. All the guidelines documents have links embedded for quick follow up on action points.

Voting Accessibility:

EAC Commemorates the 25th Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by hearing 'How to Make Voting More Accessible for Individuals with Disabilities' The event was intended to explore ways to make voting more accessible for individuals with disabilities. Commissioners heard testimony from accessibility advocates, experts, and individuals with disabilities regarding the progress made to ensure HAVA's requirement that individuals with disabilities be given the same opportunity to vote freely and independently as other voters.

Accessible Voting Technology Initiative:

The EAC's Accessible Voting Technology Initiative (AVTI) supports accessibility research on transformative technologies and approaches. Through the AVTI, the EAC has produced over 45 solutions for assisting voters with disabilities. The initiatives include the EAC's Military Heroes grant to provide assistance needed for recently injured military personnel to participate in elections.

Resources for Voters with Disabilities:

This comprehensive list of resources for voters with disabilities includes links to voting accessibility laws and regulations and the latest best practices and research pertaining to voters with disabilities and elderly voters.

EAC's '6 Tips for Making Voting Accessible':

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission has collaborated with local election officials to develop a series of helpful tips for election management. This series provides ideas and suggests best practices to help run efficient and effective elections.The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Help America Vote Act(HAVA) require that all Americans have the same opportunity to participate in the voting process, privately and independently. These tips and examples can help you make voting accessible to everyone in your jurisdiction.

EAC's '10 Tips for Voters with Disabilities' (Quick Start Series):

Before you vote in the next election, know the voting process in your State. The following tips from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission examine the options available to help voters with disabilities vote privately and independently.

'4Tips for Managing Alternative Voting Methods':

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission has collaborated with local election officials to develop a series of helpful tips for election management. This series provides tips and suggests best practices to help you run efficient and effective elections. Nationwide voting has slowly moved from one Election Day toward an election period of several days or weeks that can involve a variety of methods for voting. Maintaining the accuracy, security and integrity of elections despite having to manage these multiple methods of voting is still expected by the public.

Overseas and Military voters Accessible Voting Technology Initiative The EAC's Accessible Voting Technology Initiative (AVTI) supports accessibility research on the subject

Language Accessibility Resources:

As mandated by the Help America Vote Act, the EAC Language Accessibility Program studies and promotes accessibility in voting, registration, polling places and voting equipment. The materials EAC issues are the product of collaboration among working groups comprising election officials, advocacy groups and research and public policy organizations.

The EAC's Language Accessibility Program has developed Glossaries of Election Terminology, Voter's Guides to Federal Elections and the National Mail Voter Registration Form. These resources are important in helping election officials provide translated voting materials at a lower cost.

Glossary of Election Terminology:

Our glossaries are available in six languages: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. The glossaries contain 1,843 terms and phrases used in the administration of elections in the United States. To ensure the translations were culturally and linguistically appropriate, terms were translated and reviewed by a multi-dialect team of translators representing the main regions of each language. For example, the Spanish to English Glossary was produced by teams represented from four of the main regions of origin of the Hispanic population living in the U.S: Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Central America. Refer to EAC Resource Library at its website for all glossaries.

EAC's Virtual Public Forum:

EAC's Virtual Public Forum provides a public platform where members of the EAC Standards Board and Board of Advisors can view and provide comments on EAC work products. Members of the public can participate by viewing documents and board members' comments. From this screen, the public can access materials from any current forum, as well as archived comments and documents from previous forums. The meetings of the forum are notified for public information and participation. The forum can be accessed through links in EAC website.

SUPPLEMENT: USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CEEP

ONLINE TOOLS:

Check our our collection of election engagement sites with registration and voter information, maps, widgets, webinars & more!

CAMPUS ELECTION ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

ROCK THE VOTE'S REGISTRATION WIDGET

As we enter the 2013 and 2014 election seasons, Rock the Vote (RTV) wants to work with you to deliver this free service to your fans, friends, and community. Start registering voters today – sign up for RTV's online voter registration tool, embed the widget on your website, promote your customized tool via email and mobile lists and on your social networks, & more. To download RTV's Registration Widget Guide, click here. For next steps to downloading the widget, click here and get ready to register voters!

ELECTION PROTECTION APP

When it comes to registering and voting, having the right information can often mean the difference between casting a ballot and being left out of the process. Americans are much more accustomed to receiving information via their mobile phones. This election cycle, it's vital for voters to be able to access key information right in the palm of their hand. In order to meet the needs of the Digital Age, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, National Association of Latino Appointed and Elected Officials Education Fund, New Organizing Institute, Rock the Vote and Verified Voting Foundation have joined forces to deploy the Election Protection Smartphone Application to provide all information and resources, in English and Spanish (branded Ya Es Hora), that voters need to fully participate in the elections. The Election Protection App will is now available on all Smartphones and provides all the information and resources voters need to register and cast a meaningful ballot in the palm of their hands. The app allows voters to:

- Verify their registration;
- Register to vote;
- Look up their polling place;
- Review key voting rules and regulations for their state;
- See what type of machine they vote on;
- Contact Election Protection via phone or email to report a problem or get answers.
    It also allows schools to get a customized sign-up page (modeled on Rock the Vote widget) where you can track student registrations and follow up with customized emails or text messages to highlight key dates, like deadlines for them to help their friends register, early voting information, or campus Get Out the Vote events. To get your sign-up page, so you can distribute the app to your students, fill out this form.

STUDENT PIRGs NEW VOTER PROJECT

The Student PIRGs' New Voter Project supports massive registration and "get out the vote" drives and provides support and a national voice for student groups involved in the election. They also have their own modified version of the Rock the Vote online registration tool, which you should use if you have PIRG chapter on your campus.

VOTE WITH FRIENDS

Leverage your network on Facebook to get out the vote! Set up a voting block on Vote With Friends and rally more people who care about your issue to vote than ever before. Set up your custom Vote With Friends portal, activate your networks, and empower all of your supporters to become their own get-out-the-vote operations. See who's voting→Get a voting block→

VOTE411

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information including:

- State-by-state voting and registration information, with requirements & deadlines
- Online registration tool,
- Polling place finder,
- Candidate and ballot information,
- Absentee ballot information
- Ballot measure information (where applicable)
- Early voting options (where applicable)
- Election dates
- Factual data on candidates in various federal, state and local races
- General info on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye
- ID requirements
- Polling place locations
- Registration deadlines
- Voter qualifications
- Voter registration forms

League of Women Voters

State Voting Tool

GOOGLE POLL FINDER

Google Poll Finder: The Google Poll Finder tool is now live! It uses official information from state elections offices and Secretaries of State to provide voters with current voting information.

- Type in your address to find your polling place and directions.
- Use the Ballot Summary Menu Bar on the right to view your candidate choices for president, Congress, and state legislatures.
- Embed the tool on your website to raise the profile of the election.
- Share the link with your audience.
- Set up a computer in your lobby on Election Day to allow voters to check their voting information.

MORE FROM ROCK THE VOTE

Voter registration tool that you can add to your website, blog, and Facebook page profile. (For campuses with student PIRG chapters, use the similar PIRG tool below)

Electionland is the place where you can ask and answer questions on everything related to elections in your state. You can find out about the elections, register to vote, and learn more about the voting process. You get access to experts and election officials. In some states, you can even ask candidates questions directly.

Voting System Scorecard serves as a national benchmark that measures state laws and policies in three key areas: (1) voter registration, (2) casting a ballot and (3) young voter preparation. The 21-point scale evaluates each state's implementation of policie that increase access to the political process.

Rock the Vote also created a video on the history of American voting!

Rock the Vote

Widge Registration

Voting System Scorecard

Electionland

FAIR ELECTIONS LEGAL NETWORK'S CAMPUS VOTE PROJECT

FELN is an excellent source on new voting rules, doing webinars and giving expert advice on how to work within them, as well as advocating for policies that expand the electoral franchise and challenging those that narrow it.

Their Campus Vote Project has an excellent toolkit on organizing a campus. It can help campuses organize, activate, and reach election and voter engagement goals.

FELN's Best Practice webpage offers excellent examples of election engagement efforts from previous elections.

Fair Elections Legal Network's Campus Vote Project

Toolkit

Best Practice Webpage

NONPROFIT VOTE

NonprofitVOTE.org - hosts direct links to state registration and voting rules.

Nonprofit VOTE also has live and archived webinars, and voter engagement, staying nonpartisan, research, and other resources.

NonprofitVOTE's Starter Kit offers an introduction to nonpartisan voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote work. It emphasizes how to integrate voter engagement into your organization's ongoing activities and services.

With one click on NonprofitVOTE's widgets and badges, visitors are taken either to the home page of Nonprofit VOTE or to your state's voter information page (depending on the badge you choose).

If schools (or community groups their volunteer centers serve) are unsure about 501(c)(3) guidelines, they can watch Nonprofit Vote's relevant webinar on YouTube, download their PowerPoint presentation, or their audio portion.

Here's a list of their upcoming webinars.

Nonprofit Vote

Webinars

Widgets

Starter Kit

PROJECT VOTE SMART

Project Vote Smart gives users access to candidates' and representatives'biographies, voting records, interest group ratings, issue positions, public statements, and campaign finances.

Project Vote Smart's Easy Vote interactive online tool allows users to compare their and presidential candidates' stances on 13 different issues. The site also allows users to explore candidate's political background.

Project Vote Smart

Easy Vote interactive online tool

ELECTION PROTECTION HOTLINE

866ourvote.org, from the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, offers both a website and an toll free number to connect with voting rights experts who can advise you on issues relating to voter identification, registration rules and voter rights.

A new report, Got ID? Helping Americans Get Voter Identification provides an outline for how state and local organizations can stand up for democracy by helping voters secure the necessary ID. The report draws lessons

from programs implemented by interviewees and details the best strategies that community groups are using to help voters ensure they'll be able to vote

ELECTION PROTECTION YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE

866ourvote.org

GOT ID?
Helping Americans Get Voter Identification

Got ID? Helping Americans Get Voter Identification Report

LONG DISTANCE VOTER

Long Distance Voter's website helps you get your absentee ballot in three easy steps. An excellent resource for students studying abroad!

long distance VOTER
register to vote
verify your registration
request your absentee ballot

Long Distance Voter

SUPPORT CEEP

We're raising funds for our 2016 work and beyond. Please visit our DONATE page to contribute — every dollar helps!

4.09
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The issues faced are as follows:

- Voter information and the voter education resources availability through websites certainly provide both the efficacy and efficiency in dissemination of information. However, it assumes uniformly easy access to the computers, networks and certain degree of literacy. The assumption may not be true in certain areas. Does it contribute to digital divide and affect deepening of democracy.
- The impact of easy access through e-resources on voter turnouts as compared to the conventional means; whether any well designed research studies on impact analysis have been carried out

on a continued basis.
- Voter information and voter education resources are provided by EMB's in the form of e-resources or in print form or in the both forms in different countries. Does the dissemination as e-resources reduce costs and reduce demand for print copies?
- Impact of social media in addressing voter apathy especially amongst youth voters: Has the use of social media helped in engaging youth and improved the voter turnout amongst youth voters. Experience sharing based on empirical studies may be of help.
- The process of electoral campaigning, particularly the roles of parties and the news media, have been transformed during recent decades. Concerns have been raised that these developments have caused, general apathy especially among youth, from the traditional modes of electoral participation in representative democracies.
- Introduction of new technologies involves additional costs. Government has to dedicate sufficient funds to implementing any changes.
- Sufficient time must be available for detailed planning, running of pilot schemes, training and evaluation.
- A substantial proportion of social media use is personal and entertainment-orientated, focused on self-identity construction and what organizations regard as trivia.
- Social media are usually open to public comment, may disseminate vitiating criticism, other disruptive information such as spoofs, parodies, 'send-ups' and satire. How is this problem tackled?
- Social media sites need to attract audiences. Audiences are not pre-assembled, as in case of mass media. New social media sites start 'from scratch' in terms of audience and need to engage in audience-making as well as content production, a factor overlooked in many social media initiatives. Static informational sites usually do not attract significant audiences. In such cases content needs to be attractive to target demographics, often requiring multimedia and interactive content, as well as opportunities for visitors to comment and even contribute their own content.

The Challenges are listed as below:

- Control on conversations and topics in case of social media engagement is weak and the fact needs acknowledgement in online engagement as a challenge
- Demand on resources comes up as a key issue in establishing, maintaining and engaging in social media. Stagnant, out-of-date sites may have a negative impact on an organization. Round the clock nature of social media places heavy

demands on staff and related costs. Further, large volumes of public comment and discussion pose a challenge to organizational listening and response capacity.

- Basic statistical data such as page visits, views, downloads, 'likes', 'followers', etc are plentiful in internet-based media, but outcomes data and evaluation are generally not available. Even at output level, social media users rely on free platform measurement tools such as Google Alerts and Facebook. Analytical studies for broad quantitative outcomes, with specific focus to demographics and qualitative analysis may help.
- Political neutrality and privacyhave not been perceived as issues in using social media. The rationale given for this view is that political neutrality is the norm in public service procedures; existing codes and guidelines apply to social media. However, the EMB's may soon require political neutrality guidelines for online engagement in respect of electoral processes including voting and training in 'managing conversations'.
- High levels of citizen engagement in social media necessitate creative approaches and adoption of social media practiceswhich are engrained in informality, irreverence including satire, entertainment and humor, and high levels of interactivity including collaboration and acceptance of user generated content.
- Elections New Zealand communication using Orange Manand the 2012 London Mayoral election 'Bite the Ballot' campaign are noteworthy examples of a creative and entertaining approaches.
- Cyber security, high degree of obsolescence and the costs associated with these factors need to be examined as challenges.

SECTION 5
VOTER EDUCATION FOR INFORMED AND ETHICAL VOTING

NO VOTER TO BE
LEFT BEHIND

SECTION 5

5.01
INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Citizens and Participation:
Citizen voice and participation are at the center of a democratic government. Citizens express their voice preferences for electing representatives through participation that is voting at elections.

Democracy depends on such participation. It also depends upon equal voice. One of the bedrock principles of democracy is the equal consideration of the needs and preferences of all citizens, a principle embedded in the notion of one person, one vote.

Informed citizens: Why Vote? Whom to Vote?:
An equal voice means that citizens should be good moral reasoners or social scientific reasoners, their preferences and values should have coherence and stability. They should be willing to transcend their preferences. They should have enough information to know how to pursue their goals and more so the common goals through politics and should be capable of making causal inferences about how their electoral participation and vote preferences lead to desired outcomes. They should be able to figure out, in terms of their preferred policy outcomes, whom to vote for or why one policy rather than another will affect their welfare. If they cannot reason about the political world, what do their expressed preferences mean? Democratic voice becomes meaningless.

Lack of Information and Political disengagement:

We need to examine as to why some people are active in political engagement why others are not. The answer may be derived by inverting the usual question and examining as to why people do not take part in politics. In this context, political disengagement of citizens suggests three causative factors:

- Because they can't: It suggests a paucity of necessary resources, time to take part, money to contribute to campaigns and other political causes, and skills to use time and money effectively.
- Because they don't want to: It focuses attention on the absence of political engagement lack of interest in politics or little concern with public issues, a belief that activity can make little or no difference, little or no knowledge about the political process, or other priorities.
- Because nobody asked: "Nobody asked" implies isolation from the networks of engagement through which citizens are mobilized to politics.

Citizens Need Information for Ethical Participation:
Any electoral system requires some level of information for successful voting. The complexity of the electoral systems increases the information burden for voters. Vote information can be divided roughly into three types:

(1) Practical, technical or process information about where, when and how to cast a vote

(2) contextual Information about the particular issues, policies, parties and candidates at Stake in any election; and

(3) broader political information about the role of elections in the wider democratic system.

Political scientists hold a range of views about the role of informed voting in a democracy, with some seeing it as critical to the health of a democracy and others viewing it as a relatively ineffective element of democratic life.

Suggestions to improve voter information and engagement can be divided into demand and supply side solutions. Demand side solutions include education programs and the like to make voters more aware of the current political system, while supply side solutions focus on making the political system more attractive and responsive to voters.

Do the citizens have relevant, unbiased, and accurate information or know how and where to source it for ethical engagement? Is the available information sufficient to make valid and ethical causal inferences about the likely consequences of exercise of participation and preferences? Further, moral and ethical commitments of citizens would be relevant for an effectively functioning democracy in which citizen voice is freely expressed?

Several EMB's have approached the subject under different approaches building awareness for qualitative electoral participation. Many papers have been included in this section for the purpose of supporting the interaction. The intention, while developing this Conference Reader, was to include as many papers as possible to learn from the experiences of other countries. However, the readings in the section have been presented to support the interaction on sharing of experiences by the participants.

5.02

INFORMING YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE NEED FOR CONSCIENTIOUS VOTING: VOTER OF THE FUTURE (ELEITOR DO FUTURO) IN BRAZIL

Introduction:

'Voter of the Future' (Eleitor do Futuro) program was launched at the time of presidential election of 2002 in Brazil. EDF was initiated as a parallel exercise with specific focus on youth belonging to the age group 10 to 15 years.

Aims and Objectives:

The program was aimed at generating a sense of civic responsibility for enhancing electoral participation in future voters. It was felt desirable to engage the youth to address the issue at an early age as in Brazil, voting is optional for youth over 16 years of age and mandatory for all citizens over 18 years of age. Thus the main objective was to encourage youth engagement with the political process and teaching of the skills necessary to engage them in electoral processes in an astute and informed manner.

Parallel Election for Young People, 2002:

During the 2002 parallel election held for young people under the EDF program. The Federal Electoral Court (FEC) provided necessary guidance, encouragement and support to the State Electoral Courts of Minas Gerais, Matto Grosso, Tocantins, Maranhao and Sau Poulo.The FEC assistance included permission to use the same electronic voting (e-voting) equipment as the formal vote for the ETF parallel elections. About 20,000 students of 10 to 15 years age group participated in these parallel election.

EDF Program: The Follow up:

Different states in the federation pursued the program in line with the national initiative of 2002. However, the follow up of the program lacked regularity and the rigor across different jurisdictions depending upon the interest taken by the Regional Electoral courts. In view of the positive outcome of the 2002 parallel mock vote, and building on a concern that the overall sense of citizenship needed to be supported and strengthened in a generation that had no memories of the dictatorship that ended in 1985, the Electoral Judiciary School of the Federal Electoral Court reviewed the EDF in consultation with the State Electoral Courts in 2003 and developed a revised a more detailed EDF.

Revised EDF Program:

The overall objective of the revised EDF program is to prepare Brazilian youth for responsibility of voting and in that process playing a determining in future of the country. The specifics of the roadmap and the focus age groups were left to the discretion of respective State Electoral Courts. The coverage of the age groups varied amongst the states between 10 and 15 years. Broadly the following objectives were accepted by all the SEC's for further follow up and action:

- Strengthening the sense of citizenship amongst children and adolescents in the age group 10 to 14 years.
- Motivate youth to actively engage in the

electoral process by voting, and to instill the capacity and desire to conscientiously exercise this right and responsibility to vote in the next generation of voters.

- Educate young people about good and bad electoral practices.
- To alert young people against practices and attitudes that vitiate electoral processes with a view to encouraging an ethical approach to electoral politics.

Approach and Methodology:
Different approaches and methods are used to achieve the objectives and goals of EDF. Nevertheless, the central theme of democratic electoral processes in all the cases remains the same i. e. conducting a free, fair and transparent mock vote as per law. In some cases the EDF vote parallels municipal elections while in others it parallels state or federal elections.

The Problem Areas:
One of the problem areas the EDF mock ballot faces is the level of partisanship that may emanate from real-world political parties and its resultant influence that can detract from the educational goals of the exercise. Regional Electoral Court of the Federal District of Brasilia recognized this problem and developed a fictional electoral process based on a series of artificial parties focusing on specific issues of interest to young people such as health, liberty, sport and leisure, public security and education.

Special Characteristic Features of EDF Process:
It would be appropriate to mention that the EDF mock election is conducted in a manner similar to the real process to provide genuine exposure to the youth. Thus a notable characteristic of the mock ballots coordinated by the state electoral authorities is their formal structure and the process. It includes:

- Advance training to the school staff and students in the proper operation of polling booths and electoral policing.
- Full formal mechanisms including deployment of presiding judicial institutions, including the need to complete specially generated candidate registration applications, with the local educational authorities playing the role of electoral registrar.
- Deployment of same e-voting machines that are used in formal elections.
- Results are tabulated and released in much the same manner as local, state and federal elections.

Impact Analysis and the Correction:
The EDF mock election has a special impact in states with a long standing tradition of vote-buying, partisan manipulation and disrespect of electoral laws. Focused and interactive seminars and lectures are held for explaining the substance of the electoral laws and the necessity for rule of law for the political process. In addition, exercise is undertaken to engage students in a discussion of the ethics in the political process with the objective to instill a sense of civic virtue that will undercut the residual aspects of *coronelismo,* or local political bosses controlling electoral outcomes through patronage and misuse of power.

The EDF program activities and its substantive impact depend on level of cooperation and support from the schools. Brazilian law prescribes compulsory education up to the age of 16. Cooperation from local education authorities is therefore, vital to the success of the program.

A major portion of the state electoral courts' efforts is directed towards development of the civic education curriculum and teacher's resources for the classroom.

Special attention is given to training of the teaching staff. Some of the states offer distance education programs to disseminate information and further advance the program's aims and objectives. Such initiatives may strengthen the expansion of federal initiative, which until now has been limited to larger urban areas. The latter results in limiting the number of participants and neglects the more remote parts of the country that have experienced serious electoral abuse.

While there is widespread awareness on existence of the EDF program, the actual exposure and participation is not commensurate with the effort and the outcome which needs substantive improvement in coverage of youth population.

Concluding Observations:
Finally the sense, that political participation is a wider civic responsibility, is bolstered by the approach that the Electoral Courts take in design and implementation of the EDF. Unlike previous federal and state programs that were handed down and imposed by the presiding institution, the EDF initiatives on the state level are explicitly inclusive, requiring the cooperation of, and input and active assistance from, not only educational authorities and individual schools but also a wide range of NGOs operating in areas ranging from democratic enhancement through youth education and capacity development to the more general enhancement of widespread citizenship and civic inclusiveness.

5.03

INDIA: ETHICAL AND INFORMED VOTING: CHALLENGES IN QUALITATIVE PARTICIPATION

The principle, philosophy, spirit and vision of Election

Commission of India lies in the empowerment of the citizen to voluntarily register and ethically vote in each and every election and also inculcate a perpetual and responsible democratic awareness. Informed and Ethical voting is an integral part of the voter education programme (acronym SVEEP for Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation) of Election Commission of India. It is one of the objectives spelled out for the SVEEP action plan i.e. *Promoting Ethical and Informed Voting*.

As part of their action plan ahead of elections, States and Districts identify expenditure sensitive constituencies and polling stations where focused campaign needs to be taken out on ethical voting. State SVEEP plan specifically mentions the measures to be taken in these identified areas on ethical and informed voting. Expenditure control guidelines are widely disseminated so that public can inform the election authorities about any violation of the Commission's instructions regarding expenditure during election campaigning by political parties and candidates. Quality creatives on ethical voting have been created at State and district level for wide dissemination or as well as on ECI website under 'SVEEP-Outreach Material-Ethical Voting' and under the 'Voter Education Channel'. Advertisement campaigns on provision of bribery etc can be undertaken as well.

In expenditure sensitive regions, the Booth Awareness Groups (BAGs), which are formed at each booth, are the dissemination hub for messages on ethical voting i.e. disseminating information about the electoral process, motivating people for participating in the electoral process through activities and facilitating their participation by extending support to the election machinery during election, roll revision and National Voters' Day celebrations.. BAGs ensure that adequate awareness material on registration and voting is available at the booth level in form of booklets, pamphlets, posters, A/V promos etc and also supervise its dissemination at suitable points. They organize street plays among the youth, and involve schools within their areas for street plays, games, quizzes, competitions etc based on the theme of electoral literacy. Electoral awareness has been facilitated in Aanganwadi centres through board games, film viewing, audio programmes, flash cards etc. Community Radio has been an important tool to engage with people for dissemination of electoral awareness. BAGs also supervise and partake in the mass mobilization activities during roll revision, National Voters Day celebrations and elections, while associating with stakeholders like Campus Ambassadors, senior citizens, retired officers, NSS or NCC Cadets, civil society organization for the same.

Besides, ethical and informed voting is highlighted in all SVEEP activities and events (even outside the expenditure sensitive areas). CSOs, Schools and Colleges are involved in spreading the message. Campus Ambassadors, who are selected by the Elections Office from among students in educational institutes, are the nodal point for dissemination information about the electoral process in the campuses. Promoting ethical and informed voting is an essential and important component of the role of the Campus Ambassador. Ethical and informed voting forms the component of the various edutainment and games (video and board games) designed for children and adults under the Ed-utainment category. Electoral literacy through curricula and extra-curricula that is being taken up for introduction in Schools also has ethical and informed voting'as an essential component.

In 2013, the theme of the National Voters' Day (25th January) was 'Ethical and Informed Voting' to promote quality electoral participation among people. The **Voters' Pledge** that is administered to the citizens on the occasion of the National Voters' Day (NVD) in the NVD function held across the country is essentially focussed on ethical voting. The same NVD pledge, is also prominently displayed in the polling booths on the day of election to reiterate the message of ethical voting.

An Example of success

Many initiatives have been taken up all over India for electoral awareness. Steps taken in a province of India, proved to be very successful. Here, the State election machinery took concrete steps to create awareness among the voters to cast their votes without any inducement with messages such as "Vote with conscience" "Vote without Note" " Vote without Fear", publishing about the legal penal provision of punishment for accepting and giving money for voting, conducting of signature campaigns, insisting ethical voting etc.,

For the first time in Indian elections,the contesting candidates in this province were requested to take a **pledge on ethical voting** immediately after filing of their nomination, to ensure spreading of the message that, as contesting candidates they too are interested in the conduct of clean and fair elections free of any monetary inducement for exercising ones democratic right. This commitment of the contesting candidates was widely disseminated in all the Media.

The contesting candidates were requested to take the following pledge while filing their nomi

> " I
>   Thiru/Tmt ……..
> the contesting candidate for ensuing elections to Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly 2016 wish to state that I am aware that giving money for votes and accepting money for votes is a punishable offence. I hereby pledge that during the election campaign with a view to influence the voters I will not offer money or material to voters and will also not encourage my party men or friends to directly or indirectly indulge in this crime."

Ethical Voting Pledge as a movement:

In addition to this, awareness was created among theelectors, on the importance to exercise one's franchise as per their conscience by taking an oath on ethical voting. All stake holders including Government departments, public sector undertakings, NGOs, CSOs and other partnership agencies were requested to take an oath on ethical voting on 10.05.2016 to spread the message of ethical voting and inducement free voting. As a result, on that day nearly around **1.65 Crore Stake holders** including members of political parties, media, Industries, Corporations, State and Central Government Departments, Public Sector units, Banks, Trade unions and employees' unions of various sectors, voluntarily came forward and participated in this mass movement of spreading the message of clean elections and took a pledge on ethical voting.

Ethical Voting Pledge

"I, the citizen of India, having faith in democracy, hereby pledge to vote ethically upholding the democratic traditions of my country and the dignity of free, fair and peaceful elections. I promise to vote in this election honestly, fearlessly and without taking money and without being influenced by any undue inducement. If I come to know of any malpractices, I shall bring it to the notice of electoral authorities for taking up corrective actions."

Effective Monitoring Mechanism – Use of Information Technology Tools

In order to promote ethical voting with a view to improve the confidence of all stake holders, the complaint monitoring mechanism was streamlined and an 'App' based complaints lodging system was introduced and timely action on the complaints received was ensured.

The Road Ahead

It has been widely accepted that SVEEP division needs to partner with Election Expenditure Monitoring Division within the ECI to make more content publicly available in easy to understand formats. Moreover, informed voting can be supported by making more and more data on candidates, parties publicly available in formats which are easily understood and are editable and analysable. Almost real time availability of some of this data is also of essence. This would facilitate the work of CSOs and several giving them easy access to data in formats which make it easy for them to tabulate and analyse the data. Campaigns on making deliberate, informed and ethical choices during elections should also target general voters. Communication strategy on ethical and informed voting will be incorporated in state plans for further effectiveness. During elections phone number of election expenditure observers/helpline numbers should be widely publicised, Real time availability of election expenditure, donations, instances of vote buying and paid news is a must as this may impact informed voting decisions.

Conclusion

The principle, philosophy, spirit and vision of Election Commission of India lies in the empowerment of the citizen to voluntarily register and ethically vote in each and every election and also inculcate a perpetual and responsible democratic awareness. Free and fair elections are the life force of democracy. Credible elections at stipulated intervals have since enabled India's peaceful transformative journey for inclusion and empowerment of the common citizen and in manner that has inspired the world. The justification of election as a key anchor of democracy comes from the fact it translates the idea of people's power to a physical reality: but that can effectively happen when people are able to exercise such power through informed participation.

5.04
US: VOTER ENGAGEMENT BY NONPROFIT VOTE

Introduction

Nonprofit VOTE was founded in 2005 by a consortium of state nonprofit associations and national nonprofit networks to provide resources and training to conduct nonpartisan voter participation and election activities. Nonprofits have inherent assets that make them strong and capable proponents of voter and citizen participation.

Nonprofits represent democracy's highest ideals of public service, active citizenship and commitment to a better society. With their natural engagement assets and unparalleled reach, nonprofits are particularly well suited to encourage voter participation with a proven impact on voter participation.

Nonprofit VOTE partners with America's nonprofits to help the people they serve participate and vote. They are the largest source of nonpartisan resources to help nonprofits integrate voter engagement into their ongoing activities and services. They are an official voter participation partner of the National Association of Secretaries of States.

Goals:

- Provide high quality resources for nonprofits and social service agencies to promote voter participation and engage with candidates on a nonpartisan basis.
- Build lasting capacity for nonpartisan voter and election engagement throughout the nonprofit sector.
- Encourage increased voter participation and active citizenship, especially among voters new to the process or with a recent history of lower participation.
- Develop and evaluate agency-based models for voter engagement by nonprofit service providers, identifying the most effective strategies for nonprofits to incorporate voter engagement into their ongoing activities.
- Strengthen the nonprofit sector and encourage new civic leadership.

Engagement Assets

Nonprofits are the nation's human service providers, community development groups, health centers, multi-service and educational organizations and are deeply rooted in local communities across all 50 states. Through daily contact with clients, constituents, staff, volunteers, board members and communities, nonprofits can reach and connect with a large numbers of potential voters.

Nonprofits have access to communities that are typi-

cally underrepresented in the political process. A 2012 study by Nonprofit VOTE and CIRCLE brought out that nonprofits disproportionately reached individuals who are younger, lower-income and more diverse than the general public, the groups that historically participate at lower rates.

Nonprofits are trusted messengers. A recent Harris Poll asked the public who they wished had more influence in political affairs, and respondents said they wanted nonprofits and small businesses to have a greater say in politics.

At the heart of that trust is the nonpartisan approach. Charitable and educational nonprofits by charter must remain nonpartisan and not take sides for a candidate or party. However, nonpartisanship does not mean nonparticipation. Nonprofits take up a wide variety of activities to support voting, like voter education and registration, get-out-the-vote efforts, and engaging candidates on a nonpartisan basis.

Impact on Participation

Nonprofits reach populations that are less likely to vote, and as such they are effective in increasing turnout among these groups thereby reducing disparities in votes based on age, income, and ethnicity. Nonprofit VOTE's 2012 evaluation: Can Nonprofits Increase Voter Turnout? revealed that voters contacted in-person by nonprofits during services voted at higher rates than other voters in their state across all demographic segments. Nonprofits had their greatest participation impact on voters otherwise considered less likely to vote.

The bottom line is that nonprofits have inherent assets that make them strong and capable proponents of voter and citizen participation. There are also strong reasons for nonprofits to promote voting and democracy in their communities.

Why Voting

Nonprofit voter engagement can benefit nonprofits, their communities, and the nation, far beyond the outcome of any particular election.

Registering and helping people vote is one way to further empower the people they serve. Voting is associated with a host of positive benefits. Compared to non-voters, voters are more likely to volunteer, contact their elected officials and stay informed about local affairs. They are more likely to contribute to their neighborhood's "social capital" and live in communities where neighbors are in contact with one another. Being a voter is associated with better health outcomes, reduced unemployment, lower recidivism rates and the like.

Because many nonprofits have social missions of education, service and social uplift, encouraging voting and other forms of participation is a natural part of every nonprofit's mission. An increasing number of nonprofits are incorporating civic engagement into their overall mission, regardless of the issues they address or the communities they serve.

This is not only because of the benefits to individual voters, but also because of the implications for the non-profit and the sector. The nonprofit sector depends on good government and fair and open elections. Nonprofits are more likely to thrive in an environment where government is held in high esteem and people are more likely to participate in the process.

Having engaged constituents allows nonprofits to activate the groups of voters who support their policy goals. This is important because elected officials and policy makers are more likely to pay attention to communities that vote.

The key to successful voter and election engagement is being prepared.

It begins with understanding why the work is important to your organization, your community, and the individuals you serve. Developing a list of the benefits may include advancing your issues, building clout, or empowering the clients by promoting engaged and active citizenship.

> A 501(c)(3) organization may NOT con¬duct partisan activities to support or oppose any candidate for public office, including:
> - Endorsing a candidate.
> - Making a contribution   to, or expenditure for, a can¬didate.
> - Rating candidates on who is most favorable to your issue(s).
> - Letting candidates use the organization's facilities or resources, unless those resources are made equally available to all candidates at their fair market value.

Nonprofit Voter Resources

Voter Resource of Nonprofit Vote include

The following tools for engaging the voters. The tools also include online engagement tools as shortlisted below.

Guides and Toolkits
 - A Voter Registration Toolkit for Nonprofits and Social Service Agencies
 - A Voter Participation Starter Kit for Nonprofits and Social Service Agencies
 - A Nonprofit's Guide to Hosting a Candidate Forum
 - Nonprofits, Voting and Elections: A Guide to Nonpartisan Voter Engagement for 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organizations
 - Online Guides to Registering and Voting in Your State.

Webinar Series
 - Ready, Set, Register: Nonprofit Voter Registration
 - Think Locally: The Value of Municipal and Local Elections

 - Plan Ahead: Creating a Voter Engagement Plan for your Nonprofit
 - Taking a Stand: Ballot Measure Advocacy for Nonprofits
 - Being Nonpartisan: Guidelines for 501(c)(3) Nonprofits
 - Engage Candidates and Build Clout: How to Host a Candidate Forum
 - Nonpartisan Voter Participation Basics for Nonprofits
 - Nonprofits Get Out the Vote: Countdown to Election Day
 - What Nonprofit Staff Can('t) Do

> There is a wide range of nonpartisan activities 501(c)(3) nonprofits may do to encourage voter participation and pro¬mote voter education.
> 1. Promote or Conduct Voter Registration
> 2. Educate Voters on the Where, When, and How of Voting
> 3. Encourage and Remind People to Vote
> 4. Encourage Staff to Serve on Election Day as a Poll Worker, Translator, or other Nonpartisan Volunteer
> 5. Distribute Nonpartisan Sample Ballots, Candidate Questionnaires, or Voter Guides
> 6. Host or Co-Sponsor a Candidate Forum
> 7. Hold a Voter Education Event
> 8. Educate the Candidates on Your Issues
> 9. Continue Issue Advocacy During an Election
> 10. Support or Oppose Ballot Measures as a Lobby¬ing Activity (subject to normal lobbying limits)

Factsheets
 - 501(c)(3) Permissible Activities
 - Nonprofits and Ballot Measures
 - What Nonprofit Staff Can Do

State Felon Disenfranchisement Laws
 - Working with Candidates
 - Election Day Registration
 - Be a Pollworker
 - Federal Funds and Voter Participation
 - Expanding Voter Registration Opportunities
 - Nonprofits Increase Voting: Findings from a Nonprofit Voter Mobilization Experiment

Checklists
 - Getting Started With Voter Engagement
 - Seven Reasons to Do Voter Registration at Your Nonprofit
 - Seven Principles of Getting Out the Vote
 - 10 Things to Do Before Election Day

Posters and Other Materials
- Register to Vote poster in English and Spanish
- Get-Out-the-Vote poster
- Voting in Your State Web Badges

Getting Started with Voter Engagement: See Supplement

SUPPLEMENT
GETTING STARTED WITH VOTER ENGAGEMENT A CHECKLIST

GET STARTED
Before you begin, think about why this work is important. Take a look at our "Benefits of Voting" factsheets and make a list of the benefits of voter outreach work to your organization, your community, and the individuals you serve. This might include advancing your issues, building clout, or empowering your clients by promoting engaged and active citizenship.

CAPACITY
- Get buy-in from your Executive Director or other leadership
- Choose a staff lead who can involve and motivate other staff and volunteers
- Consider ways to involve the people you serve in your election activities
- Identify assistance and resources from a community partner and your local elections office

Featured resource: Voter Participation Starter Kit for Nonprofits and Social Service Agencies

KNOWLEDGE
- Understand the guidelines for 501(c)(3)s on how to stay nonpartisan
- Learn about voting in your state – important dates, how to register, early voting options, etc.
- Find out what's on the ballot in your locality and state for the upcoming election

Featured resource: Nonprofits, Voting and Elections: A Guide to Nonpartisan Voter Engagement

PLANS
- Choose your target audience – clients, constituents, staff, your local community, or others
- Select appropriate opportunities for engagement: as part of daily services, in classes, at trainings or events, as a project for a youth group, or incorporated into community outreach
- Create a specific timeline for your plan

Featured resource: 2016 Voter Registration and Engagement Timeline

VOTER REGISTRATION
Decide on your approach. Some nonprofits actively register voters, while others focus on promoting registration by announcing deadlines, making forms available, or helping voters register online. If you plan to conduct voter registration make sure to:

Familiarize yourself with your state's voter registration procedures, how to obtain and return forms, online registration (if available), and guidelines for hosting a registration drive

Set concrete and attainable goals and tie them to deadlines

Target pre-existing opportunities – at your nonprofit and in the community at citizenship ceremonies, graduations, or other events

Create a schedule for tabling opportunities in the waiting room, lobby, and at events

Enlist volunteers and staff to enhance your efforts

Featured resource: Voter Registration Toolkit and free poster, available in English and Spanish

ENGAGING CANDIDATES
Plan at least one activity that engages local candidates on your issues.

Identify a race that's important to your community – city council, mayor, state representative, Congressional representative, or others

Choose from five main candidate engagement options: Candidate Forums, Candidate Appearances, Sharing Research, Candidate Questionnaires, or Asking Questions at events

Be familiar with nonpartisan guidelines for candidate work, which requires equal treatment of all candidates in the same race

Featured resource: Connecting with Candidates
www.nonprofitvote.org

5.05

VOTING ADVICE APPLICATIONS (VAAS) FOR INFORMED AND ETHICAL VOTING

Background:

A voting advice application or voting aid application (VAA) is a Web based application that helps voters find a party that stands closest to their preferences. Voting advice applications have been widely used across the world and have been a huge success in developed economies. The first application of this kind was an offline application called StemWijzer and was developed in the Netherlands in1989. Some of the most successful VAAs are the Dutch Stemwijzer and the German Wahl-O-Mat. At present Voting Advice Applications are popular in majority of countries in the developed world like the EU countries, United States, Canada, Australia etc. A list of VAAs available across the world is placed at Supplement.

The Concept & Methodology:

VAAs help users casting a vote by comparing their policy preferences on major issues with the programmatic stands of political parties on such issues. The success of VAAs also comes in large part from its design, the presentation, the user-friendliness and handiness of the program. The mechanism employed is rather straight-forward: the respondents fill in a web-questionnaire with their opinion on a wide range of policies; after comparing the user's profile with that of each party, the application produces a sort of advice under the form of a rank-ordered list, at the top of which stands the party closest to the user's policy preferences.

Impact on electoral participation:

VAAs can be thought to affect electoral participation in at least three ways:

- by contributing to a change in individuals' information-seeking behaviour, that is to say, motivating users to gather further information about politics and political parties.
- by motivating people to turn-out, even if they had not intended to do so before playing the tool.
- by affecting individuals' vote intentions: that is, convincing already decided voters to change their political preference.

Relevance of VAA for Educated Youth:

The typical users of VAAs across the world are young, highly educated, politically interested, and actively partic-

ipating in politics. The Voting Advice Application concept can be targeted especially on Youth for informed and ethical decision making on electoral choices and improving the quality of voting. This tool may also come as a solution for the apathetic behaviour of educated youth who are indifferent to the electoral processes on the account of information gap and as a curative to the 'What's there for me?' or 'My Vote doesn't matter!' attitude.

Pilot Study in India:

A pilot study of the VAAs has been done in the State of Kerala by the Centre for Research on Direct Democracy, University of Zurich, Switzerland in collaboration with other partners including the Department of Political Science, University of Kerala has launched an online research project of studying Kerala State Assembly Election 2011 which was based Voting Advice Application (VAA) to explore the ideological profile of party supporters. However, the same was as a part of research project rather than a tool for the mass application.

Development of VAAs: Pre-requisites and Cautions:

VAAs across the world have been developed by Government Agencies (Federal Agency for Civic Education in Germany), Educational and Research Institutes (Institute for New Culture Technologies, Austria) and many of them have been developed in collaboration with Media Houses (Wall Street Journal in the US).

Pre-requisites:

- Generate a collection of issues or questions, usually referred to as theses in the VAAs. The collection may include relevant socio economical issues as are also addressed by major political parties so as to create a balance between the theses and selection of right kind of questions. This is pertinent in determining user's interest in the tool.
- A set of responses on the questions by leading political parties, which serves as the backend database for serving as the benchmark to the users, where users can relate to political parties who have similar opinions as them.
- An online user friendly interactive tool based response on the basis of available data.

Approach for Development:

The approach for development may include the following steps:

- Generate initial questions of relevance; and seek online response from the focus groups especially the youth.
- Examination of the response along with other relevant materials by a group of experts, political parties representatives and other stakeholders and develop a framework including questionnaire for inter alia political

consultation.
- Consultation with political parties through structured questionnaire.
- Develop final framework for implementation.
- **VAA's can bedeveloped** on different platforms depending upon on the target audience.
- Online Application: can be popularized through social media.
- Smartphone application: based on the web based version.
- Offline tool, disk or paper based: Can be used in educational institutions for creating awareness especially where internet facility is inadequate.

SUPPLEMENT
List of Countries having Voting Advice Application:
(only one VAA is mentioned, countries may have more than one VAA)

S.No.	Name of the Country	Voting Advice Application
1.	Belgium	"Doe de Stemtest"
2.	Bulgaria	"Glasovoditel"
3.	Germany	"Wahl-O-Mat"
4.	France	"Vote & Vous"
5.	Greece	"Vote Match"
6.	United Kingdom	"UK Vote Match"
7.	Italy	"Cabine électorale"
8.	Latvia	"Providus"
9.	Netherlands	"StemWijzer"
10.	Austria	"wahlkabine.at"
11.	Poland	"Latamik wyborczy"
12.	Slovakia	"Kohovolit"
13.	Spain	"preferencematcher"
14.	Czech Republic	"Kohovolit"
15.	Czech Republic, Slovakia and EU	Volební kalkulačka
16.	Canada, US, Australia	Vote Compass
17.	Switzerland	smartvote
18.	Israel and US	Electoral Compass
19.	US presidential elections 2012	Electoral Headhunter
20.	Netherlands	Stemwijzer

S.No.	Name of the Country	Voting Advice Application
21.	Netherlands and 40 other countries	Kieskompas
22.	UK and EU)	Vote Match
23.	Bosnia and Hercegovina)	Glasometar
24.	Austria)	Wahlkabine.at
25.	Germany)	Wahl-O-Mat
26.	France)	Vote&Vous
27.	Hungary)	Voksmonitor
28.	Denmark)	Kend din kandidat
29.	Belgium)	GPS electoral or Kieswijzer
30.	United Kingdom	Who Shall I Vote For?

Example of questionnaire used in Vote Match UK for reference....

Vote Match UK EN
1. The UK should leave the EU
   - agree
   - disagree
   - neither

2. The UK should introduce tighter restrictions on which EU citizens can claim benefits in the UK
   - agree
   - disagree
   - neither

3. The EU should introduce stronger environmental standards for shale gas extraction ("fracking")
   - agree
   - disagree
   - neither

4. The UK should only hold a referendum on its membership of the EU if new powers are transferred to Brussels
   - agree
   - disagree
   - neither
5. Growing genetically-modified crops should be allowed throughout the European Union.
   - agree
   - disagree
   - neither

6. If Scotland becomes independent, it should be fast-tracked to EU membership
   - agree
   - disagree
   - neither

7. Member states must recognise same-sex marriages conducted in other EU countries
   - ○ agree
   - ○ disagree
   - ○ neither

8. The EU should set stricter targets for CO2 reduction
   - ○ agree
   - ○ disagree
   - ○ neither

9. The EU should only be able to introduce new regulation if it can be demonstrated that it will contribute to economic growth
   - ○ agree
   - ○ disagree
   - ○ neither

10. Migrants from the EU push down wages in the UK
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

11. The EU should increase the amount of money it spends on foreign aid
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

12. The UK should opt out of the European Arrest Warrant
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

13. The EU should limit the maximum journey time for the transport of live animals to eight hours
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

14. The European Court of Justice should be the final authority on matters of EU law
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

15. The EU should introduce a Financial Transactions Tax
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

16. The European Parliament should be able to sack individual commissioners
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

17. Migration from the EU is damaging to the ethnic and cultural identity of indigenous British people.
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

18. EU member states should not be allowed to subsidise nuclear power
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

19. There should be less financial assistance to poorer regions within the EU
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

20. Everybody working in an EU country should have the same employment rights, even those who have come to work there from another EU country
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

21. More foreign policy areas should be agreed at an EU level
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

22. The UK should contribute to the EU's permanent financial crisis fund
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

23. The EU should increase the minimum entitlement to unpaid parental leave from its current level of 18 weeks
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

24. There should be automatic extradition of wanted criminals between EU member states
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

25. Allowing employees to work more than 48 hours a week is open to abuse by employers
    - ○ agree
    - ○ disagree
    - ○ neither

26. The European Parliament should have the power to introduce laws without asking the European Commission
- ○ agree
- ○ disagree
- ○ neither

27. There should be a stronger EU law on data protection
- ○ agree
- ○ disagree
- ○ neither

28. Import taxes on agricultural products from developing countries should be lowered.
agree
- ○ disagree
- ○ neither

29. The EU should form a common policy to promote greater diversity of media ownership
- ○ agree
- ○ disagree
- ○ neither

30. The EU should prevent internet service providers from offering faster connection speeds for specific commercial services ('net neutrality')
- ○ agree
- ○ disagree
- ○ neither

Here you can select the statements you believe to be of particular importance. It is not required to do this.

Here are the parties contesting the European elections in the official list order. You may select the parties you want to include in the result. If you want to exclude one or more parties simply deselect the checkbox next to the party name.
- ☑ British National Party
- ☑ Conservatives
- ☑ Green Party (England and Wales)
- ☑ Labour
- ☑ Liberal Democrats
- ☑ UK Independence Party

5.06
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The issues faced are as follows:
- • Voter education needs of different categories of voters for informed and ethical voting may vary depending on their background, literacy levels, employment and psycho social behavior for civic engagement and electoral participation.
- • Do the citizens have relevant, unbiased, and accurate information. Do they know how and where to source necessary information for ethical engagement?
- • Is the available information sufficient to make valid and ethical causal inferences about the likely consequences of exercise of participation and preferences?Further, moral and ethical commitments of citizens would be relevant for an effectively functioning democracy in which citizen voice is freely expressed?
- • Voter Education programs may not be seen in isolation as programs to educate citizens on how to register and vote. Strategically well designed integration of voter education with civic education programmes may help in promoting a sense of larger qualitative electoral participation.
- • Voter education needs assessment for informed and ethical voting: the available models and impact studies may help.

The Challenges are stated as below:
- • Political scientists hold a range of views about the role of informed voting in a democracy, with some seeing it as critical to the health of a democracy and others viewing it as a relatively ineffective element of democratic life. The debate has specially emanated from compulsory voting in many countries. What then, should be the ideal approach for the EMB's to achieve the desired objectives of informed and ethical voting.
- • Have to appreciate the fact that more informed voters can have less trust in the political system, therefore, how one measures impact has to be flexible and reflective of understanding of common knowledge education that exist among the potential electorate.
- • Voter education in crisis, post-conflict situations, and de facto one-party states require special measures along with the normal techniques.
- • Family voting adversely affects women's ability for informed and ethical voting. The practice, if deliberately perpetrated on a large scale, may vitiate the democratic sanctity.

NO VOTER TO BE
LEFT BEHIND

6.01

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – VOTER OPINION AND INVOLVEMENT TÉÉHROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION (VOICE)

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) VOICE program, adopted by the DRC National Independent Electoral Commission (Commission Électorale Nationale Indépendante-CENI), was an initiative aimed to improve the knowledge and capacity of the Congolese people to participate more effectively in new democratic institutions and decentralization process in the DRC. A primary component of this program was the design and production of civic and voter education materials, and implementing activities in targeted provinces around the country.

The VOICE program featured the use of *boîtes à images* (image boxes). These civic education kits featured a variety of images that were designed to be relevant to the issues of elections and decentralization in the DRC. The image boxes were designed to communicate important messages to Congolese citizens, regardless of literacy rates. CENI worked with local civil society organizations, training facilitators and provided funding for face-to-face civic and voter education.

The VOICE program was implemented in three phases.

Phase I targeted the four provinces of Bandundu, Katanga, Maniema and Sud Kivu, and served as a template for subsequent programming phases. In this initial phase, 41 local civil society organizations were trained on the use of the image box through cascade trainings. Additionally, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) was invited to implement a comprehensive media campaign which included the production and broadcast of radio spots in the targeted provinces, and television spots in Kinshasa, with an emphasis on election-related topics.

Phase II Under this phase, an additional 58 Civil Service Organisation (CSO) partners were included and 121 sub-grants were issued to implement civic and voter education programming. At the same time, two series of motorized caravans aimed to reinforce key civic and voter education messages leading up to the national elections in November 2011. SFCG's media campaign continued until June 2012. Additional funding from DFID extended VOICE programming to the provinces of Bas Congo, Nord Kivu, Province Orientale and Kinshasa.

Phase III programming incorporated lessons learned from the first two phases of the program. An improved image box was produced, focusing on decentralization and local elections. 80 civil society organizations received sub-grants to implement grassroots civic education activities using the newly-produced *boîte à images*. These efforts focused on democracy and decentralization.

Over the course of the program, a total of 280 civil society organizations received sub-grants to conduct civic education programming using the image boxes in their communities. In total, these partners reached over 10 million citizens through this small grants program—approximately 14% of the total population of the DRC per 2013 estimates.
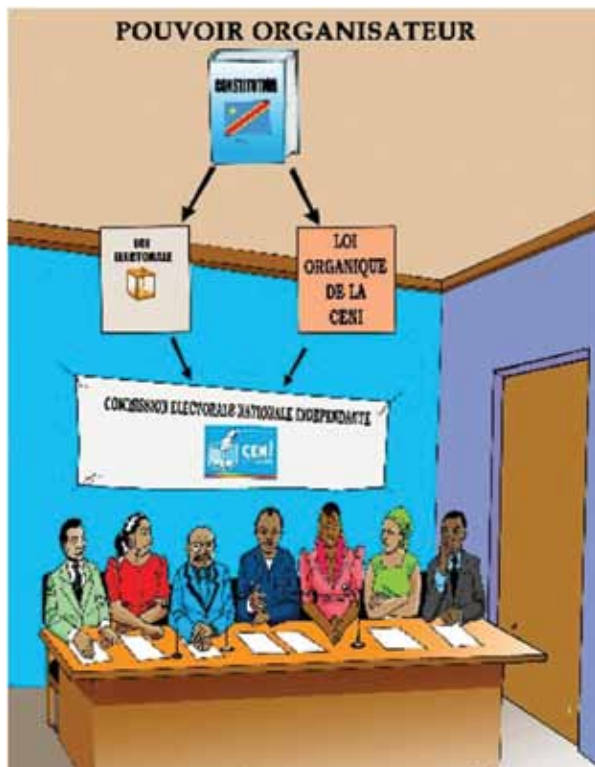
Impact Evaluation

The formal impact evaluation of the boîte à images methodology utilized control and treatment groups to examine the effectiveness of the approach. The evaluation revealed that the face-to-face sessions were extremely effective in increasing the level of factual knowledge on the topic being presented.

Moreover, 69% of individuals surveyed demonstrated increased knowledge in treatment villages, while only 36% of individuals surveyed in control villages demonstrated only some knowledge increase. The impact assessment supported the effectiveness of the face-to-face civic and voter education sessions.

These efforts along with a series of media campaigns and electoral caravans were implemented in partnership with Search for Common Ground and local community radio stations. A total of 106 radio spots in all five official languages of the DRC were produced and broadcast approximately 150,000 times in every provide of the country, 40 motorized caravans throughout the country further enhancing the visibility of the VOICE program. A post-activity survey indicated that these mass media programs worked effectively in conjunction with the *boîte à images* sessions to prepare and encourage citizens to participate in the democratic process.

Source: IFES
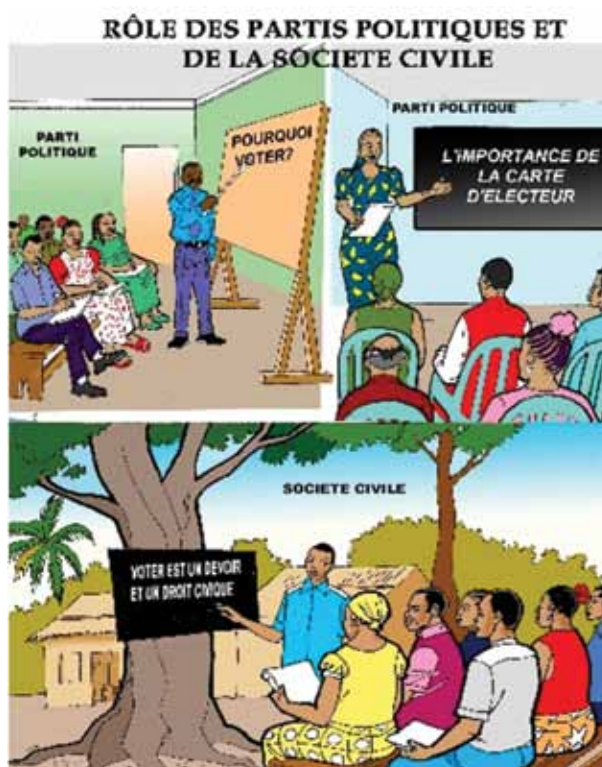
6.02

GUATEMALA: INFORMING WOMEN ON NEED FOR A FREE AND CONSCIOUS VOTE

It has been only 50 years, since women could participate openly and actively in elections in Guatemala. In 1945, only women who could read and write were allowed to vote, creating a discriminatory and non-inclusive system. The right to vote was made universal for every citizen in 1965. This was strengthened later in 1985, when the first open democratic election took place. Since then, eight democratic elections and peaceful presidential transitions have taken place in Guatemala, sustaining a democratic system which has seen an interesting growth in women's participation.

For the 1985 election, the national voter list comprised of only 34.4% women and 60.6% men. The percentage of women on the national voter list increased with each subsequent election, with women surpassing men as the

majority in the 2011 General Elections, 50.9% to 49.1%. In 2011, another significant event took place – Roxana Baldetti was elected as the first female Vice-President of Guatemala. These gradual but significant steps in Guatemala´s electoral and democratic history, is a recognition of the increasing interest and efforts of women, to actively participate in the political process.

Unfortunately, there was a downside – the manipulation of women's vote by political organizations by appealing to their most basic needs. In the most isolated, indigenous and rural areas of the country where women are responsible for the household and the well-being of their families, political parties, usually the ruling party, handed out bags filled with basic food items like cooking oil, beans, powdered milk, salt and rice, disguised as subsided social programs, which are then advertised as huge achievements by the administration. This practice started in 2008 under the name "Solidarity Bag" provided basic food supplies to the most vulnerable population, particularly single mothers, mothers under the age of 20 and pregnant woman. The purpose of the program was to provide the ruling party with a strong base of potential voters as the beneficiaries had to complete a form with their personal information which created a sense of psychological dependency and fear as they were told during the campaign "vote for us, because others will take this benefit away from you if they win the election". When the ruling party wanted more reassurance of their control, they unofficially obtained copies of voter registration information. This program continued under the new administration in 2011.

These activities did not go unnoticed by Guatemala's election monitoring body, the Supreme Elections Tribunal (TSE). The TSE's department (state/province-level) and municipal offices reported a significant increase of women, particularly indigenous women, registering to vote. They also reported strange individuals collecting voter registration forms from the woman outside of the offices. Although this was reported to the local police, the police did not take any action as this was not a crime. Finally, the TSE's patience ended with the inclusion of photographs of local candidates and even national ones inside the bags to be distributed, and TSE imposed the highest monetary fine of $500,000 on the ruling party for openly making illegal use of public funds and programs in their campaign, and for early campaigning.

When the official campaign period was about to begin in 2015, the TSE recognized the need for a voter education campaign and thus the inclusive campaign was designed with the following three main objectives:

1. To motivate women to make use of their right of suffrage, to vote free and conscious, to minimize the null vote and to avoid the dependency and clientele vote.
2. To empower women, to help them find their own voice, as citizen under equal rights, to be part of the democratic process of the Country.

3. To promote the civic and national enthusiasm among young women who are first time voters.

Guatemala has a population of around 16 million, out of which more than seven million are eligible to vote. The percentage of the indigenous population is estimated to be 41% of the total population, the second highest indigenous population in Latin America, after Bolivia. The indigenous population is mostly of Mayan descent, but there is also a small percentage, around 1.7%, of African descent. In total, 22 different languages are spoken in Guatemala, creating an enormous challenge for the TSE, to efficiently and effectively reach out to all communities with voter information and civic education efforts. In this instance, due to financial constraints and time limitations, the campaign was only translated (with support and control of the National Academy of Mayan languages), into the four most commonly spoken indigenous languages: Qéqchi, Kaqchikel, Mam and Kíche.

For the campaign, various women belonging to dif-

Mime actors in Guatemala informing women of the need for a free and conscious vote

A woman of African descent showcased under the banner "I decide"

ferent sectors and age groups were showcased under the banner "I decide":

The campaign aired for one month, from August 6 to September 6, 2015 on national television, regional cable stations, national and local radio, community radio, and local market radio. It primarily targeted eight (out of 22) departments which had the largest women and indigenous population. An additional campaign in the capital city of Guatemala was implemented at public transportation stations using mime actors.

In sum, the campaign achieved its immediate goals, and has left three main lessons to the new ruling party: 1) to not repeat the malpractice of previous administrations, like disguising handouts as social programs (so far, the new administration has not replicated these programs and has put them on hold); 2) that the TSE will not allow such abuse to ever happen again, without punishment; and 3) that targeted voter education efforts, can be effectively developed and implemented on time, with satisfying levels of acceptance among the voters.

Source: IFES

6.03

INDONESIA – VOTER EDUCATION MEDIA CENTERS: CIVIL SOCIETY'S ROLE IN ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES

Ahead of Indonesia's 2014 legislative and presidential elections, the Indonesian General Election Commission (*Komisi Pemilihan Umum*, KPU) collaborated with civil society organizations (CSOs) to establish Voter Education Media Centers (VEMC) in six provinces. They worked together at national and provincial levels, along with media outlets and journalists, to improve information on election processes and engage the public more directly in voter outreach.

Indonesians in 2014 were more likely to rely on messages from the KPU for information than from any other source. Almost half of Indonesians (47 percent) said that the most important source of information leading up to the legislative elections was the KPU socialization materials. In 2014, the Voter Education Network for the People (JPPR) and the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem), two Indonesian-based civil society organizations focused on elections, established VEMCs with six

provincial KPUs across Indonesia,[1] strengthening the role of civil society in informing voters and extending election administrators' capacity to disseminate voter education materials.

Founded on the principle that civic and media engagement is essential to achieving comprehensive voter education, the VEMCs were a medium for CSOs and provincial KPUs to fill complementary roles. The VEMCs played an important role in voter outreach: distributing KPU materials; hosting interactive public discussions; and supporting multi-media voter education campaigns. Each Center was staffed by experts trained in elections, information technology, social media and voter education/communication. The Centers worked with provincial KPUs to strengthen media relations, communications and voter outreach activities.

The Centers collaborated with provincial KPUs to distribute materials – including leaflets and banners in well-trafficked areas – about voting processes and candidate information. The VEMCs also hosted public discussions on the importance of the elections, which engaged community members in practical simulations of voting procedures and relayed balanced information on both presidential candidates' platforms. The simulations drove home the importance of understanding how to mark a ballot correctly, what actions are (and are not) allowed on Election Day, or what resources are available for those needing assistance. During public discussions, the VEMCs also relayed balanced information on the candidates, distributing both presidential candidates' written platforms, and emphasized the need for peaceful and transparent elections

Beyond offering the opportunity for direct public engagement between provincial KPUs and the community, the VEMCs also contributed to the KPU's voter education campaign through multi-media outreach. Across all six provinces, the VEMC program initiated a Visual Campaign Competition. With a theme of "*Peaceful Presidential Elections for a Friendlier Indonesia*", the competition invited Indonesians to submit ideas for inspirational voter information campaign materials. The Visual Campaign Competition was open to high school and university students, along with the general public and professional agencies, and aimed to develop innovative campaign materials that underscore the importance of peaceful elections. The KPU announced the winners of the competition at the Voter Education Media Centers, in conjunction with a public forum discussion covering the competition's theme of peaceful elections.

The VEMCs were established with the intention that the KPU would inherit sustainable, effective centers for media and voter outreach. Following the elections, civil society partners JPPR and Perludem worked to hand over the Voter Education Media Centers to provincial KPUs. To consolidate the guidance and lessons learned during the 2014 elections, JPPR and Perludem developed two critical

[1] Voter Education Media Centers were established in Central Java, West Papua, North Sumatra, Aceh, Maluk and Papua.

Voter Education Media Center staff in North Sumatra prepare for voter education discussions for 2014 presidential elections.

KPU Commissioner Ferry Kurnia Riszkiyansyah awarding first prize in the Visual Campaign Competition to Yusuf Habibi.

documents: a Media Center Manual and a Voter Education Guidebook. The Media Center Manual addressed the procedures and requirements to operate the Voter Education Media Centers.

The Voter Education Guidebook, meanwhile, provided information on voter education strategies, analyzed areas to focus on in future voter education campaigns, and underscored the need for inclusive, participatory voter outreach. Following the elections, JPPR looked back on the voter education and media efforts and identified three key ways to strengthen future voter education campaigns:

- Adapt and target voter education strategies for audiences with varying levels of knowledge or awareness of election processes.
- Leverage existing resources, especially community centers and spaces, for voter outreach.
- Reach marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, through targeted social campaigns, services and resources.

Civil society support for election management bodies' voter education campaigns can produce wide-reaching, inclusive and successful results. When done in combination with strategic media outreach, the impact can be magnified. The VEMCs' voter education activities were particularly successful in achieving the following results:

- *Understanding voting processes:* The interactive simulations of voting, vote counting and invalid votes brought home the importance of understanding Election Day processes. The simulations, which portrayed hundreds of people from the surrounding communities, drew attention to the practical steps voters must take to cast their ballots, as well as highlighting the need for amenities and resources to make polling stations accessible for persons with disabilities.
- *Knowledge of candidate and party platforms:* Impartially sharing the platforms of both presidential candidates underscored the importance for voters of knowing who and what they are voting for.

- *Direct engagement:* The VEMCs fostered direct engagement between provincial KPUs and the community, establishing deeper trust in electoral institutions and constructing a platform from which to urge peaceful elections. CSO partners' involvement, and the outreach expertise that they brought to the Centers, enabled provincial KPUs to grow positive community relationships.
- *Improved voter education resources:* The VEMCs quickly identified the need to improve resources for marginalized groups and materials that are accessible to voters with wide-ranging levels of knowledge of elections and processes. The VEMCs' activities broadened the reach of the KPUs' messaging but also allowed for targeted messaging for diverse audiences.

The VEMCs' reliance on collaboration between civil society and election administrators was its strongest feature, a strength that can be replicated in Indonesia and regionally.

Source: IFES

Talkshow on West Papua's TVRI station on Presidential Election with a local KPU Commissioner.

6.04
KENYA – CIVIC AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Backdrop:

In 2010, the Kenyan Constitution put forth a vision of a democracy where all voters were fully enfranchised. Indeed, Kenya has made important strides to realize greater enfranchisement e.g. the constitution required official positions for women representatives in each of the new 47 counties in the country. This new requirement paved the way for the largest number of women in Kenya's history joining parliament; however, there is still important work to be done. For instance, the growth of women's participation and representation is still slow due to traditional practices and conservative views that ultimately restrict women's rights.

Kenya's last elections were largely hailed as successful, with one of the largest voter turnouts in the country's electoral history at 86%. However, it only represented 56% of the voting age population. An audit of Kenya's voter list showed a continued underrepresentation of women and youth in a number of constituencies throughout the country. For example, over 4.3 million eligible women did not vote in the country's 2013 elections as they were either not registered, or chose not to exercise their franchise. The reasons for this underrepresentation are still not fully known, but are speculated to be linked to both the shortened voter registration drive ahead of the 2013 election, the uncertain efficacy of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission's (IEBC) voter education efforts particularly in rural areas, and the aforementioned cultural norms.

An effective voter education program has many different goals, from informing voters on how to exercise their right to vote, to encouraging them to fulfill their civic responsibility, to developing attitudes of respect towards other members of society. Kenya is still a country divided along tribal lines and political tension, and the campaign period leading up to the last election was dominated by messages of one tribe contending against another rather than messages related to governance issues.

IEBC, Women, Youth, Persons with Disabilities and Voter Education Efforts:

Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) has been commended for its efforts to register 14.3 million voters before the 2013 election, the largest number of registered voters in Kenya's history. The registration exercise took place over 30 days in over 15,000 locations in Kenya and even included a fledgling effort to register some of the estimated three million Kenyans living overseas.

To increase civic and voter education efforts, IEBC conducted a comprehensive review of its voter education

activities from mid-2012 to present. This included reviewing all voter education and civic education plans and reports, posters, brochures, videos, radio shows, magazines, road shows and other voter education products produced by the IEBC's civil society partners. The overall objectives of this exercise were to:

- Assess the types of civic education and voter information used by the IEBC to inform the target groups, particularly in regards to voter registration;
- Conduct interviews with election management officials, civil society and other electoral stakeholders to understand the shortcomings in civic and voter education and why they did not address the needs of the target groups;
- Provide support to the IEBC's Voter Education Department to formulate and implement a voter and civic education plan; and
- Map potential areas where the IEBC should pilot targeted voter education and voter registration drives to address underrepresentation.

As a follow-up to the IEBC's review, a national survey and a series of focus group discussions were conducted to serve as analytical tools which examined voter preferences, increased understanding of the factors that may have led to lower voter registration and participation rates among women, youth and persons with disabilities, and what sources of information are more relevant to this segment of the population in order to identify strategies that can be used to better target these groups.

Through the national survey and focus groups, the IEBC received several recommendations that provided promising opportunities to update its voter education strategy/ plan in order to make it even more effective for the upcoming elections. For example, the IEBC is currently going through an identification process of constituencies in which to pilot new targeted messaging for women and youth. In addition, the IEBC is planning new outreach platforms for targeted messaging. Of course, this is not without recognizing the challenges the IEBC faces with limited resources and competing electoral priorities. Nevertheless, the scarcity of resources can help the IEBC, and its partners, focus voter education and registration activities on both geographic and demographic populations with the lowest registration rates. This is an opportunity to develop cost effective voter outreach methods that capture the attention of younger citizens, particularly those between the ages of 18 and 25 who are not predisposed to voting. On reaching disaffected youth, studies of voting patterns in Kenya indicated that turnout of registered youth voters in 2013 was roughly equal to overall voter turnout. The core issue remains getting youth registered. One key issue that arose during the survey and focus groups was the 'lack of youth economic empowerment' thereby leaving youth vulnerable to participate in unlawful activities. An example is the 2008 Kenya Post Election

Violence (PEV), where most perpetrators were youths who were manipulated by political forces.

Civil society is engaged in activities that seek to make a difference in youth engagement. Ongoza Peace for Africa and Economic Development (PAD) is a Kenyan non-profit organization that combines youth economic empowerment and community leadership as an approach to sustainable peace. Ongoza Institute was born out of the 2008 post-election violence and was active in mobilizing thousands of youth for peace during the elections. Ongoza Institute organized the Kenya National Youth Summit dialogue conference, which brought together over 250 young people representing all the 47 counties in Kenya. This provided a platform where youth from different parts of the country dialogued and shared ideas on best practices in youth engagement in the electoral process. They also identified key problems and set an agenda for action within their communities, by the government and political parties in the coming year. The summit gave IEBC the opportunity to engage first hand with youth from different parts of Kenya and to hear about their concerns for the upcoming 2017 elections.

Source: IFES

6.05
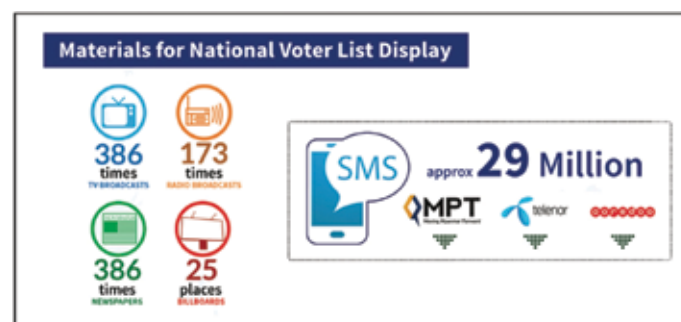# MYANMAR: VOTER EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Myanmar is a country with 33.4 million eligible voters, where exclusion of many minorities such as persons with disabilities, elderly voters, youth voters, voters from ethnic regions, and women, was felt in the 2015 Elections. The need of the hour was to spread awareness regarding voting procedures as well as motivating people to vote, on a mass scale.

A voter education strategy incorporating mass media and voter education materials for the same, in a target-oriented approach, was developed. In order to build the strategy, the "National Voter Inclusion Survey" was conducted six months prior to election day, cataloging responses from over 3,000 eligible voters throughout the 14 regions of Myanmar, to determine the types of messages that people needed, regions where voters had less information about procedures and greater engagement was required and so on. A "Voter Education Working Group" was also set up, which in consultation with Civil

Society, developed strategies, messages and materials. 12 FAQ guides on technical procedures, 11 posters, 10 radio PSAs, 4 newspaper advertisements, 2 videos, a billboard and 2 pamphlets were designed successfully.

Voter education was divided into three phases in the pre-election period ranging from focus on supplying information on the preliminary voter list display and the national voter list display to providing relevant information about voting and Election Day procedures.

Mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, billboards, SMS messaging and social media (for the youth) were used in the pre-election period to spread voter awareness regarding information and procedures in all areas. For instance, local telephone networks sent eight individual SMS messages motivating voters to check the voter list during the national display and to vote on election. Videos demonstrating the technicalities of voting were aired on regular basis on national television as well as adapted to radio. Facebook pages with voter education material in the form of videos, posters and FAQs were actively promoted to target the youth. With an extensive coverage of **29 million citizens,** these measures were indeed extremely successful.

Materials for National Voter List Display

386 times TV BROADCASTS
173 times RADIO BROADCASTS
SMS approx 29 Million MPT telenor
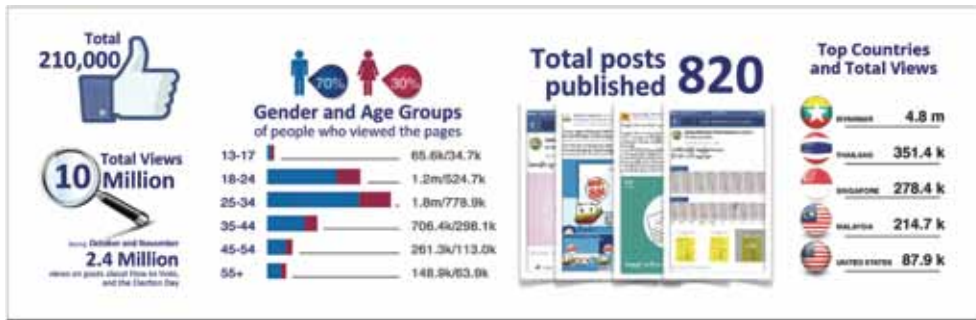386 times NEWSPAPERS
25 places BILLBOARDS

Despite the success of mass media campaigns, some aforementioned groups still felt excluded, a solution to which was provided in the form of 17 Civil Society Organizations. These CSOs received training that included technical information on elections, training on developing original voter education materials to target communities, a module to conduct trainings, and brainstorming activities to develop engaging methods to reach communities. Following this, they conducted surveys and trained the people regarding the technical know-how of elections. Not only that, CSOs also distributed voter education materials throughout local communities and motivated individuals to vote on Election Day. Flash mobs, cascade trainings, Facebook campaigns and songs were also used to spread awareness.

The efforts of CSOs in spreading voter awareness can be seen clearly in their impact on the successful 2015 elections in Myanmar. "Pandita Development Institute (PDI)" posted a series of graphics under its "Vote for Myanmar" Facebook

Mass Media Impact

NEWS 1,136 Newspaper advertisements in 4 outlets
706 Television advertisements on 5 Stations
479 Radio advertisements on 6 Stations

campaign, targeting the youth, while Mon Youth Progressive Organization organized education workshops, motivating the youth. Women-centric organizations like Creative Home, Yaung Chit Thit (YCT) and Share Mercy played a major role in encouraging women to become informed voters. Many CSO's like Mawduklamae Social Development Association (MSDA) targeted ethnic groups, and motivated them to vote. Myanmar-Independent Living Initiative (MILI) worked to advocate the inclusions of persons with disabilities in the electoral process successfully. Not only was a physical and online resource center of electoral materials called Myanmar Electoral Resource and Information Network (MERIN) set up by "The Serenity Initiative", but they also played a crucial part in getting fake ballots out to CSOs and communities.

The impact of such initiatives can be seen in the overall turnout on Election Day i.e. 69.82% of the voters. Moreover, a post-elections period follow-up national survey found that the participants demonstrated a much greater knowledge of elections, proving that the measures were extremely successful.

However, work is being done on important topics like democracy, representation and citizenship in target areas where the voter turnout of the 2015 elections was low, through CSOs, for even better results.

Source: IFES
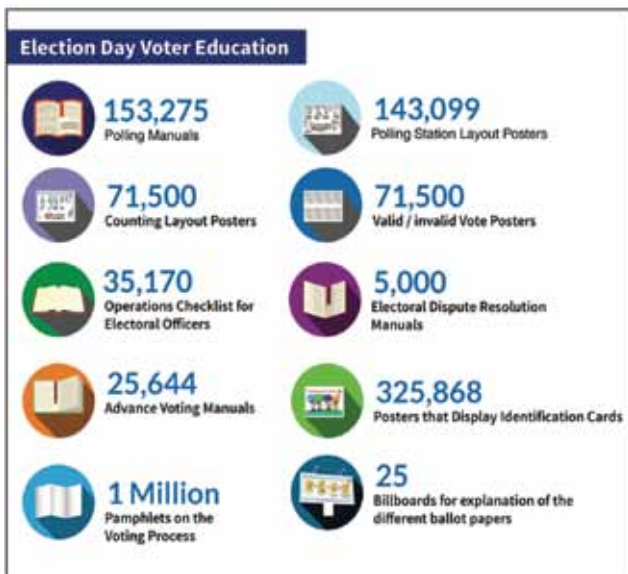
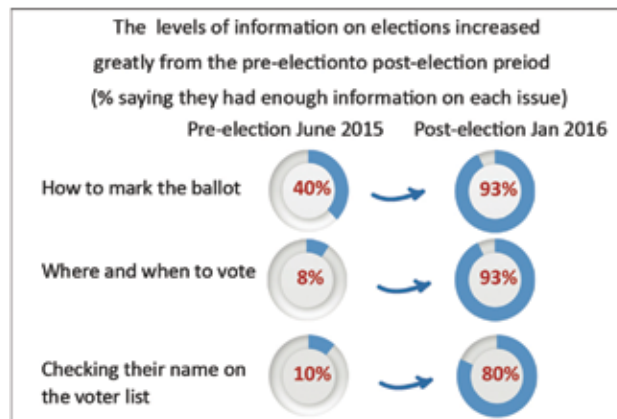Mon Youth Progressive Organization's voter education workshop

Mawduklamae Social Development Association's polling simulation provided Kayah voters a chance to practice how to cast a valid vote.

MILI's mobile get-out-the-vote concert.

YCT training women voters.

The levels of information on elections increased greatly from the pre-electionto post-election preiod (% saying they had enough information on each issue)

	Pre-election June 2015	Post-election Jan 2016
How to mark the ballot	40%	93%
Where and when to vote	8%	93%
Checking their name on the voter list	10%	80%

6.06
NEPAL – KEEPING VOTERS ENGAGED

Since Nepal's first democratic elections without a monarchy in 2008, its political transition has been rocky at best. From waiting seven years for a constitution to be passed to enduring the instability of eight prime ministers in eight years, these events could leave even the most enthusiastic citizen apathetic about voting. Yet, the voter education programs led by the Election Commission Nepal (ECN) and a grass-roots network of civil society organizations have managed to keep voters engaged in the electoral process, both before and after the country's second major election in 2013.

Due to multiple promises of upcoming elections later canceled by the government, many groups in Nepal were skeptical that elections would actually take place in the lead up to the November 2013 elections. Less than two months before the election, even the ECN was fearful to begin election preparations lest they need to be repeated were elections postponed again. However, once the ECN closed candidate registration on October 3, elections preparations, including a nationwide voter education campaign to reach 12 million Nepalese of voting age, kicked into gear. The key role of any election management body (EMB) is to provide people with information about their voting rights.

In Nepal before the 2013 elections, voter education had to be designed with **two major needs** in mind: ensuring voters understood how to vote and mobilizing disenfranchised voters, weary after 5 years of stagnation following the high hopes of democracy. In order to address both of these issues, a central component of the ECN's election preparations was the training of voter education volunteers known as "Nirwachan Sikshya Karmachari" (NISIKA). The ECN developed a voter education training manual that allowed a core group of regional level voter education trainers to give the same training to thousands across Nepal. The ECN trained merely 187 voter educators who eventually trained over 30,000 additional NISIKA in their districts.

A unique component of the campaign to train NISIKA, was the ECN's policy that female representation among voter education volunteers reach at least 50%. In fact, nearly 24,000, or 76 percent of the voter education volunteers were women. A women-to-women approach, where female voter educators traveled to homes of people in marginalized communities to distribute voter education messages, proved particularly effective in reaching women who lacked resources to travel to events.

The ECN also coordinated with other stakeholders to conduct voter education programs that targeted women

and other marginalized groups. One of the largest programs was called "Chodnai Nahune Mauka" (an opportunity not to be missed) led by local NGO Worldview Nepal, across 40 districts. Worldview Nepal sought to educate people at the local level through drama performances that emphasized the importance of voting. They targeted districts with high numbers of marginalized groups and illiterate populations who would otherwise have difficulty understanding the voting process through a standard voter education publication. Furthermore, the script was adapted and performed by local artists in at least four languages to reach different ethnic groups who often struggle to connect with awareness events conducted in Nepali. Beginning less than a month before the elections, Worldview performed 755 street theater performances reaching over 200,000 people.

Voter turnout in the 2013 elections was 78% making it the largest election in the history of Nepal and especially impressive compared to 62% turnout in the 2008 elections. While the ECN and Nepalese civil society groups accomplished an impressive amount in a short period of time, in an ideal situation, voter education is an unending process that continues even without an impending election. This is particularly important in a country like Nepal where electoral systems have changed frequently and there are high rates of unregistered voters specific to certain classes and ethnic groups.

In an informal voter education survey conducted jointly by five CSOs following the election, almost 50% of those who did not vote said it was because they were not registered or did not have their citizenship certificate. As a primary legal document in Nepal, the citizenship certificate helps facilitate access to formal banking, higher education and employment; voter registration; and social security, government al-

Community health worker who participated as a NISIKA preceding the 2013 election

Worldview performs the voter education street drama in 2013

Women line up to receive their citizenship certificate at a mobile camp in Kailali, Nepal

lowances, health services and other benefits. Yet despite its importance, there are significant barriers – including issues relating to gender, caste and extreme poverty – that hinder individuals' ability to obtain a citizenship certificate. An estimated 2.1 million Nepalese citizens are without citizenship certificates, further isolating the most marginalized groups from local governance and economic opportunities. While the ECN has made an effort to continue its voter registration efforts in the post-election period, numerous among the most marginalized voters live in remote areas, making it extremely difficult for the ECN to reach them.

To address this gap, voter education campaigns in Nepal have continued to operate in the aftermath of the 2013 elections, specifically targeting women and other marginalized groups. The ECN continues to collaborate with four local civil society partners to implement a campaign across 21 districts, assisting Nepalese to obtain their certificates, register to vote, and learn about their civic responsibilities.

The campaign begins with an identification phase. The CSOs meet with their respective district election offices (DEOs) to choose target villages where there were low turnout rates in the 2013 election. CSOs then orient community members on the importance of citizenship and voter registration, and seek their support in reaching those residents of the villages in need of citizenship or voter registration. While voter registration can take place at the village headquarters, citizenship certificates must be obtained at the District Area Office (DAO) which could be many hours away from a person's house. After providing information about the process and importance for obtaining citizenship, CSOs provide stipends for stamps, photos, and other necessary documents as well as transportation to the DAO. If the CSO identifies a large number of people in need of citizenship or voter registration in a village where access to the DAO is particularly difficult, DAOs or DEOs are sometimes willing to bring mobile camps to the village. In these cases, the CSOs continue to be involved in the process by publicizing the camp and mobilizing volunteers to provide support during the camp; an impressive example of coordination between government officials and local organizations.

Since 2013, CSOs have already supported over 50,000 people to acquire their citizenship certificates through these individual and group support programs in addition to supporting 500,000 people to register to vote. The promulgation of Nepal's new Constitution in 2015 has made voter education for the most marginalized groups all the more important. The new federal structure increases the opportunities for exercising the right to vote and also participating in government especially with new provisions for reserved seat at every level of government. But this can only be a reality if Nepalese citizen especially women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups have access to the electoral process.

The ECN has been able to reach out to citizens of Nepal through numerous programs implemented in 2013 elections and also due to the continued voter education efforts in the post-election period.

<div style="text-align: right">Source: IFES</div>

6.07
PHILIPPINES – VOTER EDUCATION INITIATIVES

In the Philippines, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) and local civil society organizations worked to strengthen the delivery of voter education through projects that empowered local organizations to take a lead role in promoting the engagement of disadvantaged communities, including citizens in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and youth.

Citizens CARE
Citizens CARE is a consortium of Non-Government Organizations in the ARMM to advance electoral reforms in the region. Citizens CARE effectively mitigated the security and geographic challenges of reaching certain marginalized groups with voter education. Since its founding in 2005, it has grown to a consortium of more than 30 organizations from all five provinces in the ARMM. After its founding in 2005, it developed an ambitious project entitled "Strengthening Election Process though Voters Education and Election Monitoring in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (SEPVEEM)," which aimed to empower disadvantaged community members with knowledge and skills needed to actively participate in decision making processes and exercise their right to suffrage responsibly. SEPVEEM has three modes of intervention: Pulong Tayo/PT (Let's Meet), Ugnayan Tayo/UT (Let's Link Up), and Election Monitoring.

Pulong Tayo (PT) was the community-based voter education activity of Citizens CARE. It entails mobilizing and training the extensive staff and volunteers of Citizens CARE throughout the ARMM, including its Provincial Management Committee members, partner organizations, full-time provincial coordinators, and municipal and barangay (village) election gurus (or trainers) to effectively deliver voter education messages. In total, Citizens Care held 231, 620 and 1,000 training programs in its first, second and third stages of the PT respectively and enlightened the people with values, responsibilities and ethics concerned with voting. Various UT meetings were organized which brought together nearly 900 participants including representatives from Citizens CARE partners and member organizations; COMELEC and its deputized government agencies such as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine National Police (PNP), Philippine Marines, Department of the Interior and Local Government, Department of Education, National Statistics Office; media reporters; and representatives from the academic

and interested private organizations.

To supplement the voter education activities of the organization, Citizens CARE also embarked on media/radio programs in all five provinces of the ARMM to discuss pressing electoral reform matters in order for people to be updated and well-informed. Expanding people's knowledge on issues is seen to improve their decision making ability and will help the public develop more sound and objective decisions during elections when they go to the polling stations to vote for the right candidates. Through the radio programs, Citizens CARE received queries from listeners on what they should do to become election monitors and volunteers. Citizens CARE member also received SMS/ text messages expressing appreciation for the effort of the organization in advocating for electoral reforms in the ARMM.

Kid's Voting Philippines
The country has made efforts to promote kid's voting as well. Philippine Center for Civic Education and Democracy, PCCED conducted the pilot run of the Kids Voting Philippines project in two urban schools in Caloocan City, Metro Manila and two rural schools in Laguna province.

In September 2008, PCCED used Kids Voting materials from Arizona and Minnesota as a guide to develop lesson plans and questionnaires to measure the participants' knowledge of democratic principles and ideas; knowledge of Philippine government structures; and likelihood to vote in a presidential election. PCCED then conducted a teacher training workshop. While PCCED pilot-tested the Kids Voting Philippines in high schools, PRRM adapted materials to work with out-of-school youth leaders from 17-23 years old, a significant population sector in the Philippines. Topics included voter education, participatory local governance, political reform issues and organizational management and leadership. PRRM selected Quezon City, in Metro Manila, and the municipality of Ternate, in the province of Cavite, to implement the project because PRRM could tap existing community-based youth organization partners. The partnership with local, barangay-based organizations immediately gave legitimacy to the project. Complementing the training seminar activity, PRRM also met with Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan officials to initiate and strengthen interactions between local officials and grassroots youth organizations. In addition, these interactions encourage continued civic participation collaboration among the youth and local government bodies.

At the project's conclusion, youth groups in both target areas organized community events to campaign for voter registration and civic participation in general. In Quezon City, a dance contest and voter registration drive attracted more than 500 people from the community. In Ternate, a concert and voter registration drive gathered more than 300 participants. These activities engaged project participants in their communities and put in practice many of the lessons learned in Kids Voting Philippines.

Source: IFES

6.08

INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

Voter education campaigns are an ideal opportunity for election management bodies (EMBs) and Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPOs) to engage persons with disabilities in the electoral process. Creative, inclusive and accessible voter education campaigns empower men and women with disabilities as citizens and voters, ensuring that all voters are able to participate in elections.

Disability-inclusive voter education campaigns are both inclusive and accessible. An inclusive campaign means that materials show positive representations of men and women with disabilities participating in elections. For example, a poster or video could show a woman with a physical disability voting. An accessible campaign means that information is provided in formats that are easy to use for persons with disabilities. For example, Nepal provided voting instructions in braille for voters who were blind or had low vision, and Georgia provided sign language interpreters during political debates to facilitate access for participants who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

A Nepali woman who is blind reads voter information in braille.

MYANMAR
During Myanmar's historic 2015 election, the Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI), a local DPO, organized a mobile "get-out-the-vote concert". The campaign presented a unique method to inform persons with dis-

abilities about their right to vote and to encourage them to cast their ballots on Election Day.

For three days, MILI members drove around in an open-bed truck lined with voter education posters and a band of musicians with disabilities. The truck stopped in six towns where the band performed popular songs to gain the attention of persons in the neighborhood. After performing the first few songs at each location, MILI spoke to voters about the elections, providing information on voting and polling procedures as well as emphasizing how voting empowers citizens and allows them to have a voice in their country's future.

During this time, volunteers also distributed 4,000 voter education pamphlets. One pamphlet outlined information on polling procedures for voters with disabilities and highlighted the different types of available assistance. A second pamphlet described the step-by-step process of voting and illustrated the process with animations of voters with visual, hearing or physical disabilities.

MILI targeted towns that were among the 15 towns where the Union Election Commission (UEC) piloted more accessible polling stations on Election Day. At these polling stations, which were located near schools and hospitals, the UEC provided polling officials who had received disability access training from MILI and other DPOs. At these locations, voters with visual disabilities were also able to use braille ballot guides when casting their ballots. These guides allowed voters who are blind to cast their ballot independently and in secret.

Musicians with disabilities perform popular songs and talk about the voting process on a mobile stage.

MALI

Boîte á images, or image boxes, were used by the Electoral Access Project in Mali (PAPEM) for a voter education project. By including voters with disabilities in the drawing, the project not only encouraged persons with

disabilities to take part in the election but also increased awareness of other voters of the right of persons with disabilities to take part in political and public life.

Trained facilitators used the images to help explain the voting process. The wordless format enhanced access of persons with low literacy as well as voters with intellectual disabilities. Image boxes have also been used around the world in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti to increase awareness of participation in political life and elections.

The boîte á images includes a voter using a wheelchair in the picture above.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

In 2012, the "Right to Choose" project, established by La Red Iberoamericana de Entidades de Personas con Discapacidad (the Iberoamerican DPO network, or La Red) utilized multiple formats to reach voters with disabilities. An inclusive television spot was produced, which showed persons with disabilities participating in the community and voting. It also incorporated an inset box with sign language interpretation in order to reach voters who are

The boîte á images includes a voter using a wheelchair in the picture above.

deaf or hard-of-hearing. The video empowered persons with different types of disabilities to take part in elections as active citizens and demonstrated the voting process.

Disability rights organizations such as the Association of People with Physical-Motor Disabilities (ASODIFIMO), the National Federation of Dominicans with Disabilities (FENADID), and the Circle of Women with Disabilities (CIMUDIS) played an important role in the project, and through their participation, helped to achieve the project's success in defending the rights of people with disabilities. The National Council on Disability (CONADIS) also supported the implementation of sensitization activities.

ARMENIA

The Disabled Center for Development of Education and Culture (PAROS) led a coalition of 9 disability organizations to implement a project to empower Armenians with disabilities to participate in the 2007 and 2008 elections for the National Assembly (Parliament) and Presidency. The national program on disability awareness and enfranchisement made the elections amongst the most accessible and inclusive in the history of Armenia.

. A series of televised public service announcements were aired nationally, and Armenian journalists provided positive media attention on project activities (such as the development of a tactile ballot guide). An increased awareness of disability rights was complemented by strong support from the Armenian government and endorsements by high-ranking elected officials and election candidates.

This poster from the campaign in Armenia calls for equal access to polling stations.

LIBYA

In 2013, an Electoral Access Working Group, which included members of the Libyan General National Congress, disabled persons' organizations, disability rights activists, and civil society members, was formed in Libya. Together, Working Group members launched a successful social media campaign called *Zaykum Zayna* ("As you are, we are") to promote awareness of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in Libya, emphasizing the right to political participation for men and women with disabilities.

The Zaykum Zayna campaign led to the development of voter education material in braille and the provision of sign language interpreters for all press conferences hosted by the High National Election Commission. A collection of advocacy tools and information about trainings was also developed through the campaign.

SOURCE: IFES

A young woman with a disability holds a leaflet from the campaign.

6.09

SRI LANKA- VOTER EDUCATION INITIATIVES

The Election Commission of Sri Lanka developed a strategic approach to bolster voter education and address other issues being faced in the electoral field. Not only did they integrate inclusive voter education throughout their Strategic Plan to further institutionalise electoral integrity in time for national elections in 2020, but also ensured that "no qualified elector is left behind" in their 2016 voter registration drive.

This strategic plan includes

    a. implementing a nationwide citizen education program on existing election laws and procedures

    b. regularizing the use of SMS and social media platforms to distribute voter education messages

    c. training CSOs to conduct outreach on citizens' voting rights and responsibilities

    d. developing and distributing a wider array of voter education materials

    e. co-sponsoring Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) training, with international participation, to develop its voter education strategy and strengthen participants' ability to deliver their own voter education trainings.

Moreover, with an aim to further the voter education outreach and promote participation of all voters, a series of Voter Education days were organised throughout the country, wherein materials (like multi-language pamphlets) on voters' rights and responsibilities were distributed and messages motivating the marginalised groups were shared. The youth was targeted through collaborations of the Election Commission with Youth Organisations, commemoration on International Youth day and partnering with youth advocates at public awareness events like "Kites for Rights".

The voter challenges faced by marginalised groups, such as ethnic and religious minorities, seasonal workers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and homeless or low caste citizens, were eliminated through various strategies. For instance, Home for Human Rights implemented voter education-focused street dramas, released public announcements and print media encouraging community members to cast their votes and displayed posters in all non-government owned buses; while Caritas Sri Lanka held its own voter education programs with local groups, engaged voters in an evaluation of their Election Day experiences and conducted voter education campaigns targeting students.

The Civil Society Organisations also targeted the youth through youth camps to build their knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizens within a democratic system. Certain male and female youth were chosen from various villages to attend an electoral conference, following which they staged civic education-focused activities in their own villages, including dramas and cricket games to distribute voter education materials.

In order to counter the isolation of Muslim women from political engagement, the Islamic Women's Association for Research and Empowerment (IWARE) raised awareness about Muslim women's rights and empowered them to act on those rights, including that of voting. Complementary training focusing on how to communicate the importance of women's representation in politics within the framework of Islamic principles were held for Muslim women leaders and male stakeholders. Door-to-door voter outreach campaigns to encourage women's participation

as voters too were conducted.

The voter education initiatives undertaken in Sri Lanka and their success are a source of inspiration for Election Commissions all over the world. It is observed that local interaction is critical to implement effective voter education programs. Moreover, the engagement of youth has a multiplier effect, such as in Sri Lanka, expanding voter messaging beyond workshop participants. Most importantly, voter and civic education should be viewed as an empowerment tool to build citizens' capacity to assume leadership in their own public process.

Source: IFES

6.10
UKRAINE – VOTER EDUCATION FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

The Central Election Commission of Ukraine, the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine and a network of libraries, conducted a voter education initiative throughout Ukrainian libraries during election periods in 2014 and 2015. In its first year, the voter education program was designed for internally displaced persons, and in 2015, the target audience was broadened to the general public.

In 2015 the program started with a training for oblast-level (region-level) librarians to educate them on key election procedures and equip them with the knowledge and information needed to answer election-related questions from voters visiting libraries, as well as from the lower-level librarians who distributed voter information leaflets. Following the seminar, a webinar was conducted for rayon-level (district level) libraries to share knowledge on when and how voters can exercise their voter rights, as well as the electoral system and novelties of the local election law.

Election posters and leaflets were produced to explain voting procedures, and key features of Ukraine's new electoral system that was used in the 2015 local elections. The posters and leaflets were placed in public libraries nationwide. 100,000 informational leaflets and 10,000 posters were produced and distributed to educate voters as they prepare for local elections.

The program was designed for oblast (24 regions) and rayon libraries (450 across the country); librarians participating in the program reported that the topic was of high interest to voters. Librarians trained their colleagues from lower-level libraries using established curricula, further disseminated printed materials into rural areas, and went out to streets to meet with voters and educated them before the Election Day (more than 13,500 voters received

personal consultations in the three-week period before the Election Day).

Election poster on voting procedures.

Informing and educating through PSAs

Taking into account the, at-times, rapidly changing electoral legal framework in Ukraine, it is crucial that stakeholders and citizens are aware of and understand the changes and how those changes affect them. Voters are often left confused and do not understand or know about important changes to their country's electoral framework.

In response to this, in 2015, the Central Election Commission developed 30-second public service announcements (PSAs) that addressed the new electoral system and how to vote, while another focused on women's representation and Ukraine's new party-list gender quota, both broadcasted on television and social media during the weeks before Election Day.

Following major reform to Ukraine's political finance system and legislation, in March 2016, local NGOs developed two informational videos devoted to educating the public on ongoing political finance reform and what it means to them. The first video, which in 30 seconds highlights the importance of direct public funding of political parties, restrictions on private donations and disclosure/transparency requirements in the new Political Finance Reform Law (adopted in October 2015), aimed to raise public awareness and support for the political finance reform. The second video, approximately ten minutes in length and targeted mainly at political parties, national experts, civil society activists and other stakeholders, explains the new rules governing political finance in Ukraine in more detail. PSAs are currently being broadcasted on TV and Internet.

Also, for each election, the Central Election Commission develops training videos for precinct election commissioners outlining key electoral procedures, including delivery and receipt of ballots and other sensitive election documents, voting, vote counting and tabulation procedures.

The role of the media in elections

The *media* plays an indispensable role in a vibrant democracy. Perception of the fairness and integrity of elections often depend on media messages disseminated among the population. For the past four years, regional NGOs conducted trainings on election topics for journalists throughout Ukraine.

The trainings include briefing for journalists on key provisions of election laws; detailed explanations of legal provisions relating specifically to media, including rules governing campaign coverage and the publically funded campaign advertising system; identification of key issues and problems likely to arise during elections; and special sessions for new media journalists on issues relating to the internet and social media in the election campaign.

In 2016, a training to strengthen media capacity on highlighting political finance reform and developments was conducted. The training emphasized effective tools for monitoring and reporting on political finance violations and the abuse of money in politics and incorporated interactive, adult-learning methodologies.

Source: IFES

PSA addressing the new electoral system and method how to vote.

Journalist training in progress.

'Aaj mein upar, aasman neeche' (on top of the world) - after voting, Assam, India 2014

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NO VOTER TO BE
LEFT BEHIND

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Making a mark

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