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**Evaluation of Donors' Support
for Elections in Pakistan 2005 to 2008**

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Executive Summary

Introduction: The Evaluation of Donors' Support for Elections in Pakistan 2005 to 2008 (Evaluation) occurred in May and June 2008. The evaluation team consisted of three members: team leader Lincoln Mitchell, electoral effectiveness expert Adrian Morrice and logistics coordinator Zia Ur Rehman. This executive summary highlights the approach of the evaluation team, the structure of the report and some conclusions, while a collated list of recommendations is found at appendix D.

According to its terms of reference (see appendix A), the mission sought to answer two broad questions. The first was "how well was donor support for the elections coordinated, among donors, between donors and implementers and among implementers?" The second was "how did the inputs that were provided for election support, match up to the desired outcomes identified in the policy matrix? And also, whether the outcomes identified were indeed the correct outcomes, as they related to the findings of the United Nations' Department of Political Affairs (DPA) mission of 2005, the EU Election Observation Reports of 2002, and 2005, and the Commonwealth Observation Reports of 2002, and 2005. i.e. what was the quality and relevance of donor support?" Another question we sought to answer was whether or not the coordinated donor support to the electoral processes in Pakistan was consistent with internationally accepted principles and norms for coordinated donor support, electoral assistance, and, of course, in order to determine the effectiveness of the support, and conduct of elections.

The evaluation employed a mixed methodological approach. Naturally, it draws substantially from a breadth of In Depth Interviews (IDIs) conducted in Islamabad and Lahore between May 26th and June 10th, Brussels June 19th – 20th, and New York in late June. During this time, IDIs were conducted with all donors and implementers, the secretariat of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), and other people connected with electoral processes in Pakistan and some NGOs directly or indirectly impacted by donor activities. Additionally, a site visit was conducted to Lahore, meetings conducted in New York and Brussels, and telephone interviews with other practitioners who had left Pakistan. In addition to these interviews, the evaluation team reviewed a variety of documents related to donor support and the electoral process. Limitations to the research were felt in the lack of availability of some of the documents as well as little but the most cursory official ECP documents being provided. This hindered our methodology, because in the absence of some of these key documents, for example, a detailed electoral process budget, our quantitative work could not be sufficiently thorough or conclusive.

Context: Reports from multiple domestic and international observer groups differed only marginally in their assessments of whether Election Day was calculated to have been partially credible or problematic and rigged in numerous constituencies. More broadly, the ECP - that is the Commissioners, their Secretariat and their temporary and permanent structures, were largely blamed for not performing their constitutionally mandated responsibilities during the electoral process. Numerous national and international interviewees, however, were surprised to be concluding the result generally reflected the 'will of the people'. This was generally taken to mean a lack of nation-wide systemic and / or systematic election-day rigging. Notwithstanding, while reports note Election Day did not go as badly as the pre-election environment had signalled, broadly the electoral process was found to not have met a significant number of international standards. The unmet standards were in most cases the same standards signalled as having not been met in the electoral processes of 2002 and 2005. Taking as a starting point that

‘there is increasing recognition that successful elections are built upon the legitimacy of institutional frameworks,’¹ it was these less visible frameworks that largely failed again in Pakistan.

Coordinated Electoral Assistance: The primary outputs of donor coordination to emerge from early donor and embassy discussions were the UNDP and The Asia Foundation (TAF) baskets. The UNDP basket was oriented primarily towards technical support to the ECP while the TAF basket focused more on mobilizing civil society for, and monitoring of the electoral process. The TAF basket had two major components, voter education and domestic monitoring. TAF organized three separate groups of NGOs to do this work, Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) and The Researchers. The first took the form of an NGO coalition called FAFEN which brought roughly 40 NGOs together to monitor the election.

While this report will break down their strengths and weaknesses, these two baskets themselves were quite well coordinated, maximizing contributions and reducing the amount of work that was done by more than one organization. The voter education activities remained an exception to this as it ended up being somewhat awkwardly divided between the two baskets. Nonetheless, the existence of the two donor baskets provided a useful place for many donors who were interested in supporting the elections, but did not have the desire or the structures to fund entire projects themselves. Thus, the baskets probably ended up bringing in more money from more donors, particularly non-US money that would otherwise have been spent on the election. This was useful, given the breadth of needs identified by previous election observer reports, various expert needs assessment reports, and reflected in the Donor Coordination Matrix (DCM).

There was, of course, a great deal of key election support which occurred outside of the two baskets, but which nonetheless could be considered part of the donor coordination. The primary example of this was the IFES voter list project. IFES was a full participant in the various donor coordination structures, but their project was directly funded by USAID and not as part of any basket. Because IFES attended the Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings, shared information informally with UNDP and other implementers in the kitchen cabinet meetings, and otherwise contributed to the coordination, this project can fully be considered part of the coordination effort. However, it should not be overlooked that this project, the single largest of the election, was funded directly by a single donor. This donor evinced a reluctance to participate in the basket approach with regards to the voter list project, suggesting that development assistance confidence in the basket approach is still not as broadly shared as it might be. This is a matter of global USAID policy not specific to Pakistan. Notwithstanding, by excluding the largest project from the basket, the donors weakened the overall impact of the coordinated effort.

Electoral Assistance: There were two dimensions which shaped electoral assistance and its coordination: first, the bulk of donor funding was dispersed between three primary sources and several smaller recipients. Second, there was a mix of four types of activity, partly driven by what some in the donor community called the supply-side versus the demand-side (electoral authorities versus voters and parties), i.e.: (i) direct technical assistance to the ECP; (ii) voter education

¹ Andrew Ellis, “From Optimism to Realism: Ten years of electoral development” in International IDEA, “Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide”. IDEA 10th Anniversary Publication, May 2005, pp99-100

implemented by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); (iii) electoral observation, both domestic and international, and; (iv) work of the party institutes, NDI and IRI. The report was not resourced to review the effectiveness and efficiency of all electoral activities so two illustrative cases are taken, the procurement of ballot boxes, seals and screens, and the voters list project. Additionally the report investigates the role of the party institutes and the lack of the integration of political activities in the donor effort.

Election Observation: The team understood this was “the largest, most technically robust Election Day observation in Pakistan’s history.”² There should be no question donor support facilitated that historical fact. More importantly there’s consensus the collective observation effort, in particular the domestic effort, had a direct impact on electoral fraud deterrence, or modification and improvement of electoral administration, and greater transparency in general. Events in the period November 2007 to January 2008 nearly derailed this collective national and international effort. Various types of coordination enabled international groups to quickly become operational, and information exchange heightened the quality of data collection, analysis and reporting.

Electoral Assistance Coordination Fora: There was a diverse array of formal and informal electoral assistance coordination fora in the 2007 – 2008 Pakistan electoral process. The overall structure was not particularly unusual or novel. However, below the broad structure three issues should be highlighted: there was a disturbingly small amount of national (ECP) leadership of an overall electoral assistance strategy and monitoring of its implementation; structures were designed using common sense but before guidance and best practice on UNDP electoral assistance baskets as well as effective electoral assistance principles were available, and; by international comparison the structures and division of labour revealed a particularly complex array of actors, funders and implementers. On this latter point the coordination fora covered a spectrum from technical, financial and political perspectives, involved national and international, private and public, and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The goal of these fora was to facilitate the ongoing communication between and among donors, implementers, the ECP and diplomats throughout the election period. Given the lack of will and capacity by the ECP to (co)lead the design, implementation and monitoring of international electoral assistance, compromises had to be made in the operation of these fora. This was a departure from both effective electoral assistance best practice as well as the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The report analyses formal coordination meetings, and more informal information sharing gatherings.

The Donor Coordination Matrix: Ultimately, the DCM was a very useful coordinating document. From the outset however, there was a lack of a broader national strategy or an agreed governance agenda within which the international electoral assistance would be situated. It is fortunate the early donors took the initiative to move forward without it, but moving forward this approach now that the political environment has been transformed, this should not be repeated. It is hard to imagine a complex coordinated effort such as the support for elections in Pakistan occurring without an evolving matrix flexible enough to reflect changes in strategies and programming. The implementers seemed to view the DCM as central to their work and referred to it frequently as indispensable to their coordination efforts. The DCM was more of an

² FAFEN Press Release, 25 June 2008, <http://www.fafen.org/pressdet.php?id=98>, accessed 26 June 2008

organizing than a planning document. The process for creating the DCM was not as open or transparent as it might have been.

Sustainability and future reform: One impact of the lack of transparency and leadership from the ECP was that it prevented the ECP from gaining experience taking charge of efforts, making mistakes and correcting them in the electoral activities internationalists supported or conducted individually. Limitations in sustainability were also influenced by the structural design of the IFES contract, and the UNDP DEX modality. These were offset by the professionalism displayed by the individual international and national experts, and their commitment to transfer skills to national counterparts. In fact personalities played a critical role in the success of the electoral assistance, a chance outcome that may not be present in the future.

The area of electoral assistance most effective in terms of long term impact and sustainability has been the support to civil society, in particular to domestic electoral observation. Three CSO coalitions conducted complementary observation of a high quantitative and qualitative level, the highest in Pakistan's electoral history. Further, in this post-election period these groups are remaining active and this may prove decisive in navigating a break with the past.

The team agrees with a significant number of those interviewed, political party statements, observer reports (see bibliography) and needs assessment mission reports, that electoral processes are highly unlikely to improve in Pakistan unless strategic reforms are urgently begun before the next electoral process. International electoral assistance could be expected to play an important role in supporting that reform. The failure of such reform would make it difficult to conclude international electoral assistance has been efficient and effective in the period under review 2005 – 2008. The first step is that seemingly already commenced by CSOs and the new parliament, to develop a broader development and governance agenda that has been missing in Pakistan the last ten years. A great portion of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness as well as best practices in delivering international electoral assistance depend on such a dialogue, negotiation and agreed vision and plan.

There was agreement the scale of such reform would over-extend both the Parliamentary Committee as well as the ECP's electoral reform committee. In fact, it is questionable how much the ECP leadership believes they are in need of the reform other domestic actors speak of. Several well-informed commentators encouraged donors to support a broad-based consultation on governance, possibly linked to a poverty reduction strategy paper or other national framework. More specifically for the political and electoral agenda, the suggestion was to promote some sort of national commission or task force to make recommendations.

Introduction

The Evaluation of Donors' Support for Elections in Pakistan 2005 to 2008 (Evaluation) occurred in May and June 2008. The evaluation team consisted of three members: team leader Lincoln Mitchell, electoral effectiveness expert Adrian Morrice and logistics coordinator Zia Ur Rehman. Although it was originally planned, there was no efficiency expert as part of the team. Thus, the team consisted of three, rather than four, members.

According to its terms of reference (see appendix A), the mission sought to answer two broad questions. The first was "how well was donor support for the elections coordinated, among donors, between donors and implementers and among implementers? i.e. what was the quality of donor and implementing partner coordination," The second was "how did the inputs that were provided for election support, match up to the desired outcomes identified in the policy matrix? And also, whether the outcomes identified were indeed the correct outcomes, as they related to the findings of the United Nations' Department of Political Affairs (DPA) mission of 2005, the EU Election Observation Reports of 2002, and 2005, and the Commonwealth Observation Reports of 2002, and 2005. i.e. what was the quality and relevance of donor support?" Another question we sought to answer was whether or not the coordinated donor support to the electoral processes in Pakistan was consistent with internationally accepted principles and norms for coordinated donor support, electoral assistance, and, of course, in order to determine the effectiveness of the support, and conduct of elections.

Accordingly, this evaluation only indirectly assesses the quality of the electoral process through an examination of those aspects of the process that were donor supported, led and facilitated. The evaluation will not, however, evaluate in detail each specific international election support program as each agency and organization have their own internal project evaluations. Rather, we address the collective quality, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of donor support and the coordination that facilitated it. Moreover, the report seeks to balance both retrospective evaluation and forward looking recommendations. However, in order to do this effectively it is often necessary to draw on the election itself as well as various observation reports and other documents. For a full bibliography see appendix B.

This report addresses the primary questions in the terms of reference from both technical and political angles as strong donor electoral support must be grounded in both those areas. We approach this issue by asking whether the coordination structures created by the cooperating donors enhanced the extent to which strong political and technical support could be provided.

Methodology

The evaluation employs a mixed methodological approach. Naturally, it draws substantially from a breadth of In Depth Interviews (IDIs) conducted in Islamabad and Lahore between May 26th and June 10th, Brussels June 19th – 20th, and New York in late June. During this time, IDIs were conducted with all donors and implementers, the secretariat of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), and other people connected with electoral processes in Pakistan and some NGOs directly or indirectly impacted by donor activities. Additionally, a site visit was conducted to Lahore, meetings conducted in New York and Brussels, and telephone interviews with other practitioners who had left Pakistan. For a full list of the people interviewed by the evaluation team, please see appendix C.

In addition to these interviews, the evaluation team reviewed a variety of documents related to donor support and the electoral process. There were two limitations to this research. First, some of the documents have not yet been made available publicly by various donor or implementing organizations. Second, in spite of requests, we were able to get little but the most cursory official ECP documents. This hindered our methodology, because in the absence of some of these key documents, for example, a detailed electoral process budget, our quantitative work could not be sufficiently thorough or conclusive. An evaluation of the full spectrum of donor support, its cost effectiveness, sustainability and long-term impact, should ideally be measured against the cost of ECP-led activities. The final set of documents we have utilized are those describing international norms of aid effectiveness, electoral assistance and electoral observation. These played a central role in our methodology as they constituted the criteria or standards against which we sought to measure the donor support in Pakistan.

One departure in this report from the terms of reference which we hope do not detract from the utility of the evaluation is that there is only one report with an executive summary and recommendations, not three separate reports. This is largely because an efficiency expert, as initially called for in the terms of reference, was not recruited so there were just two writers. The recommendations appear at the end of each section, and are collated at appendix D. There was also less time than needed to conduct interviews, research the extensive number of documents that governed the process, and write. This approach made for a more cohesive and thematically structured report.

The terms of reference called for a quantitative methodological approach to this report. It is our view that given the lack of quantitative data, particularly, but not exclusively on the output side, it is not entirely possible to use quantitative approaches in this report. Given the overall operational scale and complexity, electoral administration has proved a difficult sector to cost.³ International electoral assistance has overlapping challenges, and additional dimensions due to the variety of program funding mechanisms, notwithstanding the increasing use of baskets for several major activities. Therefore, the unreliability and inconsistency of the available quantitative data, using this data in such a way would lean more towards statistical pyrotechnics than rigorous social science inquiry. There is also, therefore, no specifically “replicable model for such quantification...for future programmes of support.” The efficiency expert originally called for to do this research would have had little to draw on. As such, we have eschewed quantitative methods as a primary approach to answering the central questions of the terms of reference. However, we feel the range and quality of the interviews conducted has allowed a broad-based and inclusive examination of the background to, and nature of, donor support to the electoral processes in Pakistan 2005 – 2008.

Context

Electoral processes are inherently high risk and high stakes with the control of the state and its resources potentially changing hands. The 2007 – 2008 electoral process in Pakistan was particularly high risk due to the number and potency of non-electoral external challenges to the

³ See discussion on core, diffuse and integrity electoral costs in the UNDP and IFES funded report R. Lopez-Pintor and J. Fischer, *Getting to the CORE: A global survey on the cost of registration and elections*, <http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections-Pub-Core.pdf>

electoral process. The entire effort of international electoral assistance needs to be seen in this overall context. Beyond longer-term electoral and legal framework, political culture and institutional capacity weaknesses, there have been critical geopolitical, regional, national, provincial and local issues that had a direct impact on the political and technical electoral environment.

Pakistan is an important country with regards to global security and anti-terror efforts. It is a country with complex and evolving relationships with Europe and the US that has also had a 60 year history of weak democratic institutions giving way to periods of less democracy. Elected government transitions have been followed by praetorian interventions. Selective and systemic election rigging has undermined even elected government. Spending a great deal of time discussing these issues is beyond the scope of this report. However, looking more closely at the immediate context and political circumstances in which the 2008 election occurred is useful to frame the donor coordination environment.

Pakistan's National Assembly ended its five-year term on November 15, 2007. The ninth general elections were held on February 18, 2008, after being postponed from January 8, 2008. The months preceding the election were a period of great uncertainty in Pakistan. Pakistan's president imposed emergency rule and suspended the constitution on November 3, 2007 when the Court was going to rule on his eligibility as a presidential candidate. At this time, the Chief Justice and several other judges were removed from office. This occurred as security circumstances deteriorated sharply across the country, but was widely viewed as being an effort by the President to maintain power.

The President was re-elected to a second five-year presidential term in a controversial October 2007 vote by the country's Electoral College, and, under mounting domestic and international pressure, he finally resigned his military commission six weeks later. On November 20, 2007 Pakistan was suspended from the Commonwealth in response to The President's actions. Several countries and multi-laterals including the US, UK, and EU issued statements urging the President to end the state of emergency, release those arrested, and hold free and fair elections. The lawyers then resumed their protest movement, demanding the President's resignation. Lawyers demonstrating against the President were beaten and arrested. Among them were leaders of the lawyers' movement like Aitzaz Ahsan and Ali Ahmed Kurd. Protests against the imposition of emergency rule were made in foreign countries as well, especially in the UK on the occasion of the President's January, 2008 visit.

During this period, journalists faced persistent pressure and threats from the government to tone down their coverage of the anti-government protests. Media offices were physically attacked and closely monitored by the security forces. Reporters working for local, regional, national, and international media faced torture, kidnapping, illegal detention, beatings, and coercion. Political unrest in the south-western province of Baluchistan, the spread of violence from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) to neighbouring areas, price hikes and shortages of flour, electricity and gas before the elections contributed to the weakening of the ruling party. Wheat flour prices, particularly, became one of the major election campaign issues.

As the election approached, thirty-two parties opposed to Musharraf joined together in a political alliance called All Parties Democratic Movement (APDM). However, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the largest opposition party, was not a part of this alliance. Other parties

including Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, Nizam-e-Mustafa Party, Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) and Tehrik-i-Insaf decided to boycott the election. These parties demanded (a) restoration of the judges of the superior courts who refused to take the oath under the Provisional Constitutional Order⁴, and (b) formation of an independent caretaker government to hold free and fair elections. Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif's return from exile in late 2007 altered the campaign and created a new level of excitement around the election. Bhutto's welcoming procession, however, was targeted by suicide bombers, killing 139 people and injuring several hundred. This was followed by a series of violent activities.

Nawaz Sharif was allowed to return to Pakistan on September 10, 2007. His return played an important role in the election campaign of the Pakistan Muslim League PML(N); however, his candidate nomination was disqualified by the ECP, which largely discouraged the PML(N) voters. Thousands of political activists from the parties headed by Bhutto and Sharif, as well as smaller political groups, were arrested in order to prevent post-emergency protests. Bhutto herself was intermittently placed under house arrest to prevent her from leading demonstrations in the aftermath of the crackdown on lawyers and activists of political parties. December and January produced significant political turmoil that nearly derailed the entire process. Expectations at that time were low: *"The Musharraf government is widely expected to rig these elections if only to ensure its opponents do not win a clear majority and threaten Musharraf's continued role as President."*⁵ Both Bhutto and Sharif continued to dominate the campaign until Bhutto's assassination on December 27. This had an immediate and dramatic impact, resulting in violence across the country and damage to public and private property and the looting of banks and other financial institutions.

In the weeks following the postponement and preceding the election, there were several more attacks targeting politicians and political rallies. On February 9, a suicide car bomb killed 27 and injured 37 attending a political rally for the Awami National Party in Charsadda. On February 16, another suicide car bomb killed 37 and injured 93 outside the residence of a PPP candidate in Parachinar. A PML (N) candidate for the provincial assembly was murdered on 17 February in Lahore. Political violence continued right up until Election Day. Election Day, however, witnessed a relatively calm polling process.

*"To the surprise of nearly all observers, the February elections were relatively free of expected violence. The apparent absence of election-day rigging allowed opposition parties to defeat Musharraf's allies in Parliament, where nearly all the senior incumbents lost their seats."*⁶

According to the final election results, the Pakistan Muslim League (Q) (PML(Q)), the party supporting Pervez Musharraf, was badly defeated. All its main leaders including 22 former federal ministers (which constituted a bulk of the previous federal cabinet) lost their seats. The PPP scored the highest number of National Assembly seats, followed by PML-N. PML-Q won the third most seats. The President of the PML-Q and the Speaker of the National Assembly also

⁴ See Provisional Constitutional Order No.1 of 2007, 3 November (amended 15 November) 2008, http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/post_03nov07/pco_1_2007.html, accessed 24 June 2008

⁵ Social Science Research Council, Statement by the Editorial Advisory Committee, *Pakistan in Crisis*, 21 December 2007, <http://www.ssrc.org/pakistancrisis/statement-by-the-editorial-advisory-committee/>, accessed 24 June 2008

⁶ From http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/root/pdfs/irc_alert_march_april_2008.pdf, accessed 10 June 2008

failed to secure their seats. Turnout remained at 45.67 percent. PPP got a majority in Sindh while PML(N) did so in Punjab. In the North-Western Frontier Province (NWFP) the Pashtoon Secular Party (ANP) got a majority and the alliance of religious parties, (MMA) was unable to retain their positions in National and Provincial Assemblies. Reporters noted the people rejected military rule and the role in politics of those who had supported the regime.

Reports from multiple domestic and international observer groups differed only marginally in their assessments of whether Election Day was calculated to have been partially credible or problematic and rigged in numerous constituencies. More broadly, the ECP - that is the Commissioners, their Secretariat and their temporary and permanent structures, were largely blamed for not performing their constitutionally mandated responsibilities during the electoral process. Numerous national and international interviewees, however, were surprised to be concluding the result generally reflected the 'will of the people'. This was generally taken to mean a lack of nation-wide systemic and / or systematic election-day rigging. Notwithstanding, while reports note Election Day did not go as badly as the pre-election environment had signalled, broadly the electoral process was found to not have met a significant number of international standards. The unmet standards were in most cases the same standards signalled as having not been met in the electoral processes of 2002 and 2005. Taking as a starting point that 'there is increasing recognition that successful elections are built upon the legitimacy of institutional frameworks,'⁷ it was these less visible frameworks that largely failed again in Pakistan.

On February 21, the PPP and the PML (N) formed a coalition government together with the ANP in the NWFP and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI (F)). The ECP released the final results on March 6, 2008. These results showed the PPP with 120 seats and the PML(N) with 90 seats in the National Assembly. The coalition government took office with major challenges of security, inflation and ongoing demonstrations and protests. Moreover, there are serious questions regarding the sustainability of the coalition.

In this extraordinary political environment, with the scope and diversity of external threats to the electoral process, it is a challenge to isolate the overall international electoral assistance effort and make post-facto conclusions. The evaluation team feels this is still possible, in particular because the team has benefitted from extensive and candid IDIs, and have been able to assess the motivations of the main donors and implementers before, during and after the process, in particular the impact their early decisions had on eventual outcomes.

⁷ Andrew Ellis, "From Optimism to Realism: Ten years of electoral development" in International IDEA, "Ten Years of Supporting Democracy Worldwide". IDEA 10th Anniversary Publication, May 2005, pp99-100

Funding and Electoral Assistance Analysis

This section outlines donor funding structures and the general impact of the donor coordination effort, in particular its cost effectiveness. While conclusions are reached, specific recommendations on donor coordination are found in the following sections on electoral assistance coordination fora, and long term impact.

The Structure of Donor Funding

Well before the 2007 – 2008 electoral process began, the donors began to discuss the election related needs in Pakistan and the best ways to address them. One critical moment was the February 2005 report of the UN Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) Needs Assessment Mission (NAM). This report made a substantial critique of the problems of the electoral framework, the law, the independence and the capacity of the ECP, and the links between the ECP, the judiciary and the civil service. The discussion then opened to multilaterals and implementers to continue to identify those electoral needs as well to coordinate these efforts.

The primary outputs of donor coordination to emerge from this discussion were the UNDP and The Asia Foundation (TAF) baskets. The UNDP basket was oriented primarily towards technical support to the ECP while the TAF basket focused more on mobilizing civil society for, and monitoring of the electoral process. It should be kept in mind that the UNDP basket was something of a hybrid as agreements were signed between UNDP and each specific donor. The TAF basket had two major components, voter education and domestic monitoring. TAF organized three separate groups of NGOs to do this work, Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) and The Researchers. The first took the form of an NGO coalition called FAFEN which brought roughly 40 NGOs together to monitor the election.

While this report will break down their strengths and weaknesses, these two baskets themselves were quite well coordinated, maximizing contributions and reducing the amount of work that was done by more than one organization. The voter education activities remained an exception to this as it ended up being somewhat awkwardly divided between the two baskets. Nonetheless, the existence of the two donor baskets provided a useful place for many donors who were interested in supporting the elections, but did not have the desire or the structures to fund entire projects themselves. Thus, the baskets probably ended up bringing in more money from more donors, particularly non-US money that would otherwise have been spent on the election. This was useful, given the breadth of needs identified by previous election observer reports, various expert needs assessment reports, and reflected in the Donor Coordination Matrix (DCM).

There was, of course, a great deal of key election support which occurred outside of the two baskets, but which nonetheless could be considered part of the donor coordination. The primary example of this was the IFES voter list project. IFES was a full participant in the various donor coordination structures, but their project was directly funded by USAID and not as part of any basket. Because IFES attended the Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings, shared information informally with UNDP and other implementers in the kitchen cabinet meetings, and otherwise contributed to the coordination, this project can fully be considered part of the coordination effort. However, it should not be overlooked that this project, the single largest of the election, was funded directly by a single donor. This donor evinced a reluctance to participate in the basket approach

with regards to the voter list project, suggesting that development assistance confidence in the basket approach is still not as broadly shared as it might be. This is a matter of global USAID policy not specific to Pakistan. Notwithstanding, by excluding the largest project from the basket, the donors weakened the overall impact of the coordinated effort.

National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI) programs were much more tenuously part of the coordinated strategy as they were primarily funded by Washington based donors who did not participate in the coordination structures. IRI, and to a greater extent, NDI participated in the TWG and other structures, but indicated that their work was not viewed with the gravity that it should have been, in part because it remained outside of the donor basket and the explicitly coordinated donor efforts.

Descriptions and analysis of many of the donor-funded electoral activities and their role in donor coordination follow; it includes examples of activities the team felt illustrative of the coordination effort.

The coordinated basket approach proved to be a very effective way to attract and coordinate medium sized and small contributions for the elections. Even donors suggesting they would have liked to have been brought into the discussion earlier all told the evaluation team that, on balance, the basket approach made it easier for them to give money and to have a seat at the table. The baskets and coordination fora around them allowed these donors to remain involved, briefed and to have an impact on election-related developments. This was one of the clear and unambiguous positive aspects of the donor funding approach. It is also precisely this sort of motivation that guided the 2005 *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, i.e. ‘eliminating duplication of efforts and rationalising donor activities to make them as cost-effective as possible.. reforming and simplifying donor policies and procedures to encourage collaborative behaviour.’⁸

While a substantial amount of money for election support came through the baskets, there were other sources of election funding as well. The primary source, other than basket funding, was the US. It should not, however, be concluded that because USAID gave a substantial contract to IFES for the voter list project, that USAID was somehow not part of the donor coordination. Indeed, as discussed above, against their global preference, USAID contributed to the UNDP basket as well and was fully engaged in the coordination including through participation in the Joint Development Political Meeting (JDPM), TWG and Diplomatic or Like Minded Group (LMG) meetings as well. An additional US funding organization, the State Department’s Department of Democracy Human Rights and Labour (DRL), however, was not part of the coordination effort. DRL had existing cooperative agreements with US based NGOs, NDI and IRI. These agreements were made independently of in-country donor coordination. In the case of NDI this agreement was bolstered to fill a perceived gap in the UNDP project. Thus, while DRL was certainly an important funding organization, it is not entirely clear that they should be considered part of the donor coordination effort. The table in Appendix E summarises donor funding and activities.

⁸ Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, 2 March 2005, page 1, paragraph 3

The Impact of Electoral Assistance Coordination

There are a number of different angles from which to explore the impact of donor coordination. Criteria through which this coordination could be examined include the extent to which coordination led to more effective programming, was cost effective, made it easier for the implementers to do their work, increased the sustainability of the project, facilitated greater cooperation with the ECP and ultimately led to a better electoral process. It may also be fruitful to go back to the bigger picture and explore the initial goals of donor coordination.

Cost Effectiveness

All parties involved in donor coordination bear transaction costs, that is, the Government of Pakistan (GoP), the ECP, donors and their implementers; improved coordination may increase those costs for one group, and reduce it for another. This is the case for donor coordination in any sector.

Between 2005 and 2008 there were significantly higher donor coordination transaction costs for donors and their implementers and lower transaction costs for the Government and the ECP. It was not the case however, that the former led to the latter. IDIs all stated the ECP did not wish to facilitate or lead any donor coordination, even though the effectiveness of that coordination would have a direct impact on the success of the electoral process. A mutually convenient situation developed where the ECP did not need to lead donor coordination because they believed the UNDP would do it for them, and the donors did not need to insist on the ECP to lead it because UNDP and IFES were seen as the unofficial interlocutors of the donor group. They maintained the option to go directly to the ECP on a bilateral basis in any case. In that sense these arrangements and their structures made donor coordination extremely cost effective for the ECP and GoP. They also provided structural impediments to two of five primary goals of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, namely ownership, and mutual accountability.

In future election support work in Pakistan it is essential that the ECP play a larger leadership role in coordinated international support efforts. Given the recent experience with the ECP, this will not be easy, nor will it be accomplished solely through better programming. Again, this is a political issue which will require not only coordination among donors, but coordination between donors, embassies and foreign ministries. There was a broad understanding among people with whom we spoke that the capacity exists in Pakistan to administer electoral processes to an international standard and does not need the international community to take such a major role. This needs to be reflected in the substance and structure of further electoral support in Pakistan.

Donor coordination clearly was cost effective for the donors' individual programs. Although the team did not have access to sufficient budget and other data to demonstrate this point through quantifiable means, the evidence we gathered is unambiguous on this point. There appeared only limited duplication of effort because in general the donors knew what other donors were doing, both inside and outside of the two donor baskets. Exceptions to this included voter education in which both baskets were involved and party agent training which seemed to fall between the UNDP basket and NDI. Implementers and donors were able to use structures such as the TWG to minimize the amount of time they needed to spend briefing and discussing their

programs. While there is clearly a transaction cost in staff time associated with conducting these TWG meetings, they ended up taking less staff time than briefing individual donors would have. Moreover, once donors establish a presence in the country, being briefed by grantees is an activity which must occur. Doing this through both the TWG as well the project management meetings of each basket simply streamlined the process, particularly for implementers. Some regular attendees of the TWG meetings indicated that these meetings were considerably longer than they might have been. This was not, however, a consensus view.

Organizing the electoral support effort through a matrix early in the process also increased the cost effectiveness of the program because it made it possible for the donors to establish, and agree upon, a set of priorities. Donor funding was then solicited for programs on the matrix through an approach which appeared to broadly reflect these priorities. For the most part, it was difficult for donors to tack on their own priorities without, at the very least, discussing this with either the TWG or JDPM, but there were relatively few such new priorities added once the matrix began. More importantly, the donor matrix and relatively strong degree of donor coordination substantially decreased the chances of implementers pitching new ideas to donors midway through the process which might have taken the electoral support off track and sent resources to lower priority projects.

Facilitating implementation

The extent to which donor coordination made it easier for implementers to do their work is less clear and depends upon which implementer we examine. The implementer which benefited most from donor coordination was the UNDP. Coordinated donor activity made the UNDP project possible as working with so many donors separately would have been a major bureaucratic burden on the UNDP project. Donors involved at the earliest stages who drafted the first donor coordination matrix effectively designed it this way, looking forward at a complex multi-donor project. By being involved from almost the beginning, the UNDP was able to agree upon a set of activities with the donors relatively early. This also allowed them to be a locus of electoral support activity.

For other significant implementers, the benefit for the coordinated effort was more mixed. To phrase it more accurately, other implementers experienced a substantially less coordinated donor environment. TAF, which was the other major donor basket, also benefited from the donor coordination, but not to the same extent as the UNDP. The TAF basket brought together seven donors who worked together throughout the election period, met as a group through the TAF coordinating meetings and agreed upon common reporting procedures. CIDA played a convening role among the donors (sometimes called the like-minded group) to ease the burden on TAF. The basket, however, was not the only source of funding for TAF. TAF also received funding from USAID, DRL and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) which together combined for roughly 40% of TAF's funding during the election cycle. Each of these donors required distinct reporting procedures, briefing and other work from TAF. Thus, while the presence of the basket made it somewhat easier for TAF, the reality was that TAF's funding still came from multiple sources for multiple projects and the transaction costs facilitating funding receipt, disbursement and reporting was therefore higher.

The extent to which donor support beyond the two major baskets was coordinated remains unclear. Importantly, some of the most important electoral support work, including the

voter list projects and all of the political party work, was done outside of these two baskets. IFES, IRI and NDI, all had programs outside of the donor baskets, yet all three of these organizations, in varying degrees, participated in the donor coordination. As discussed above, they all attended the TWG meetings and briefed donors, even those from whom they were not receiving any money, on their activities. These organizations also participated in the informal discussions which played an important role in the coordination. Although IFES' voter list project was on the donor matrix, it was funded directly by USAID and had been decided well before the first donor coordination matrix was drafted. IFES, in this sense, was de facto part of the coordinated donor effort.

NDI and IRI were in a different situation as their activities were not on the donor matrix. None of the donors who contributed to the baskets, with the exception of USAID, supported these two organizations. Instead, they had to go to a Washington based organization, DRL, and the NED, to get their funding. This suggests some combination of the following: a significant gap in donor coordination, a gap in the understanding of what were priority activities to address Pakistan's electoral capacity, or a decision to firewall more 'political' activity from 'technical' work. Political party work is a critical component of election work, particularly in a country like Pakistan. Accountable, programmatic political parties play an essential role in making elections have a genuine impact on a country's democratic development. This is particularly true in Pakistan where the electoral institutions have experience but where political divisions remain substantial. For electoral assistance programming to be effective a strategic and holistic approach is needed, or one set of activities may be inappropriately subordinated, or forgotten in the intense and complex environment that normally prevails. While it was appropriate not to have the more political work as part of the UNDP basket, it should have been part of the donor matrix from the beginning, so that donor agencies with Pakistan offices could have been more involved in funding, and following this work.

Comparative context: One can only fully answer the question of whether the donor cooperation saved money and made the electoral support more productive by raising another question. That question is against what are we comparing the donor coordination? Above we have stated that what happened in Pakistan was much more effective and a better use of resources than what would have happened if the donors and implementers had never coordinated with each other. However, a higher bar needs to be set for determining the value of donor coordination.

Another way to answer this question would be to ask if the donor coordination in Pakistan was significantly stronger or more effective than the coordination usually seen around electoral processes in comparable countries. In early 2005 donors and implementers (Islamabad and headquarter-based staff) had very little other than personal experience to guide their decision making. Neither effective electoral assistance principles nor UNDP and European Commission electoral assistance norms and guidelines had been drafted; Paris Aid Effectiveness principles had only been recently approved in early 2005. Notwithstanding, some commented, and the evaluation team members have experience to confirm the type of coordination was at least similar to that seen in other countries, with perhaps two differences: first, the level of national participation in coordination design and decision-making was low and against the electoral assistance normative trend, and; second, the number of external (political) issues impacting the success of the coordinated effort was particularly high. This makes comparisons to other countries problematic. Several general positive observations are: although in comparatively

small amounts, the US did participate in the baskets where in other countries they have not; and like UNDP who have more established international procedures, TAF was able to design common donor agreements and reporting frameworks that reduced bilateral bureaucracy.

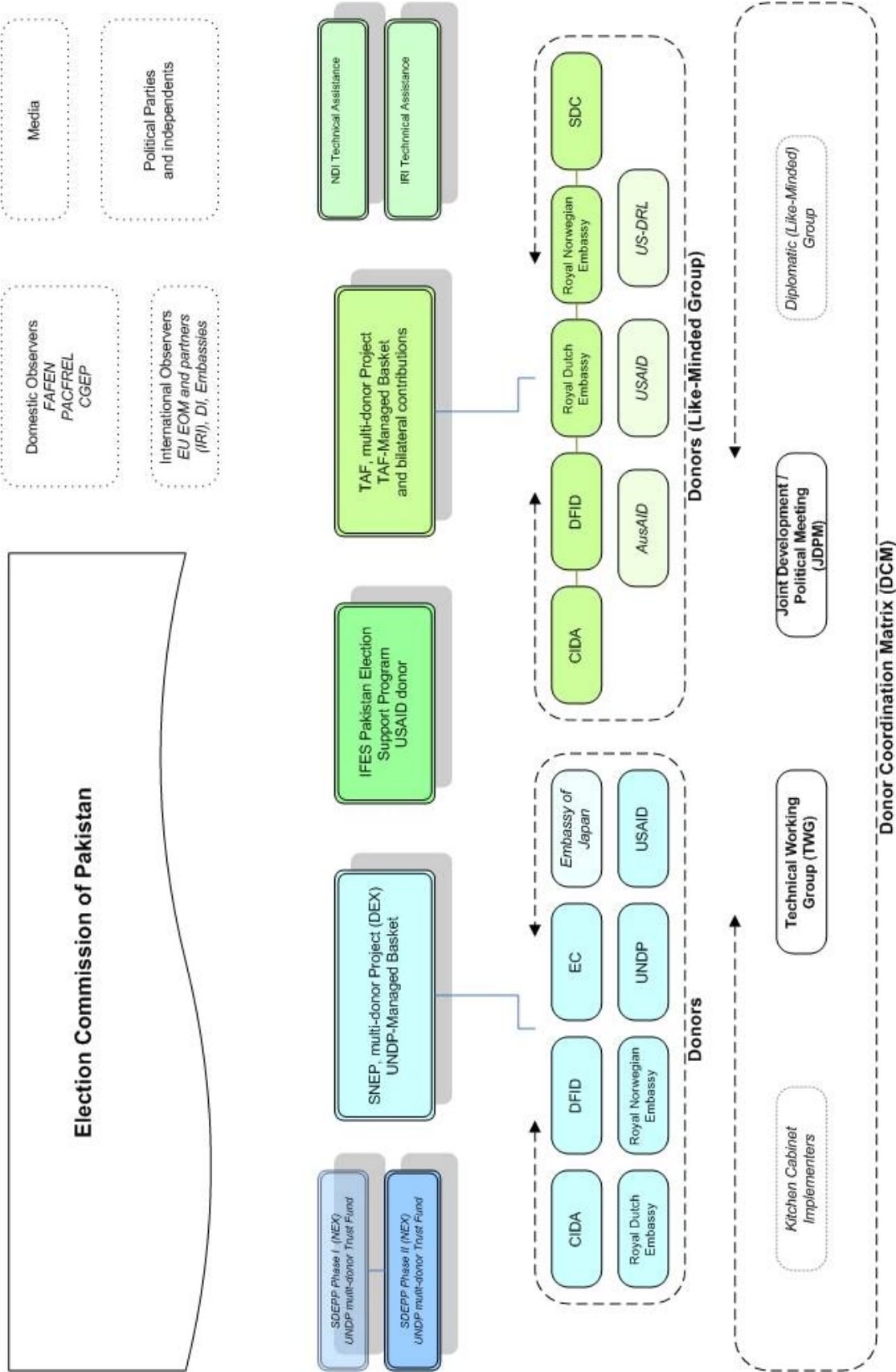
Another useful comparison is to look at the degree of coordination in the recent electoral cycle, compared to what is typically seen in Pakistan. This approach indicates that the 2007 – 2008 electoral process both had a quantitatively and qualitatively higher degree of coordination than has been seen in previous Pakistani electoral processes. In previous processes, the team was told, there was very little coordination between donors let alone even information sharing and, in fact, not a lot of electoral assistance in general. Explanations given in IDIs included the even worse donor assistance environment that existed in military regime politics during previous elections, as well as the positive demonstration-effect experienced during the national and international coordinated response to the October 2005 Kashmir earthquake. Therefore, the recent experience was clearly a break from this and a step forward with regards to donor coordination. The question of why there was so little coordination before 2008, compared to other countries having elections during that period, is somewhat beyond the scope of this project, but is not an insignificant question.

Electoral Assistance

Notwithstanding the attempts at harmonisation, the coordinated funding approach in support of the 2007 – 2008 electoral process was still a complex framework. There were two different donor baskets as well as numerous other projects and activities funded by DRL, USAID and others. There were numerous other activities outside the coordination structures. Notwithstanding the complexity and number of exceptions to the coordination rule, the terms of reference as well as numerous interviews confirm the assertion above that “The support for elections is...widely speculated to have been one of the most intensely and rigorously coordinated donor interventions in Pakistan, where donor harmonization tends to present significant challenges.”

There were two dimensions which shaped electoral assistance and its coordination: first, the bulk of donor funding was dispersed between three primary sources and several smaller recipients, described above. Second, there was a mix of four types of activity, partly driven by what some in the donor community called the supply-side versus the demand-side (electoral authorities versus voters and parties), i.e.: (i) direct technical assistance to the ECP; (ii) voter education implemented by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); (iii) electoral observation, both domestic and international, and; (iv) work of the party institutes, NDI and IRI. For some donors the voter education and domestic observation activities are defined as “assistance to civil society.” This section will begin with an introduction to the two baskets, then provide an outline of the formation and execution of a selection of the main areas of electoral assistance (see the diagram below, as well as appendix E for an outline of donor support).

Mapping Donor Support to the 2007 – 2008 Electoral Process



Technical Assistance to the ECP

The UNDP Support to National Elections in Pakistan (SNEP) and the IFES programs were the largest major components of donor support for the Pakistani electoral process 2007 – 2008. They were well integrated into and participated fully in the coordination fora, but determining the extent to which these programs made the election more legitimate and democratic is a more complex endeavour. The broader impact this assistance had on the electoral process will partly be discussed here and partly in the following sections on coordination fora and sustainability. Using national and international observer reports as a guide, the success of this electoral assistance is quite mixed. A more detailed evaluation would have been valuable, but the team did not have time or access to all documents to make a comparative assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of such a large collection of technical and operational activities. Several illustrative examples have been chosen, yet other large areas of support such as training, manual drafting and publication, and voter education are unfortunately not covered in detail in this report. The same goes for activities that were expanded in this process, for example, supporting the media, and promoting the participation of women, minority groups and disadvantaged voters in the political and electoral processes.

Together, these projects received a majority of donor funding for the election in Pakistan and can be broken down into several components: from IFES and UNDP, jointly working on procurement of election commodities (transparent ballot boxes and seals and polling screens); from IFES, technical advice and material support for the computerisation of the voter roll (information technology, contract management, and training of voter registration centre officials), and results adjudication support; and from UNDP, voter education (contract management for design, printing and distribution of materials), supporting the training of 600,000 polling agents, and design, printing and distribution of materials for political party agents. Neither IFES nor UNDP were funded by the arrangements most common for their organisations worldwide. The IFES assistance was carried out under a direct contract with USAID, as opposed to a cooperative agreement which is how IFES usually is funded by USAID. The UNDP SNEP assistance was carried out as a Direct Execution project (DEX) because of the perceived failure of the preferred method used for both Supporting Democratic Electoral Processes in Pakistan SDEPP Phase I and II – National Execution (NEX).

When measuring against 2002 and 2005 electoral observer reports, and the results and goals of the DCM, the degree to which these programs were successful varied. The lack of *translucent ballot boxes* was critiqued in previous reports, so the procurement of new ballot boxes, seals and screens seemed a relatively unambiguous task that was well executed and provided valuable material for the election. However, there was some question as to the utility of providing these materials when: (i) the ECP had otherwise completed its own procurement of election materials in the past, and interviewees did not question their capacity to do so, or the likelihood of their receiving the financial resources for it, and; (ii) there were so many other competing electoral framework priorities for this particular electoral process.⁹ In the team's assessment, given the potential lack of will on the part of the ECP to complete the procurement of these commodities, it was an effective and efficient use of donor funds, as well as a very well-

⁹ The IRI Pre-election Observation Mission Statement made this latter point, 13 November 2007, <http://www.iri.org/mena/pakistan/2007-11-12-pakistan.asp>, accessed 28 June 2008

executed and coordinated activity. The question that remains is what the sustainability and long term impact of the procurement was. This will be discussed in the final section.

When looked at through the prism of the team's terms of reference, the *voter roll* electoral assistance to the ECP was less successful. The voter list project has not led to a voter list that meets international standards. This was not because the project was not well designed or implemented, but because of the environment the project began in, in particular the late starting time, the inability of the ECP to conduct professional data collection and fieldwork, and their lack of will to compare voter roll data with that of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). As is unfortunately not uncommon in electoral assistance, voter registration as the first real step of the electoral process was victim to late and limited donor presence, influence and capacity. This late engagement is in itself a departure from effective electoral assistance principles.¹⁰ The end result is that every substantive domestic and international observer report has criticised a voter roll that still contains a significant number of duplicate entries, inaccuracies and omissions, including a disproportionate number of women who were omitted from the list. Moreover, the list has little confidence from voters, civil society or political parties. This is, of course, highly problematic in going forward towards future elections. It should also be noted that the UNDP offered guidance to the ECP on computerisation of the enumeration process. This advice, however, was ignored as the ECP did the enumeration in a faulty and non-transparent way.

There were significant and sustained attempts to change the direction the ECP was taking the voters' roll, from the earliest time when it became clear the enumeration was highly suspect, through the computerisation of the role and its display. There was an impressively detailed set of analyses, prognoses and proposed solutions as the low quality of the roll became evident. Interviewees expressed their frustration at the limited gains achieved by their extensive and coordinated lobbying. Also, it is clear that IFES' failure to be able to facilitate the production of an inclusive and reliable voter list occurred in spite of a professional and skilled team at IFES. The same can be said of the UNDP technical advice provided to the ECP under SDEPP II. Nonetheless, both assistance programs cannot be overlooked when assessing the extent to which the electoral assistance was cost effective. The cost efficiency of implementers having streamlined reporting processes and donors being able to be briefed by all the implementers at once, is somewhat obscured by the roughly \$10,000,000 that were spent on an unsuccessful voter roll program. Ultimately, the effectiveness of these programs will need to be measured by each implementer before the next assistance program is designed. This will make it possible to determine whether or not ECP can do what numerous public and internal reports to them have stated needs to be done to make the list accurate, inclusive and credible.

Better early donor coordination and information sharing may well have saved the donors money spent on this program. The discussions around the original DCM occurred at a time when it was already almost certain that a poor voter list would be produced. The poorly developed enumeration had not been observed or improved upon through donor support. However, nobody participating in crafting the DCM, which represented the overall donor

¹⁰ Starting programs with sufficient lead time is a generic principle of aid assistance, but has a particular importance in time and politically sensitive electoral assistance. See the discussion on problematic election-day-focused electoral assistance in the ACE report – Effective Electoral Assistance, <http://aceproject.org/ace-en/focus/focus-on-effective-electoral-assistance>, accessed 26 June 2008

strategy for the election, seemed aware of this at the time. Therefore, the DCM included a very expensive voter list project which already had little chances of success. More inclusive planning at the early stages might have prevented this problem. However, this problem would not have been resolved by coordination alone as it had political will and capacity components which should, in the future, be addressed.

Overall impact of direct electoral assistance

The question of the overall impact of this work remains unclear. The fragmentation of electoral assistance between different organisations, and the lack of a central data pool to analyse, including from the ECP, prevents a baseline from being established to compare before and after electoral assistance. Certainly the ECP gained valuable material resources, new technology and trainings from the electoral assistance, but this only tells part of the story. The ECP has been receiving technical support through SDEPP I and II for over a decade: according to UNDP reports¹¹ these programs were not as successful as they might have been. The present challenge present is to seek a common political and electoral vision between previously antagonistic state and non-state actors. Even if the ECP wasn't suffering from a deficit of legitimacy, this would be a serious challenge.

Observer reports from 2002 to 2008 repeatedly question the will of the ECP to administer elections to an international standard, and the weaknesses in the electoral and governance frameworks to facilitate it. Others speak more broadly of systemic fault lines between and weaknesses within the ECP, judiciary, civil service, CSOs and political parties. A central issue, then, is whether the totality of donor-supported electoral assistance for the 2005 to 2008 electoral process made it possible for this election to be held in a significantly more democratic and legitimate manner than might otherwise have happened. The anecdotal evidence is mixed, and the answer is nuanced.

Several implementers with whom the team spoke indicated that individuals in the ECP had the existing capacity to procure electoral commodities on the international market, conduct comprehensive voter education campaigns for each aspect of the electoral process, and train their permanent and temporary staff. Yet in two electoral processes, 2002 and 2005, these activities were criticised by observers, and in 2008 they were essentially outsourced to the international community and CSOs with little oversight from the ECP. The international support may have bolstered these areas, or made it easier for the ECP, but it did not seem to be the difference between having a decent election and not having one. The net impact of all this assistance almost certainly did contribute to the opening of the process (one of its stated goals), the professionalization of some election administration, the creation of an enabling environment, and the increase in the cost of more overt election rigging. Again, this is based on qualitative evidence, but is still, at the very least, an important viewpoint.

Support for the ECP, in addition to being technical, provided the international community leverage in its discussions with both the ECP and the Pakistani government more generally. The involvement of the UNDP and numerous major donors in supporting the ECP made it easier for the diplomatic community to demonstrate their concern and support for the elections, which made it more possible for them to effectively push the government and ECP to deliver a credible

¹¹ See, for example, George-Coker and Lopez-Vargas 2007

and legitimate process. The negatives of the approach include the lateness of the intervention, structural impediments to sustainability of the assistance activities, and the lack of capacity building throughout the process. These latter two points will be addressed in the next two sections.

The Party Institutes

NDI and IRI had a mixed relationship with the donor coordination effort as they participated in some of the key structures, but did not receive the bulk of their money from Pakistan based donors who were part of the donor coordination effort. Instead, they were primarily funded by DRL and the NED. Moreover, most of their work was not included on any of the DCMs. NDI and IRI, however, were engaged in important political work and, in the case of NDI, were the primary liaisons between the international election support community and the political parties.

Communication with political parties was a particularly important role because the ECP did not meet or conduct outreach with political parties as effectively or frequently as it should have. The ECP had been criticized for this in election monitoring reports in both 2002 and 2005, but they did not seem to improve in this election cycle. The following comment by IRI seems to reflect the current state of relations between the ECP and political parties. “The ECP and the nation’s political parties continue to find it difficult to work together despite numerous attempts by various stakeholders to facilitate regular meetings on issues related to the conduct of the elections”¹² NDI and IRI were the only major international organization working directly with the political parties. They conducted numerous fora and roundtables seeking to inform political parties and provide opportunities for dialog between them. NDI also did some campaign trainings with the political parties.

IRI’s portfolio was somewhat different than NDI’s, although they had a similarly complex relationship with the coordinated donor effort. IRI had an ongoing public opinion research project which sought to provide information about the electorate to political actors, including political parties in Pakistan. This project which provided useful information to the electoral support donors and implementers eventually led to political tension between IRI and the Pakistani government and was terminated. IRI’s election monitoring effort was similarly terminated late in the election season and replaced by an election monitoring effort by Democracy International (DI), a US based contractor.

Usually, any election-related activities with political parties are viewed as key and fundamental parts of electoral assistance, but this seemed not to be the case in Pakistan. There seemed to be several reasons given to explain this reality. Some viewed it that donor support was set up without a great deal of attention being paid to parties. Others that there was a conscious firewall established to protect UNDP from more ‘political’ work, or more broadly to separate the technical community from the political community in the same way the TWG was distinct from the embassy political officer meetings. A third explanation was it was a by-product of local tensions stemming from some donor capitals’ support of the government. Finally, donors, and some implementers, explained that because parties in Pakistan are so poorly

¹² IRI Pre-election Observation Mission Statement, 13 November 2007, <http://www.iri.org/mena/pakistan/2007-11-12-pakistan.asp>, accessed 24 June 2008

organized, non-ideological and leadership driven, donors did not want to invest resources in working with them. Translucent ballot boxes were a safer investment. Of course, the weak state of political parties in Pakistan is precisely why donors should have invested in working with political parties. Political parties are central actors in elections. Avoiding working with them because they are weak seems to violate the spirit of electoral assistance.

Recommendations – Electoral Assistance

1. Short: Assuming that electoral assistance implementers continue to support post-election, they should consider how they can improve the delivery of that assistance. A workshop could be conducted with the ECP, CSOs and other stakeholders jointly reviewing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and effective electoral assistance principles and make recommendations to improve their collective working methodologies.
2. Short: UNDP was supporting the ECP conduct post-election reviews with its provincial staff. This review should be broadened to include an ECP-led review of all domestic and international reporting on their work and organising recommendations by theme. Such a database could form a baseline for future electoral reform discussed at the end of the report.
3. Short: The IFES program on the ECP's complaint mechanisms should be further strengthened and promoted. This is an essential post-election activity seldom undertaken internationally that seeks to address one of the core weaknesses of electoral administration in Pakistan. In the medium term a lessons learnt study could be commissioned on the project to inform how other countries might conduct this monitoring,
4. Short: Donors should brief political parties on their electoral support work on the 2008 elections and plans for the future. Parties should be given an opportunity to present their views, concerns etc.
5. Medium: IFES should not only continue to be engaged in voters roll assistance, but seek support with the ECP for a joint strategic review of the system of and procedures for voter roll compilation, and its relationship with the civil registry. An urgent short term goal should be to clean the voters roll as much as is feasible before local government elections in 2009. Any enumeration should be done in an integrated fashion with at least national and international teams at the provincial level.
6. Medium: TAF should be funded to support a CSO-led national civic education program in the between-elections period. Such a platform could advise on electoral reform, seek input from local communities on the same, and conduct a preparatory campaign for the 2009 local government elections.
7. Medium: Donors should support structures which will facilitate stronger communication between those providing election support and the political parties. This may be done directly through the political party institutes or through more formalized meetings or venues.

8. Long: Ongoing political party programs should be supported. These programs should not just be election focused encompassing issues such as proxy training and campaign workshops, but should include broader goals such as platform development, party leadership and communication and working with parties in the legislatures.
9. Long: As soon as more favourable conditions allow, if electoral reform progresses, IFES, UNDP and TAF should re-negotiate and re-design their electoral assistance activities with the ECP, as well as establish a clear division of labour between themselves. As far as possible two implementers engaging in the same electoral activity should be avoided.
10. Long: Implementers should seek to support a full cycle of an electoral activity, that is, not to commence assistance when the ECP's work is already underway and the design and operational planning for that activity have been done. Likewise, Paris Aid Effectiveness and effective electoral assistance principles should be applied and national capacity building included as a central element of every program.

Electoral Observation

Standards for domestic and international observation have been the subject of discussion the last decade, and in the case of internationals a primary reference is now the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, along with its accompanying Code of Conduct for International Election Observers.¹³ The principles and code provide for rights and responsibilities of both the observers and the national authorities, and are often, as in the case of Pakistan, explicitly identified by domestic observers as standards they set for themselves. Different international organizations also have complementary or additional standards they set for their observation missions, and national organizations are often linked to regional and international efforts to set these norms, as has also been the case in Pakistan.

The team understood this was “the largest, most technically robust Election Day observation in Pakistan’s history.”¹⁴ There should be no question donor support facilitated that historical fact. More importantly there’s consensus the collective observation effort, in particular the domestic effort, had a direct impact on electoral fraud deterrence, or modification and improvement of electoral administration, and greater transparency in general.

While some donor support for domestic observation efforts operated within the formal coordination frameworks outlined in this report, international observation largely did not. As discussed earlier, there was something of an early consensus and strategic preference at least among a majority of active donors to support civil society efforts. Combined with the explicit DCM aim to ensure “independent election observation,” the electoral process in the latter half of 2007 leading to Election Day and after 2008, saw a diverse array of domestic and international observation efforts. Interestingly the 22 March 2006 JDPM and the matrix developed at that time led with the need to deploy international observers. Domestic observation is listed more passively as an objective to “engage civil society including media to gather data and report code

¹³ This reference is at <http://aceproject.org/ero-en/topics/electoral-observation/decprinciples.pdf/view>, accessed 22 June 2008

¹⁴ FAFEN Press Release, 25 June 2008, <http://www.fafen.org/pressdet.php?id=98>, accessed 26 June 2008

of conduct irregularities.” It is in this context that TAF brought a proposal to support civil society, including an ambitious domestic observation effort.

The table in appendix F summarizes available information on the electoral observation activities of different domestic and international organizations during 2007 – 2008. PILDAT’s Citizens’ Group on Electoral Process (CGEP) acted more like a specialist think tank than electoral observer group and produced numerous reports in the early period of the electoral process when few were monitoring the ECP’s activities. TAF funding was provided for some of their activities and other direct bilateral support. The two largest civil society groups FAFEN and PACFREL presented quite different strengths and weaknesses. Several PACFREL members were earlier going to join FAFEN but following some disagreements, for example on the form of coordination and decision-making, they decided to go on their own. Broadly, where PACFREL was a smaller coalition of larger national CSOs, FAFEN was a numerically much larger coalition of smaller provincial and local CSOs. PACFREL received funding from numerous sources and Catholic World Service (CWS) provided support by managing their funding in a form of basket. This international electoral assistance was effectively cut off from the broader donor coordination effort. However, because PACFREL and FAFEN conducted ‘light and cordial coordination’ (deployment planning, information sharing), the impact of their collective observation at the national and local levels was strengthened, not undermined. From the evaluation team’s point of view, PACFREL did not, therefore, undermine the coordinated donor effort under the TAF programme.

FAFEN therefore presented the advantage of significant local knowledge, with the disadvantage of coordinating and seeking methodological coherence between a diverse array of CSOs. The domestic observation led by the FAFEN coalition and supported by TAF was one of the major accomplishments of the coordinated election support. FAFEN produced valuable election related information throughout the election period as well as a strong set of recommendations for election reform. Their parallel vote tabulation (PVT) effort was particularly impressive as they were able to have about 19,000 election monitors in 8,000 polling places throughout the day. An additional 3,000 FAFEN mobile observers made brief visits to about 14,000 polling stations on Election Day. TAF facilitated processes where credible international and regional CSO observation experts advised on professional observation methodology. They also facilitated complicated donor relations, basket management, contracts, procurement and financial disbursement that freed the new FAFEN coalition of this administrative burden. It is now imperative the skills and capacity for this equally vital support aspect of the domestic observation is systemically transferred.

Although international observation was not part of the original DCM, nor was it a central element of the coordinated effort, it was nonetheless an important example of donor coordination. There were two quite different types of observation, smaller expert missions from NDI, IRI, Japan and Democracy International (DI), compared to the larger polling-day EU presence, which included Canada and Norway, and limited local embassy staff groups. For the latter collectively larger groups in particular, the lifting of the state of emergency combined with the postponement of Election Day provided the conditions and the time to launch these quite ambitious missions. Invitations from the Government to observe were also delayed. Their eventual effectiveness should be seen in that light. Because of their larger size, a mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology was possible, in particular when adding their own data with that from FAFEN.

For the smaller groups, focusing on a qualitative methodology, early pre-election assessment delegations from NDI (May and October 2007) and IRI (October 2007) were particularly vital in the earlier stages of the electoral process when there was little or no other long term observation presence, yet the electoral process was in full motion, and the environment and preparations for Election Day being established. They were able to call on eminent high profile individuals whose political impact was expected to be strong. In the case of IRI, a unique set of circumstances eventually led to their withdrawing from the observation effort. In the case of DI, they were only asked by USAID on 30 January if they could support a mission for an election 3 weeks away. While this approach went against much of the spirit of the 2005 Declaration of Principles, they did manage to pull together an experienced group who were trained on a professional methodology and deployed to challenging areas.

The larger part of the international observation effort pivoted on the European Union Electoral Observer Mission (EU EOM). Norway and Canada joined this collective effort. Norway did this through a pre-existing global agreement and Canada within an arrangement decided for each country. It should be said that unified multilateral observer efforts are generally more effective and efficient than numerous smaller efforts. In the last 15 years of international experience we have seen that having many smaller international observer groups raises challenges with regards to following a professional methodology that is politically and technically sound. Smaller groups that are not formally part of a coordinated coalition do not have the quantitative reach or qualitative sophistication to make detailed observations and comprehensive recommendations. They also have a much more limited chance of making positive changes to events as the electoral process is unfolding. In that sense, the collective EU EOM was regarded, in the end, as a highly successful electoral observation effort. It was still, however, nearly derailed by the political context several times, and was high risk in terms of security, as well as impact. Interviewees commented the observation upheld its own international standards and the EU methodology.

The EU EOM liaised with FAFEN, TAF, UNDP and the rest of the assistance effort and sent representatives to the TWG meetings. In particular the observer missions achieved three critical objectives: they coordinated their respective deployment plans with other national and international groups to avoid overlap and duplication, collectively ensuring the observation of strategically important sites; they shared information so each benefitted from the others' coverage; and international observers sought out more-informed national observers and worked together at the local level. The groups also fed their information back into those settings, and generally achieved a high degree of impact by its public visibility, and private dialog. The final EU EOM report is high on quantitative and qualitative analysis, and makes appropriate use of FAFEN's (donor supported) data. This report combined with the national observer reports therefore leaves a legacy that future political and electoral reform should be guided by.

Observation of the electoral process as a whole was better than many expected, but still below standard in terms of its commitment to the whole electoral cycle. This is because of the significant gap in the early voter registration process that meant enumeration went ahead without any substantial national or international monitoring. The quality of the voters' roll suffered directly as a result. Attempts to get started during voter registration, however, paid dividends because there was substantial and high quality observation and reporting during the display period that had a direct and positive impact on that process and the improvement of the roll. In

general, there was a successful *electoral process* observation, one of the key modern observation standards. The efficacy and impact of observation only increased in the months leading to, including and after Election Day.

The Election Day postponement and the politics surrounding the lifting of the state of emergency are two of the most important external factors that allowed both domestic and international observers, particularly the latter, to get better organized and ensure a broader deployment and more time on the ground. But the collective observation effort clearly directly contributed to creating the conditions for which the cost of rigging the electoral process was increased to the point where interviewees frequently described the election as being ‘less rigged’ than expected. International observation was a high risk exercise, and the security decision-making regarding whether to deploy observers or not consumed and challenged donors and foreign governments leading up to Election Day. That environment also meant international observation, unlike its domestic counterparts, was less present, present for less time and in fewer locations that might otherwise have been possible.

In terms of reporting on and affecting changes in electoral administration and being coordinated, domestic observation was more effective than international observation; domestic observation was therefore a highly effective and efficient use of donor funds. It was probably the most effective and efficient activity supported by the donors. This was achieved in spite of multiple domestic umbrella groups and multiple funding mechanisms. There are clearly many reasons for the success, many of them based on the disposition and commitment of CSOs in Pakistan, but the success also benefited greatly from the coordination and information sharing architecture established by the donor and implementer community. In general, in marked contrast to the ECP and donor relationship, and political parties and donor relationship, the civil society observer community and donor relationship was an example that should be studied further as best practice. The FAFEN observation reports show a high quality of quantitative analysis based on both access to data from a statistically significant range of constituencies and a sound methodology. The EU observation reports, using data from the FAFEN reports and their own LTO and STO reports, ground their reports in international law, ensuring a high qualitative outcome.

The impact of the observation after the election process should also be assessed to determine whether or not the reports have been used as tools to affect the electoral reform they recommend. Although this post-election impact cannot yet be determined, it should be closely monitored by the CSO and donor communities. The alternative is the reports and observation efforts overall do not influence reform and the reports raise similar issues and have as little impact as 2002 and 2005 reports. As the electoral reform section below states, there is, however, evidence this electoral process was a breakthrough and has created conditions, helped by the overall observation effort that will make further reform possible.

Recommendations - observation

1. Short: TAF and donors should continue to support (financially, technically and politically) a coalition of domestic observation groups so that they can speak with a more powerful, unified voice. The short-term priorities should be the collection of credible data from the last electoral process, and its use in advocating for electoral reform

discussed at the end of the report. The medium-term priority would be preparations for local government elections 2009.

2. Short: Assuming support from the FAFEN Board, continue to engage TAF to administer the basket and provide expert advocacy and project management skills to its CSOs. Ensure the development of a medium to long term capacity building strategy, including skills and capacity transfer from TAF to FAFEN and other CSOs on resource mobilisation, fund management and disbursement, donor relations and administering their complex CSO observer coalition. Consider introducing the BRIDGE program to CSOs.
3. Medium: Pending the success of the reform agenda and donor conditions related to it, (and pending the security situation), begin long-term international observation efforts at the start of the electoral cycle, including during preparations for boundary delimitation (if relevant) and preparing to improve the voters roll. This should be closely guided by the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Electoral Observation

Electoral Assistance Coordination Fora

There was a diverse array of formal and informal electoral assistance coordination fora in the 2007 – 2008 Pakistan electoral process. In our experience, and after conversing with colleagues with other international experience, the overall structure was not particularly unusual or novel. However, below the broad structure three issues should be highlighted: there was a disturbingly small amount of national (ECP) leadership of an overall electoral assistance strategy and monitoring of its implementation; structures were designed using common sense but before guidance and best practice on UNDP electoral assistance baskets as well as effective electoral assistance principles were available, and; by international comparison the structures and division of labour revealed a particularly complex array of actors, funders and implementers. On this latter point the coordination fora covered a spectrum from technical, financial and political perspectives, involved national and international, private and public, and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The goal of these fora was to facilitate the ongoing communication between and among donors, implementers, the ECP and diplomats throughout the election period. In this section we divide these fora into formal coordination meetings, and more informal information sharing gatherings. Interestingly, a number of the interviewees said that the origins of the TWG and stronger coordination in general lay in the donor coordination which emerged from efforts to provide relief after the earthquake in 2005.

Formal Coordination Meetings

“The process was over-coordinated, but it’s the best coordination I’ve seen.”¹⁵

“This was the richest technical elections discourse in Pakistan’s history, thanks to the TWG.”¹⁶

The Joint Development / Political Meeting (JDPM)

The JDPM was not simply a donor coordination medium. It was also an opportunity for the political officers from the embassies who were providing electoral support to liaise with the development people responsible for elections. In some of the embassies, these were the same people, but, for other countries, these two people did not otherwise have a great deal of contact. This meeting, then, allowed the political people to be kept abreast of the technical side of election preparation and to use this knowledge in broader diplomatic arenas. Perhaps the clearest example of this was a set of talking points, developed in spring of 2006 which was the foundation for the political messages that the diplomats delivered to the Pakistani government during the course of the election. These talking points were occasionally modified as the election approached to reflect specific concerns raised by implementers.

A minority but not insignificant number of interviewees believed that the process behind the formation of the donor group, later formalized in the JDPM, was not sufficiently transparent. Interestingly, this view about transparency was evinced by both donors who felt that they should have been brought in earlier in the process and implementers who felt that they did not have a chance to have input into some of the key political discussions and decisions on the design of electoral assistance. The evaluation team believes this was due to the inherent tension between managing multiple expectations between actors in these complex settings and getting the job done (moving an imperfect process forward). But it does highlight that effective coordination and managing relations is a full-time job that requires specialised skills.

The primary liaisons between the TWG, discussed below, and the JDPM were the representatives of donor agencies such as CIDA, DFID, EC, the Embassies of Japan, Netherlands and Norway, SDC, USAID etc. This approach provided a good structure for sharing the key points and findings from the TWG meetings with the JDPM. Conducting these two meetings undoubtedly facilitated good communication and kept the donor agencies well briefed regarding program implementation. However, a consequence of conducting these meetings separately was that, for a number of key countries, contact between the organizations working most closely on the elections who had the most detailed knowledge about various aspects of the electoral context, did not have access to the political side of the donor community. Accordingly, the political officers rarely received information directly from the implementers, so there was no opportunity to probe for more information, ask follow up questions and the like. As the election approached the JDPM met less frequently as the TWG and LMG became more central to coordination efforts.

¹⁵ Interview with international donor, Islamabad, May 2008

¹⁶ Comment at the Donor/Implementer Roundtable Meeting, Islamabad, June 2008

The Technical Working Group

While the JDPM played the critical role in coordinating donors during the inception phase of the program, during the election period, the TWG was the central organizing vehicle for coordinated election support, particularly among those directly involved in election work. The TWG brought the donors to both baskets together with TAF, the UNDP as well as key implementers, notably IRI, IFES and NDI, who did not receive funding from either of the two baskets. The primary purpose of the TWG was to share information and identify overlapping activities. TWG meetings provided one-stop shopping for donors to be briefed on the activities of the various implementers and for implementers to address the donors collectively. However, the meeting was more than just an opportunity for donors to be briefed. At least of equal import was that all of the participants at the meeting were able to discuss their work, raise problems or challenges they were facing and consider possible solutions and strategies. The TWG meetings were conducted in a frank manner. Problems were not concealed from donors but were discussed in productive and useful ways. TWG meetings were held bi-monthly for most of the period electoral support was provided but became weekly meetings as the election got closer.

While some of the participants in the TWG, such as the representatives of Japan, Norway or the Netherlands, were from embassies, the TWG meetings were attended primarily by implementers and representatives of donor agencies such as USAID, CIDA and DFID. The political officers from these donor countries met through the LMG, which continued to meet throughout the election period.

The TWG and JDPM meetings were, on balance, valuable and productive instruments of international electoral coordination, but to determine their real value, it is necessary to probe a little further. In many of our interviews, the team was told that one of the keys to the donor coordination was that most of the people running key programs on both the donor and implementer side were not just skilled professionals, but that these people got along together and that there were very few personality conflicts and the like. While it should be a given that programs are staffed by skilled professionals who do not bicker with each other, this is not always the case. Given all of those key individuals were also working full-time implementing programs, it raises the question were the coordination structures regulated enough that the electoral assistance would have been effective with personality clashes. It's almost certain the structures would have been much less effective if the goodwill had ended, and a more highly regulated environment between donors and implementers (group terms of reference, more formal accountability, for example) will often stifle good working relations and the management of intense operational activity. The final section deals with the national / international coordination structures and the impact they may have had on sustainability.

During our interviews, we also learned, as might be expected, that electoral coordination rested on informal communication. The leaders of the implementing organization met together on an informal basis to discuss their work, exchange the latest political news, and strategize. Informal communication and good relations between individuals in key positions contribute to the overall coordination in an effort such as this one, but they cannot really substitute for regular meetings attended by the same group of people. Supporting informal communication with regular meetings assures that information is appropriately shared and that key points are not forgotten.

Informal information sharing

*“Personalities trump structure”*¹⁷

These more formal meetings above overtly facilitated information sharing, coordination, and management of electoral assistance. These meetings had leadership, meeting agendas, minutes of meetings, and specific outcomes (if not terms of reference). Beyond these, the electoral assistance community participated in more informal gatherings.

Kitchen Cabinet Meetings

The implementing organizations, UNDP, TAF and IFES as well as NDI and IRI met frequently, but informally to exchange information, political news and their respective programs. Donors and embassies were not part of these meetings. This group referred to the meetings as the “kitchen cabinet”. The Chiefs of Party or Chief Technical Advisers from these organizations attended these meetings. The kitchen cabinet meetings were not held regularly but averaged around one a month, nor were they discussed broadly. It was more of a technical group meeting, often over lunch, where the participants discussed challenges with their respective programs, strategized to overcome hurdles and coordinated activities. The kitchen cabinet meetings allowed implementers to calibrate their respective views and, to a certain extent, harmonize them prior to seeing donors. There were no ECP counterparts present at these meetings.

The Diplomatic (Like-Minded) Group

One of the critical informal structures contributing to donor coordination was known as the Like Minded Group (LMG). The LMG brought together political officers and other embassy officials from the donors in an unstructured way to discuss key political aspects of election support as well as developments within Pakistan more broadly. The somewhat presumptuous name of this group notwithstanding, the LMG played a useful role in allowing the diplomatic missions which were cooperating on election support to exchange information, coordinate strategy, and plan political communications with the Pakistan government, including the ECP.

It was extremely useful for the countries participating in the LMG to have a forum in which to discuss these issues. Also, given the political nature of the challenges to conducting good elections in Pakistan, it was essential that the major donor countries have this opportunity to coordinate their message and approach to the various bodies within the Pakistani government. It should be noted, however, that the LMG was an informal group, not radically different from similar fora which can be found in many countries.

Politics and Donor Support

International donor cooperation around this election was strong, but very technical in nature. The original DCM called for a host of election related activities, almost all of which were technical. This did not change during the course of the pre-election period. There were some activities which were non-technical in nature such as voter education and training of political party agents. However, these activities hardly qualified the donors as becoming

¹⁷ Interviewee comment, Islamabad, May 2008

involved in the political side of elections. Moreover, the former was underfunded and the latter, according to many with whom we spoke, was poorly implemented. Clearly the diplomats, embassies and leadership in foreign capitals were closely involved in the politics surrounding the Pakistan elections, but the political component of direct election support was substantially overlooked.

The emphasis on the technical side of election work was evident in other ways as well. The meeting that brought together all international organizations working on elections was called the Technical Working Group. This is obviously just an innocuous and convenient name, but it nicely encapsulates the notion that all election-related work is technical. There were participants in that group, including NDI and IRI, that not only do technical work, but who have a considerably broader portfolio.

This emphasis on technical work is not simply a case of a benignly misleading name for a recurring meeting, and a document that is too technical in nature. In some respects, it belies a more fundamental flaw in the approach taken by the international donors to election support on the ground in Pakistan. Elections are not just technical exercises where a state needs to increase its capacity to deliver a fundamental service, comparable to good roads or clean water. There are always political activities as well. This is particularly important in Pakistan where the barriers to a better election were from the beginning largely political in addition to, if not more than, the technical issues. Again, while there was an awareness of this at diplomatic and foreign ministry levels, it could have been bolstered by political election support as well.

To some extent, the donor community sought to create a technical solution to a political problem. In fairness, based on the election reports, they were somewhat successful in this endeavour. They likely would have been even more successful if they had had a stronger political component to this support as well.

One major example of how political work was overlooked was that political party work was somewhat marginalized by the donor matrix and the coordinated support effort. In fact, both the terms of reference state, and the donor/implementer roundtable meeting the team facilitated confirmed, the donors wanted to create a firewall between ‘political activity’ and the coordinated donor effort, in particular the UNDP basket and its activities. Political party work here includes not just party agent training but a much broader swath of activities with direct bearing on the election and beyond. Separately the donors and diplomatic staff tried in numerous ways to convince the ECP of the benefits of working and meeting with political parties. Generally, however, the ECP was unmoved and stuck to their belief that contrary to all electoral management body practice internationally, election management can be credible without engaging parties as pivotal stakeholders. In the end, the ECP’s unwillingness to meet or communicate systematically with political parties contributed to an election climate that was more tense and less broadly informed than necessary. The coordinated donor efforts did not sufficiently compensate for this by establishing programs at the outset which would have brought the parties more directly into contact with, if not the ECP, then election processes more generally. These activities were done, largely by NDI, but not as a clear part of the coordinated effort.

Additionally, programs to address the specific concerns of political parties during the pre-election period and programs that work with political parties to reduce post-election tension,

strengthen relationships and dialog between political parties and increase the capacity of political parties to link their campaigns to their post-election governance work are all activities that would have strengthened the election and its broader impact on Pakistan's path to democracy.

The coordination structures also helped reduce the extent to which the political aspect of election work was addressed. For example, the TWG brought together all the major organizations working on elections but did not include, at least on a regular basis, political officers from the larger embassies. Instead, political officers were debriefed by representatives of their donor agencies at the JDPM. Thus, the political officers, who then reported to their Ambassadors, were getting their information, in many cases, second or even third hand. Implementers such as TAF, IFES, IRI and NDI generally have the best, most accurate and up to date information about the elections; not giving them direct and regular access to the political departments of their major embassies was a structural flaw in the coordination design. While it is reasonable that they would not be full participants in the LMG, the participants in the LMG would have benefitted from direct access to not just the implementers, but the discussions which, presumably, occurred in fora like the TWG.

Recommendations – electoral assistance coordination fora

1. Short: All donors and implementers active in the 2007 – 2008 electoral process should re-engage through formal and informal structures and re-establish, in the first instance, reliable and frequent information exchange. It is particularly important at this time to ensure political officers (re)engage given donor staff concerns political embassy staff are likely to be distracted by short-term political issues and crises.
2. Short: The first business of the first donors and implementers meeting should be to conduct a workshop with CSOs about their collective findings on the 2007 – 2008 electoral process. A regular formal or informal information sharing meeting on post-election activities and reform should then be promoted between these groups.
3. Short: The second business of the first meeting of donors and implementers should be to agree to urgently promote two levels of meetings with the ECP, (a) the first at the Ambassador level co-chaired by the ECP Chairman and the UNDP Resident Representative and / or an agreed lead Embassy, to meet at least every 2 months, and (b) a working level meeting co-chaired by appropriate ECP and implementer operational staff, based on a rotating Chair among internationals, and meeting at least monthly.

Each meeting should have established terms of reference, agendas and minutes, and allow for the invitation of other stakeholders to monitor or present on issues as appropriate. A decision whether to retain or replace the JDPM, TWG, and other formal and informal donor coordination structures should only be taken when the new national / international structures have been created.

When working with the ECP to design its coordination and information sharing structures, ensure political parties are briefed about all election work, ECP and electoral assistance.

4. Medium: Build on the 2007 – 2008 electoral process experience to increase coordination in other democracy and governance areas, for example, support to parliament, political

parties, the judiciary and civil service reform. Other sectors may review lessons learnt from the electoral process and review and re-design their current coordination frameworks,

5. Long: Electoral assistance coordination of an international standard in a setting as complex as Pakistan is a full-time job. Assuming the next year will see a re-orientation of electoral assistance, and new funds will become available to take forward an extensive reform agenda: establish a joint national/international coordination secretariat staffed before the first funds are received by a donor.
6. Long: When the new electoral assistance strategy is known, and national (co)leadership is established, then create meeting structures, both formal and informal, which bring political officers and implementers together, rather than having them communicate only through representatives of the donor agencies.
7. Long: In a new electoral assistance strategy recognize the political nature of electoral assistance and include political as well as technical components in the structures.

The Donor Coordination Matrix

“The matrix was pragmatic, it worked.”¹⁸

The primary tool used by the donors to facilitate coordination between donors, and between donors and implementers, became known as the donor coordination matrix (DCM). The DCM provided a documentary foundation for the coordinated effort (see appendix G for a sample DCM from 17 September 2007). The evaluation terms of reference at appendix A state: ‘This policy matrix was agreed upon as the core technical document for the identification of all issues pertaining to making elections in Pakistan, free, fair, credible and transparent.’ That may be over-stated. Plans of the ECP and other stakeholders (civil society, political parties, security forces etc) combined with the DCM might have sought that overall goal. The DCM isolated electoral activities international donors were funding but didn’t encompass all election related issues.

In the absence of a national governance plan with an electoral assistance strategy, the DCM became a *de facto* electoral assistance strategy. In most international settings such a tool would be based on a national governance strategy or document such as a poverty reduction strategy paper. No such national development or governance strategy document existed with electoral activities, let alone an ECP baseline analysis of its capacity gaps and needs. When it was created in April 2006 the DCM first reflected activities already decided by individual donors as well as reflected to some degree recommendations of the 2005 UN EAD electoral needs assessment. The minutes of the first JDPM meeting state:

“A matrix based on a US matrix of potential assistance was presented and discussed. There was consensus that this matrix (as a working draft) could act as more than a

¹⁸ Interview with international donor, Islamabad, May 2008.

coordination tool but as an evolutionary platform for various donor party assistance for the elections 2007 within the context of support to representative government.”

By placing agreed-upon activities in one matrix, donors sought to inform the broader donor community about what had already been negotiated with the GoP and ECP by some primary donors, and what that meant for a future division of labour. It was *not* the case that the donor community came up with a common analysis of the Pakistan electoral capacity gap, considered ways to fill it, and a division of labour was informed by that common baseline. On the contrary, some donors and implementers had already gone ahead on their own analysis and negotiated electoral assistance activities with the Government and ECP. That first step of drafting the DCM, therefore, could corral donors who had jumped ahead and identify existing duplication. The second aim of the DCM was to allow a strategic overview of the electoral support which the donors thought was necessary and politically and technically feasible. Implicit in that step, if not explicitly undertaken, was the conduct of that remaining gap analysis – the ECPs capacity gap as well as that of civil society, and to a lesser extent political parties. The problem with this approach was that because the civil society work was embedded in the ECP activities, this strategy would further distance the negotiation of direct technical assistance from the institution it was designed to support. In turn the net effect of this was to make it impossible for substantive discussions, combined decision-making and monitoring to occur between donors, implementers and the ECP.

In many of the IDIs, as well as at the 3 June 2008 donor/implementer roundtable meeting, the evaluation team learnt something of the analysis in 2005 to 2006 of the community bringing together the electoral assistance activities. At first, the DCM and the 10 political talking points were viewed as tools for supporting efforts to change the legal framework for elections, to reform the ECP, and to strengthen dispute resolution. By the first half of 2006, however, the strategy changed to be more demand-driven than supply-driven. This new approach was based upon the belief that there was no longer the political environment or the time to engage in that sort of governance and electoral reform. This was the case even though the donors understood observer reports of the previous 2-3 electoral processes had outlined such reforms as necessary to address what our terms of reference call ‘the real challenges in elections administration in Pakistan.’ By mid 2006 the electoral assistance, therefore, was designed to focus on the symptoms less than the causes. This was a classic case of time beating efforts to tackle larger issues in between-elections periods.¹⁹

By the beginning of the second half of 2006 when TAF brought their proposal to the JDPM and donors, it was well timed to facilitate a strategy of some key donors to lean towards working with civil society. This developed primarily through activities such as domestic observation and voter education, rather than to attempt legal and institutional reform, and establish a comprehensive electoral assistance program with the ECP, or work with political parties. This is critical information with which to assess the efficacy of the DCM, and the relationship between donor goals, impact and results. There is specific reference in the DCM to improve election administration, review and update the legal framework for elections and promote regular conferring

¹⁹ For discussions on the challenge of taking an ‘electoral cycle approach’ and achieving between-election reform, see, for example, the ACE Focus on Effective Electoral Assistance, UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide, International IDEA Handbook – Electoral Management Design, and EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance.

between the ECP and political parties. However, there is no evidence that the donors or implementers sought, or thought it prudent, to push those activities beyond modest supply-side goals. Of all the direct electoral assistance activities that could have been chosen, ECP temporary staff training, procurement of electoral commodities and support to voter roll computerization, were not going to address fundamental flaws in the electoral framework or the independence of the ECP, nor was it their primary objective. These were each relatively distinct activities that had the support of numerous needs assessments and observer reports. It was thought, not inaccurately, that the net effect of these supply-side activities would be to support the process enough that it might promote conditions for a more credible and legitimate election.

The strategy was, essentially, to work indirectly at the causes of the problem and directly at the symptoms. Electoral observation and voter education would prove central to the plan. This was something of a high risk strategy in terms of the efficiency of donor funding: if the electoral process had produced neither a credible nor a legitimate election then little output could have been said to have resulted from the totality of donor support. A survey of observer reports finds the electoral process overall not meeting international standards, low on credibility but higher on legitimacy. It is the assessment of the team, notwithstanding the limited time available to probe the politics of that time, that this strategy may therefore have been effective, and that the matrix helped facilitate implementation of that strategy. Indeed, the supply-driven strategy contributed positively to the outcome of the electoral process, however mixed and flawed that process was. It helped create an environment where the costs of electoral fraud were heightened, Election Day itself ran more smoothly than was expected, the parties largely accepted the outcome, and a window of change in which to reform the process remains open.

During the implementation phase, the DCM became an organic and evolving document that went through several iterations between its inception and the election in February of 2008. One important criticism of the transparency of the activities in the DCM relates to the domestic observation support. While TAF showed strong and timely initiative to produce their donor proposal for support to civil society, several interviewees admitted the process of selecting TAF for donor funds, and eventually the second basket, was not transparent. It did not allow for requests for proposals that could have given other organisations time to compete for the same money.

Ultimately, the DCM was a very useful coordinating document. It is still being used, albeit less effectively, to facilitate donor coordination in this post-electoral and between-elections period. It is hard to imagine a complex coordinated effort such as the support for elections in Pakistan occurring without an evolving matrix flexible enough to reflect changes in strategies and programming. It is unfortunate such a critical strategic tool was not deployed by the ECP. The implementers seemed to view the DCM as central to their work and referred to it frequently as indispensable to their coordination efforts.

Clearly, the DCM played a key role in the coordination efforts. However, the DCM was more of an organizing than a planning document. The process for creating the DCM was not as open or transparent as it might have been. It was developed through a series of meetings between donor agencies which included the UNDP but none of the major implementing organizations where most of the technical expertise was located. Thus, problems such as overlooking political party involvement, not determining the right relationship between donors, implementers and the ECP, or not becoming involved early enough in the voter list effort, were

not addressed through the DCM. Had the process for creating that document begun earlier or been more transparent, these issues might have been addressed more usefully by the donors.

Recommendations – donor coordination matrix

1. Short: Update the DCM to reflect the current post-election activities being conducted by international implementers
2. Short: As soon as feasible in the electoral reform process, make the DCM redundant and replace it with a nationally negotiated broader governance agenda. Develop such an agenda in a collaborative manner and based on the lessons of the last electoral processes. Such a framework should be consistent with the ownership, alignment and harmonisation principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

Long Term Impact

“the Election Commission has, so far, held six General Elections during the last 22 years i.e. in 1985, 1988, 1990, 1993, 1997 and 2002 for preserving high democratic values through proper representation of the people of Pakistan.”²⁰

Assessing the extent to which electoral support in Pakistan has had a long term impact is challenging because of Pakistan’s unstable political history and the transitional and somewhat exceptional nature of the most recent electoral process. Institutional realities, including the capturing of otherwise legally-independent institutions by the state, present real challenges when deciding who to work with and who to work around. Pakistan also has a history, albeit a somewhat sporadic one, of several decades of conducting elections. It is also a country where donors, mostly through UNDP but also through electoral observation, have been involved in supporting the election administration for over a decade. Sustainability 2005 to 2008 then, should be understood in the context of where the ECP, and the electoral processes generally, were when these programs started as well as disaggregating the impact of the 2005 – 2008 electoral process support from the UNDP SDEP I and II project. Sustainability and the long term impact of the assistance is being assessed at this particular post-election moment when the impact is still being felt, but before the full impact is known (represented in the diagram below).

Sustainability

The capacity legacy and the electoral cycle approach

“We’ve failed to make the ECP an effective institution.”

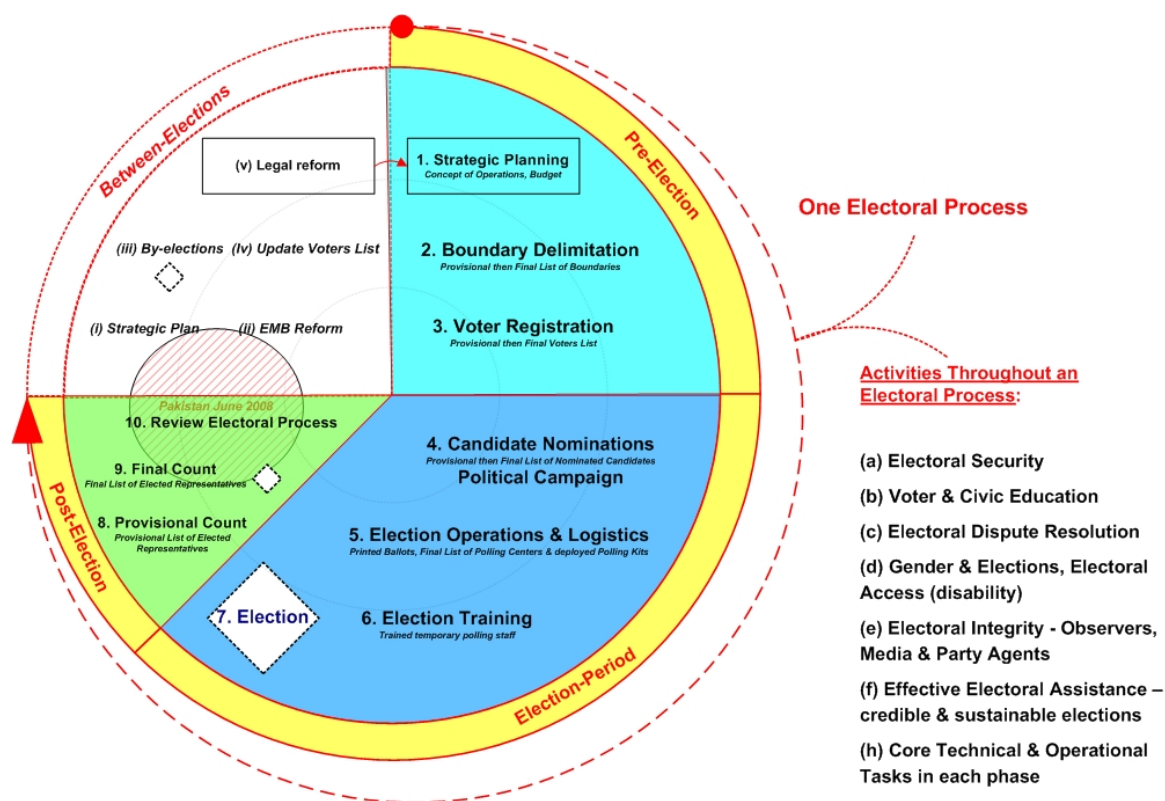
“International assistance should have been more focused on sustainability and capacity building”²¹

²⁰ Election Commission of Pakistan, *A Brief for National / International Observers, General Elections 2007-08*, p10, <http://ecp.gov.pk/brief.pdf>, accessed 24 June 2008

²¹ Comments from two interviews with members of civil society, Islamabad, June 2008

A discussion on the sustainability of the type and method of international electoral assistance requires first a discussion on the national capacity for electoral administration. An area in which the IDIs revealed some differences in opinion was their assessment of the capacity of the ECP. Comments on the ECP capacity covered, for example, staff electoral administration capacity, electoral technical capacity, operational capacity, information technology capacity, judicial capacity, material resources capacity and financial capacity.²² This difference in view is an important finding given the impact the capacity gap has on designing, and subsequently measuring the efficacy of, direct technical assistance. Responses included: the ECP had the capacity across the range of functions but not the will to use it; that they had technical capacity in several critical areas but neither will nor managerial capacity to use it; that there is no way to know because the central secretariat is one thing but each provincial and constituency level another thing altogether, and finally; that they are a largely broken institution with little capacity that outsources most of its principal functions to other public services, the judiciary, and in this last election, the international community.

Indicative Pakistan Electoral Cycle²³



In terms of ECP capacity the team notes the similarity between the analysis of the 2005 EAD/DPA Needs Assessment Mission and the 2008 electoral observer reports. It is therefore possible to conclude that whereas the donor's electoral assistance has had a positive impact on the

²² Evaluating the capacity of an electoral management body is beyond the scope of this report, and unfortunately there is no such baseline. A recommended starting point to conduct such an analysis is International IDEA Handbook – *Electoral Management Design*, in particular Chapter 9, Assessing EMB Performance.

²³ Adapted from UN EAD, UNDP, EU and ACE versions of the electoral cycle

quality of the electoral process and its credibility and legitimacy, it has had little long term impact on the capacity of the ECP. That includes the decade of UNDP support through SDEPP Phase I and Phase II. This is not altogether surprising given the surrounding political context of the military regime, and the low level of confidence enjoyed by the ECP, an institution described as part of the problem not part of the solution in three successive electoral processes. One weakness of the extensive international support was the absence of a field presence at least at the provincial level. This limited the access to real-time information about the electoral process, about the capacity of the electoral authorities below Islamabad, and removes the chance of mentoring and skills transfer.

There has been little recorded success of the ECP lifting its own standards between successive electoral processes: notably, the EU EOM Final Report mentions two ECP technical preparations which saw ‘important improvements, ‘training, the use of translucent ballot boxes’²⁴ both activities largely controlled by SNEP, and SNEP and IFES respectively. The electoral activities carved out for the ECP in late 2005, early 2006, and eventually found in the DCM, were not those designed to have a dramatic impact on this institution of 1,800 staff that is closely tied to both the judiciary (with its own independence and capacity image problem) and the civil service (problems there outlined in the 2005 EAD / NAM report). The team was impressed with the efforts of individual implementers to engage ECP staff and pass on capacity, but the net impact across the institution has been very low. One civil society representative characterised the assistance as ‘output was not of the same order as the input.’

One significant question arising from this is whether or not the international assistance prevented the ECP from gaining experience taking charge of efforts, making mistakes and correcting them in areas of international commodities procurement, polling staff training, voter education, and electoral manual development. Limitations in sustainability will have partly been a structural issue given the nature of the IFES contract, and the UNDP DEX modality. In the area of voter education, a larger problem than capacity transfer was the recognition of whether voter education is a core mandate of the ECP. Numerous interviewees, including ECP staff themselves, pointed to the fact the belief in the ECP is that voter education and voter information are not part of their core mandate. Until there is change in this understanding, sustainability cannot be assured in any internationally assisted voter education program.

In spite of attempts by implementers, sufficient sustainability was not achieved in commodities procurement. ECP didn’t have its own headquarters structures to work with the IFES and UNDP teams in an integrated fashion, and on occasion held up procurement processes when they were involved. But the ECP then did not experience the consequences of their actions because the procurement timelines were met by efficient internal IFES and UNDP procurement systems, not their own. Even if, for example, the ECP co-chaired one procurement committee on ballot boxes, seals and screens, the lack of integrated structures greatly reduced the chances of procurement being ‘seen and experienced’ by the ECP staff. Indeed interviewees concluded the ECP would have hardly seen any of the substantive steps in the sometimes complex international procurement that was executed. An added challenge was the odd situation of splitting the ballot box, seal and screen procurement between UNDP and IFES. In this largely invisible set of processes little to no substantial capacity or lessons learnt could have been transferred to the

²⁴ EU EOM Final Report, pp3-4, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/pakistan08/index.htm, accessed 22 June 2008

ECP. Unless something is done to make up for this, the ECP now takes on the responsibility without the capacity to maintain the ballot boxes and procure new ones for inevitable annual depreciation. This illustrative example could be applied to the rest of the international electoral assistance in particular in the absence of an electoral administration capacity building strategy involving, for example, the BRIDGE program.²⁵

The area of electoral assistance most effective in terms of long term impact and sustainability has been the support to civil society, in particular to domestic electoral observation. Although most of the individual CSOs are established, in the experience of the evaluation team it is particularly challenging for CSO electoral observer coalitions to remain united after election-day. It is more common coalitions fracture, the CSOs return to their primary work, and there is little comparable civil society voice in post-election and between-election periods. This is not the case in Pakistan where FAFEN, Pakistan Coalition for Free, Fair, and Democratic Election (PACFREL) and Citizens' Group on Electoral Process (CGEP), supported by PILDAT, still exist. They have remained active advocates for political and electoral reform, and for dealing now with the causes of systemic weaknesses in electoral administration seen in the last decade. This may prove decisive in navigating a break with the past.

Electoral Assistance Coordination Fora

Importantly, electoral assistance coordination was done among international organizations and even national CSOs with little input from the ECP. Failure of the ECP to take on a leadership role, or at least give active guidance very early in the planning process, created challenges for international electoral assistance that were never fully resolved. For donor assistance to be most effective in a non-post conflict country such as Pakistan, early and strong involvement by the local electoral authorities helps to ensure that the donors are funding the needed projects, that the structures are in place for ensuring the effectiveness of these project, and perhaps most importantly, make it much more possible for the donor support to have a lasting impact on the country's increased capacity for electoral administration. These are fundamental tenets of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, 2007 UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide and 2006 EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance which deal extensively with principles and best practice to embed international assistance in national structures and processes.

Experience with the ECP in previous electoral processes led donors to conclude the required national leadership was unlikely to materialise so compromises were made in designing formal structures that made practical sense in that environment. Even more starkly, many with whom the team spoke asserted that participation by the ECP in, for example, the TWG meetings would have substantially inhibited the ability of participants in that meeting to speak and exchange ideas openly, and to conduct operational management and coordination. While there was a necessary and effective formal project steering committee mechanism between the ECP

²⁵ BRIDGE is the most comprehensive professional development course available in election administration (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections). The partner organisations are: the UN Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political Affairs (EAD/DPA) NY; the UNDP; International IDEA (IDEA); International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), Washington, and; the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). See www.bridge-project.org. There are more than 150 accredited BRIDGE facilitators worldwide.

and the UNDP SNEP program begun in February 2007, it didn't meet frequently, the project had been transformed from a national to direct execution (in part because of the lack of ECP leadership but with its concomitant reduction in national ownership and responsibility), and these meetings were not designed to do more than ensure oversight of an already agreed set of activities. Although they each had their own formal donor/implementer structures, there was also nothing equivalent to formally bind the technical and operational activities of the other three main electoral assistance partners with the ECP – IFES, TAF and the party institutes.

Assertions about lack of ECP will and capacity to coordinate international electoral assistance may be accurate. However, formally excluding the ECP entirely (even, for example, as meeting 'observers') and not promoting a separate ECP-led donor meeting format and / or ECP-led Embassy or Ambassador-level forum, while perhaps understandable, removed this principal and constitutionally-mandated electoral actor from vital political and technical discussions. Many ECP/Embassy, ECP/Donor and ECP/Implementer bilateral meetings did occur in addition to, but should not aim to replace, such structures. To answer the evaluation team's terms of reference, the net effect of these structural effects were that ECP capacities were not strengthened for planning, coordinating and implementing electoral assistance. As discussed earlier, such coordination does not come without transaction costs. Certainly if there were integrated national and international electoral assistance decision-making, coordination and information sharing structures these would have consumed more time and ideally would have needed some form of full-time secretariat.

Notwithstanding this critique about their negative impact on sustainability, it is clear that all of the coordination meetings facilitated greater communication and coordination among the key international players in the electoral support arena. Strong donor coordination can lead to more effective electoral support, a better electoral process and progress toward democracy and stability or it can lead to well-run meetings and easier reporting for international organizations with little actual impact on elections or democracy. The question of where the recent election cycle in Pakistan fits in this framework is central to understanding the true impact of donor coordination. It is difficult to definitively answer this question, but the evidence suggests, that the answer is mixed. There were clearly some aspects of the electoral support which contributed to the electoral process and which benefited from donor support, but the donor support did not, ultimately, engage deeply enough with several key stakeholders in Pakistan. The team's conclusion is that the coordinated effort did achieve the original DCM "overall goal" of *'strengthened democratic electoral processes in Pakistan'* but with several areas where the strengthening was minimal, in particular, with the ECP.

Future Electoral Reform

What sort of reform?

“Pakistan stands at a critical crossroads... Pakistan’s friends must shift from backing the country’s political personalities to helping build strong institutions”²⁶

“FAFEN also urges all stakeholders, including the international donor community, to stay focused on the longer-term electoral and governance reform issues that need sustained attention in the months and years ahead.”²⁷

As the 2008 electoral process winds down, electoral reform has become a key issue in Pakistan for both Pakistanis and the international community. This is not surprising - the evaluation team was in Pakistan at a critical post-election window, the moment of transition to a “between-elections period” shown in the electoral cycle diagram above. Final observer reports are being published, electoral challenges registered and heard in court, and electoral reform discussions focused on cause and effect, prognosis and remedy.

Donor coordination is already problematic. National and international IDIs revealed a fragmentation of interest, will and ideas for how to proceed. Numerous international groups active in the TWG were beginning to work with and support the new parliament with little sense of gap analysis, comparative advantage, and a subsequent division of labour between them. This is also not surprising: in post-election and between-elections periods it is notoriously difficult to (re)generate the type of political, technical and operational coherence and unity which existed in the final phases of an electoral process. Common deadlines have passed, priorities shift and elected government is formed. Electoral stakeholder relationships, coordination structures, domestic and international political will, donor interest, civil society unity, and media coverage fade quickly.

This environment, evidence of which is present, provides fertile ground to again undermine any chance of addressing the serious structural issues outlined repeatedly in the 2002, 2005 and 2008 domestic and international electoral observation reports. In fact, the leaders of one large respected national NGO as well as one international NGO talked of having observed electoral processes in Pakistan since 1988. They both expressed dismay at the inability of 20 years of similar observer report conclusions to fundamentally change the legal, structural and institutional impediments to credible and legitimate elections in Pakistan. Such an outcome next time would manifestly undermine the credibility of the donor investment in those processes to date, in particular the period under review 2005 to 2008.

If there was an outcome of ‘business as usual’ it would be difficult to conclude that donor support has had *anything* more than a marginal long term impact on electoral processes

²⁶ European Policy Centre, Policy Brief, Shada Islam, *Building democracy and fighting extremism in Pakistan: a role for the EU*, April 2008, <http://www.epc.eu/en/pub.asp?TYP=TEWN&LV=187&see=y&t=30&PG=TEWN/EN/detailpub&l=12&AI=928>, accessed 24 June 2008

²⁷ FAFEN Press Statement, 19 February 2008, <http://www.fafen.org/pressdet.php?id=89>, accessed 26 June 2008

generally, and electoral administration specifically. This can be measured if the local government elections in 2009 again reflect no change in the independence, legitimacy and capacity of the electoral authorities, or improvement of the electoral legal framework. Local government elections are significantly more technically complex than national and provincial elections so the systemic problems will again be easily exposed. Given comparative international experience on electoral reform, there is a very short period of time to support existing civil society momentum for that goal and translate it into action. However, in the assessment of Democracy International ‘*there is little impetus for electoral reform.*’²⁸

The team agrees with a significant number of those interviewed, political party statements,²⁹ observer reports (see bibliography) and needs assessment mission reports, that electoral processes are highly unlikely to improve in Pakistan unless strategic reforms are urgently begun before the next electoral process. A summary of such reforms is listed here based on interviewee comments (more detailed recommendations are scattered through the domestic and international observer reports):

- Electoral law reform – constitutional reform, as well as a subsequent re-writing of the electoral law into one shorter coherent law with more detailed ECP orders and regulations, and manuals procedures under it issued by the Election Commission. The law reform would direct the nature of, and need to precede the rest of the reform;
- Election Commission reform – the 5-member Commission is transformed into a truly independent quasi-judicial body, including: (i) opening up Commissioner eligibility beyond the judiciary, and (ii) ensuring a transparent and consultative Commissioner appointment process;
- ECP Reform – the rest of the ECP be transformed into a professional and motivated body, researching autonomous structural models such as the Federal Board of Revenue of Pakistan,³⁰ and other electoral management bodies worldwide, noting three elements to guarantee its independence: (i) The responsibility to hire and fire its staff, therefore suggesting the ECP institutionally leaves the Civil Service and de-links electoral administration from judiciary positions, (ii) The responsibility to set and control its budget, and (iii) Organizational and Staff Development, including a restructured ECP which begins a process of professionalization and capacity building using, for example, the electoral BRIDGE program. This reform must follow, not precede electoral law reform, and be based on a comprehensive assessment of the current capacity of the institution as well as a review of international best practice.³¹
- Political party support – increased focus and resources for long-term political party development.

²⁸ Democracy International *Final Observer Report*, p17, May 2008

²⁹ For example, the 8 July 2007 declaration by some political parties including demands for an independently appointed and operating electoral commission, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistani_general_election%2C_2008, accessed 24 June 2008

³⁰ Several interviewees mentioned there was recent precedent for the reform of autonomous institutions, such as the Federal Board of Revenue of Pakistan, <http://www.fbr.gov.pk/reforms/>, accessed 26 June 2008

³¹ For a full treatment of these issues see the International IDEA Handbook – Electoral Management Design, 2006, <http://www.idea.int/publications/emd/>, accessed 28 June 2008

How to achieve the reform?

From the evaluation team's point of view, the most important development in the last months since the election has been the publicly stated support for electoral reform voiced from three critical domestic constituencies: political parties and Parliament, civil society, in particular the domestic observer groups, and the media. Interviewees stated the strength and coherence of the voices for change is a new and significant development in the political history of Pakistan. Given our concerns of the impact donor coordination on national ownership, the question is therefore what role can donors play to support a national forum to examine and recommend remedies to the structural, strategic and institutional weaknesses in electoral and political processes? How can a program of action transform these domestic voices into a coherent governance framework with electoral and political reform strategy as integral parts? How can parallel rule-of-law (judiciary) and civil service reforms be harmonised?

During the interviews the team was encouraged to hear about numerous developments related to electoral reform: (i) there have been discussion of Parliament forming a Constitutional Review Committee with a sub-Committee dedicated to re-writing the electoral laws; (ii) the ECP has formed an Electoral Reforms Committee (by Notification of Chief Election Commissioner 26 April 2008), and is feeding into it ECP provincial-level post-election evaluations that UNDP supported; (iii) FAFEN³², PACFREL and PILDAT are each still active, all see advocacy of legal and electoral reform as part of their *raison d'être*, and have or are in the process of submitting suggestions for electoral reform to both Parliament and the ECP, and; (iv) the TWG still exists and meets to discuss post-electoral issues, though with a smaller attendance and less strategic coherence.

There was agreement the scale of such reform would over-extend both the Parliamentary Committee as well as the ECP's electoral reform committee. In fact, it is questionable how much the ECP leadership believes they are in need of the reform other domestic actors speak of.³³ Several well-informed commentators encouraged donors to support a broad-based consultation on governance, possibly linked to a poverty reduction strategy paper or other national framework. More specifically for the political and electoral agenda, the suggestion was to promote some sort of national commission or task force to make recommendations. An example of such a reform process was given as the Task Force for the Reform of Tax Administration in 2001.³⁴

Recommendations - sustainability

1. Short: Consider re-designing all international coordination fora after establishing ECP (co)leadership of new structures because some may become redundant (see recommendations above about those fora)

³² See FAFEN website for their stated long-term goal of a campaign for 'electoral and political reforms to attain democratic governance' http://www.fafen.org/view_data.php?php=fafen_activities.php, accessed 26 June 2008

³³ In a written ECP briefing provided to the evaluation team during their meeting at the ECP headquarters 29 May 2008, the memorandum stated, "Election Observation Mission report states that the elections were assessed "in line with international standards for elections".'

³⁴ For an overview of this initiative see <http://www.fbr.gov.pk/reforms/taxadmin/summary.pdf>, accessed 26 June 2008

2. Short: Seek endorsement from the ECP for them to invite BRIDGE partners (and donors to fund) a capacity building strategic needs assessment as a matter of priority, but certainly before the end of 2008. Include in the assessment the possibility of BRIDGE being used to facilitate workshops on electoral reform options.
3. Short: Support CSOs collate all electoral observer reports and other baseline electoral process data and ensure a thorough review of the systemic weaknesses in electoral processes in Pakistan. From this baseline identify cause, prognosis and remedy.
4. Medium: Seek support from the ECP for a medium-term international (UN perhaps) field presence in the lead up to local government elections, working alongside ECP staff at the provincial level or lower with the aim of building capacity, mentoring and supporting ECP operations.
5. Long: For all future international electoral assistance continue to find the best quality experts who are not only capable of conducting elections, but of organically building capacity, mentoring and working with national counterparts, transferring skills and leaving a positive legacy.
6. Long: Invest in longer term projects with political parties, rather than focus on narrow election driven issues such as party agent trainings and campaign workshops.

Recommendations – future electoral reform

7. Short: See above the recommendation to support CSOs to compile a single summary of electoral reform recommendations.
8. Short: See above recommendations for donor and implementer agreement at their first meeting on donor, implementer and CSO information sharing meetings, as well as two types of regular and formal ECP, Embassy, donor and implementer meetings. In addition, in order to support electoral reform, agreement would need to be reached on systematic dialogue with Parliament, the Government, and political parties.
9. Short: In the new proposed coordination fora, the international community should establish its position regarding governance reform and develop talking points in a similar fashion to those from early 2007. Such a position should include clear benchmarks or conditions, following as far as possible principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness under ‘donors align with partners’ strategies.’
10. Short: To provide an expert assessment of next steps and to guide re-orientation of international support, a UN post-election needs assessment mission (NAM) should be urgently dispatched. As did the NAM in 2005, such an assessment could provide the UN system and other stakeholders more detailed recommendations for electoral assistance.
11. Medium: The option of supporting a national dialogue on governance reform, or specifically to create a broad-based commission or task force convened by Parliament or the Government should be considered. In the event of such a body, donors and

implementers should establish their comparative advantages on each aspect of the reform agenda and seek to bring in international experts on the various issues. A team of experts, international, regional and local could be formed to periodically oversee and report on the reform.

12. Long: The international community should be committed to the 'electoral cycle approach' before the 2009 local government elections, and again before the next national elections. This will require Embassies, donors and their capitals to stay engaged politically, financially and technically in governance reform, in particular political and electoral reform for the next 5 years. The best practices of non-earmarked donor funding through baskets should be maintained and strengthened.

Appendices

Appendix

A. Terms of Reference

for Evaluation of Donors' Support for Elections in Pakistan 2005 to 2008 [FINAL]

Background

In mid 2005, as Pakistan held much anticipated local government elections, the significant structural weaknesses of the electoral system manifested themselves. Several observation missions from the previous general elections in 2002 had identified the issues that had again become apparent in 2005. With another general election scheduled for late 2007 to early 2008, members of the international community became increasingly concerned about potential challenges to the legitimacy and credibility of the next election.

With a view to supporting changes to the electoral system, a group of bilateral donors began a process of consultations that led to the establishment of an “elections policy matrix” or “donor coordination matrix” (Annex 1). This policy matrix was agreed upon as the core technical document for the identification of all issues pertaining to making elections in Pakistan, free, fair, credible and transparent. As a core principal, it was also agreed that support for any component, sub-component, or activity within the matrix would be provided in a coordinated and harmonized manner. Ideally, donors would seek to provide such support through a single basket fund.

Donors agreed that the United Nations system offered the ideal starting point for a neutral, multilateral and technically capable support mechanism. The UNDP therefore agreed to serve as the primary coordinating platform for election support. Key to donor support however, were the political issues related to election support. Donors also agreed that dealing with sensitive political issues would put undue pressure on the technical capacities of the UN system. Therefore a range of politically sensitive issues were to be dealt with separately. This was achieved through the formation of a Joint Political-Development Group on Elections, which provided a common platform for political and development colleagues of the international partners. The group was co-chaired by DFID and UNDP.

The eventual evolution of support for elections produced two major election support basket funds (UNDP and TAF), one major parallel support programme (IFES), and several minor national and international parallel support projects (IRI, NDI, DI etc.).

Initial assessments suggest that the February 2008 general elections were the most closely watched, and the most highly supported elections in the country's history. The support for elections is also widely speculated to have been one of the most intensely and rigorously coordinated donor interventions in Pakistan, where donor harmonization tends to present significant challenges.

Purpose of Evaluation

The proposed evaluation will not seek to produce a judgment on the February 2008 election, or how it was conducted. Instead, this evaluation will focus on two overarching issues:

- 1) How well was donor support for the elections coordinated, among donors, between donors and implementers and among implementers? i.e. what was the quality of donor and implementing partner coordination, and;
- 2) How did the inputs that were provided for election support, match up to the desired outcomes identified in the policy matrix? And also, whether the outcomes identified were indeed the correct outcomes, as they related to the findings of the United Nations' DPA

mission of 2005 and the EU Election Observation Reports of 2002, and 2005, and the Commonwealth Observation Reports of 2002, and 2005. i.e. what was the quality and relevance of donor support?

Quite simply put, donors are interested in assessing whether coordination was in fact successful or not, and if it was, what did it contribute to the overall effort. This can be assessed through an objective, evidence-based, and to the extent possible, quantified, judgment of the degree to which coordination (one of the core principles that drove election support) was successful.

Donors are also interested in how closely the support that was actually provided matched the support that was needed. Here, the original elections policy matrix will serve as the basis for what was required, while the range of support interventions will serve as what was provided. In essence this will be an assessment of how donors' vision for support for elections was translated into actions. In part, this will necessitate an assessment of the appropriateness of the coordination matrix itself.

There are a range of observation missions that will be making detailed judgments about the actual conduct of the elections themselves, as well as identifying areas for further electoral reform. These include the international missions of the European Union, and Democracy International, and the domestic mission of the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN).

Scope of Evaluation

The evaluation will cover all donor supported activities in the run up to the February 2008 elections, including the following:

- UNDP 2007-2008 ECP Fund (SNEP) (Logframe Annex 2)
- TAF Civil Society Fund (Logframe Annex 4)
- FAFEN Programme (Logframe Annex 5)
- IFES ECP Fund (Logframe Annex 6)
- NDI Project 1 (Logframe Annex 7)
- NDI Project 2 (Logframe Annex 8)
- IRI Programme (Logframe Annex 9)
- SAP PK/ HRCF Programme (Logframe Annex 10)

Issues to be Covered

The evaluation will examine the following issues:

- 1) Generic: What was the role/utility of the following fora, across the range of questions below:
 - a. Technical Working Group Meetings
 - b. Joint Development/Political Meetings
 - c. TAF programme Coordination meetings
 - d. TAF Quarterly Update Meetings
 - e. UNDP ECP SNEP Steering Committee Meetings
 - f. Dip Missions' communications with Pakistani state (including ECP, etc.)
 - g. UNDP managed interaction between SDEPP II and SNEP
- 2) Concept and Design
 - a. Effectiveness: Based on available information, including assessment missions, observation missions, etc. how appropriate was the original policy matrix as an instrument to address the real challenges in elections administration in Pakistan?

- b. Efficiency: How inclusive was the process through which the policy matrix was developed?
 - c. National Ownership: How was national ownership, both of government, and other national entities ensured? Did the design of support instruments enhance the potential for national ownership, or constrain it?
- 3) Implementation (Inception)
- a. Effectiveness: What was the impact of multiple funds, with multiple donors, working on a multiplicity of issues? How technically robust was the assignment of funds being committed for support to the activities of support? What was the process that determined the assignment of funds? To what extent was this process effective and reflective of priorities set by the assessment and observation missions?
 - b. Efficiency: Was the approach to assignment of funds to activities based on consensus from contributing donors, all donors, or a few donors? Were there donors that had a greater sway? Without identifying those donors, what factors made a difference to how much or how little a donor was able to influence the assignment of funds? (Size of contribution, degree of engagement, other?) What mitigating/equalizing instruments were there to ensure relative balance between donor demands on programmes in basket funds? What mitigating/equalizing instruments were there to ensure some degree of acquiescence with donor demands in basket fund programmes?
- 4) Implementation (Additional Activities)
- a. Effectiveness: How responsive were the donors to the evolving requirements of electoral assistance and to what extent was the policy matrix dynamic enough to capture these requirements? How were additions, if any, made to the policy matrix? Did those additions become reflected in project activities? How did new activities get added to existing programme/project streams? How did programme / project activities change as a result of the emergence of surprises and/or challenges (voters list display period, voters' list registration, changes in elections schedule) etc)
 - b. Efficiency: How were discussions/decisions about new activities communicated between programmes/projects and donors, between donors and other donors, and between programmes and projects themselves? Who was the steward of activity information? How was duplication, replication, or overlap avoided? What role did various interventions play in the advent and addressing of emerging challenges (example: voters' list Supreme Court decision)? How did inter-programme/project communication assist in devising of common positions and platforms?
- 5) Sustainability / Long Term Impact
- a. Effectiveness: To what extent were capacities strengthened for planning, coordinating and implementing electoral assistance of national counterparts in public, civil society and private sector.
 - b. Efficiency: How were national counterparts engaged in planning, management, coordination and decision-making processes and what are the long term implications of this process.

Methodology

While interviews, and consultations with stakeholders offer one clear and simple way to assess and answer some of the questions and issues for this evaluation, a fundamental premise

for attempting to evaluate the support is that quantifiable inputs should have some way of producing quantifiable outputs. To the extent possible, donors expect therefore, that economic / business analysis (cost/benefit, input-output, etc.) will be a central element of the approach taken to answer questions for the evaluation. Examples of the ways in which such analysis will be useful include identifying per unit costs of doing different things, such as donor coordination meetings like the TWGs and estimating financial savings accruing from eliminating overlap (geographical and functional). Since this represents a slightly different means of evaluation, it will be important to coordinate with donors on the methodology for quantification. This can be done through interfacing with a small group of donors' technical staff.

The evaluation will be primarily scientific, and donors will expect its authors to be able to defend their findings rigorously and on the basis of, to the extent possible, numerical evidence, and where such data is not available, reasonable estimates and calculations that serve as proxies for the same.

Outputs

The evaluation will produce a single summary report (OUTPUT 1) of no more than 10 pages that identifies the successes and failures of the donor support for elections in Pakistan. This report will summarize two things. First, it will summarize the effectiveness of donor support in terms of what was needed and what donors provided. Second, it will summarize the efficiency of donor support, in terms of how support was provided, (through which instruments etc.)

The evaluation will also produce two separate and more detailed reports, one each on the effectiveness of donor support (OUTPUT 2) and the efficiency with which donor support was provided (OUTPUT 3). Each report will detail the methodology through which assessments and conclusions were made, as well as a set of actionable recommendations for the short term (three to six months), medium term (six months to eighteen months) and long term (eighteen months and longer). Each report will also describe in full detail the quantification of inputs and outputs and how a replicable model for such quantification can be developed for future programmes of support (not necessarily limited to elections support).

Team Composition and Skill Sets

- 1) *Team Leader* (international) *upto 25 days*
- 2) *Support Effectiveness Specialist* (international/national) *upto 25 days*
- 3) *Support Efficiency Specialist* (international / national) *upto 25 days*
- 4) *Evaluation Coordinator* (national) *upto 25 days*

Timeline

Begin: May 12, 2008
Inception & Context Setting: 5 days
Initial Primary Research: 5 days
Primary & Secondary Research: 5 days
Consolidation of Research: 3 days
Drafting of Report(s): 7 days
First Draft (Summary) due: June 13, 2008 (close of play)
Final due: June 20, 2008

Appendix

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- M. Yard, UNDP (SDEPP), *Toward Accurate & Credible Electoral Rolls: 1/3 17-31 Mar 05*, 31-Mar-05
- L. Maguire, P. Anderson, EAD/DPA, UNDP (SDEPP Phase II), *Joint NAM Report: 13-25 Mar 06*, 25-Mar-06
- M.L. Vargas, T.G. Coker, UNDP, *SDEPP II Evaluation Mission Report: 4-15 Nov 07*, 1-Dec-07
- UNDP (SNEP) Reports: *Project Document: SNEP 18 months DEX; 1st Quarterly Report (Oct-Dec)*, 1-Jan-07; *Memo approving DEX Modality*, 1-Sep-06; *2nd Quarterly Report (Jan-Mar)*, 1-Apr-07; *3rd Quarterly Report (Apr-Jun)*, 1-Jul-07; *4th Quarterly Report (Jul-Sep)*, 1-Oct-07; *5th Quarterly Report (Oct-Dec)*, 1-Jan-08; *Mid Term Report Dec 07 – Jan 08: Voter Education Campaign*, 1-Feb-08; *6th Quarterly Report (Jan-Mar)*, 1-Apr-08

Standards and Norms

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- Election Commission of Pakistan, *Election Laws General Elections 2007 – 08*
- European Commission, *Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance*, October 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/multimedia/publications/publications/thematic/evaluation-methodology-external-assistance_en.htm
- European Commission, *Handbook for European Union Election Observation*, 2nd edition, February 2008, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/docs/handbook_en.pdf
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- International IDEA Handbook, *Electoral Management Design*, 2006, <http://www.idea.int/publications/emd/>
- UNDP Democratic Governance Group, *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide*, 2007, <http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/UNDP-Electoral-Assistance-Implementation-Guide.pdf>

Appendix

C. In Depth Interviews

Location	Name	Title	Organization
Islamabad	Azhar Malik	Project Manager	UNDP
Islamabad	Michael Hryshchyshyn	Director Governance	USAID
Islamabad	Shahid Fiaz	Sr. program officer	Asia Foundation
Islamabad	Shahnawaz Muhmood	Sr. program officer	Asia Foundation
Islamabad	Ahmed Bilal	Executive Director	PILDAT
Islamabad	Christopher Shields	Director	DAI
Islamabad	Mudassir Rizvi	National Coordinator	FAFEN
Islamabad	Afreina Noorn	Thematic Coordinator	FAFEN
Islamabad	Sheila Fruman	Country Director	NDI
Islamabad	Eriko Murata	Economic Advisor	Japan Embassy
Islamabad	Kanwar Muhammad Dilshad (Secretary ECP), Col. Ijaz Ahmed (IT Specialist), Mr. Iftikhar Ahmed Qureshi (JS Elections), RB Jan Wahidi (JS Admin), Sher Afghan (JS- Local Government)	Headquarters staff	ECP
Islamabad	Mirjam Krijnen	First Secretary	Royal Dutch Embassy
Islamabad	Elisabeth Loacker	Program Manager	European Commission
Islamabad	Nancy Foster	First Secretary	Canadian High Commission
Islamabad	Saad A. Paracha	Governance Officer	Asian Development Bank
Islamabad	Staffan Darnolf	Country Director	IFES
Islamabad	Tor Haug	First Secretary	Royal Norwegian Embassy
Islamabad	Farhan Sabih	Assistant Country Representative	UNDP
Islamabad	Musharaf Zaidi	Governance Specialist	DFID
Islamabad	Abu Rehan	Program Officer	DFID
Telephone	David Avery (telecon)	Chief Technical Adviser	UNDP
Islamabad	Roundtable of Donors and Implementers		Asia Foundation, DFID, USAID, UNDP, DAI, NDI, IFES, PILDAT, EU, Japanese Embassy, Canadian High Commission
Islamabad	Nicholas Coghlah	Political Officer	Canadian High

Location	Name	Title	Organization
			Commission
Islamabad	Alvaro Rodriguez	Country Director	UNDP
Islamabad	Tariq Junaid	Program Manager	IRI
Islamabad	Ashely Barr	Head of Election Program	Asia Foundation
Islamabad	Laura Davies	First Secretary	FCO
Islamabad	Peter McDermott	Governance Advisor	DFID
Islamabad	Mark Tattersall	First Secretary	Australian High Commission
Lahore	I A Rehman	CEO	HRCP
Lahore	Muhammad Tehseen	Executive Director	SAP PK
Lahore	Javid Khurshid	Provincial Election Commissioner Punjab	ECP
Islamabad	Wajahat Latif	Senior Program Adviser	CWS
Islamabad	Rubina Zulqarnain	Associate Coordinator	CWS
Islamabad	Majwa Khan	Project Administrator	CWS
Islamabad	Ms. Samina Ahmed	Country Director	International Crisis Group
Islamabad	Najwa Khan	Project Officer	Church World Service
Islamabad	Mikiko Tanaka	Deputy Country Director	UNDP Pakistan
Brussels	Helen Campbell	Head of Unit	EC, External Relations
Brussels	Heino Marius	Deputy Head of Unit	EC, External Relations
Brussels	Stefano Gatto	Head of the Election Desk	EC, External Relations
Brussels	Francesco Torcoli	Directorate for Operations Quality Support	EC, EuropeAid
Brussels	Mario Rui Queiro	Directorate for Operations Quality Support	EC, EuropeAid
Brussels	Shada Islam	Senior Programme Executive, Pakistan	European Policy Centre
New York	Kendra Collins & Andrew Bruce	Policy and Institutional Memory Team	Electoral Assistance Division, DPA, UNHQ
Telephone	Glenn Cowan		Democracy International
Telephone	Linda Maguire	Electoral Adviser	Democratic Governance Group, BDP, UNDP

Appendix

D. Evaluation Team Recommendations

**Note: the recommendations are short term (3 – 6 months), medium term (6 – 18 months), and long term (18 months and longer)*

Recommendations – Electoral Assistance

1. Short: Assuming that electoral assistance implementers continue to support post-election, they should consider how they can improve the delivery of that assistance. A workshop could be conducted with the ECP, CSOs and other stakeholders jointly reviewing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and effective electoral assistance principles and make recommendations to improve their collective working methodologies.
2. Short: UNDP was supporting the ECP conduct post-election reviews with its provincial staff. This review should be broadened to include an ECP-led review of all domestic and international reporting on their work and organising recommendations by theme. Such a database could form a baseline for future electoral reform discussed at the end of the report.
3. Short: The IFES program on the ECP's complaint mechanisms should be further strengthened and promoted. This is an essential post-election activity seldom undertaken internationally that seeks to address one of the core weaknesses of electoral administration in Pakistan. In the medium term a lessons learnt study could be commissioned on the project to inform how other countries might conduct this monitoring,
4. Short: Donors should brief political parties on their electoral support work on the 2008 elections and plans for the future. Parties should be given an opportunity to present their views, concerns etc.
5. Medium: IFES should not only continue to be engaged in voters roll assistance, but seek support with the ECP for a joint strategic review of the system of and procedures for voter roll compilation, and its relationship with the civil registry. An urgent short term goal should be to clean the voters roll as much as is feasible before local government elections in 2009. Any enumeration should be done in an integrated fashion with at least national and international teams at the provincial level.
6. Medium: TAF should be funded to support a CSO-led national civic education program in the between-elections period. Such a platform could advise on electoral reform, seek input from local communities on the same, and conduct a preparatory campaign for the 2009 local government elections.
7. Medium: Donors should support structures which will facilitate stronger communication between those providing election support and the political parties. This may be done

directly through the political party institutes or through more formalized meetings or venues.

8. Long: Ongoing political party programs should be supported. These programs should not just be election focused encompassing issues such as proxy training and campaign workshops, but should include broader goals such as platform development, party leadership and communication and working with parties in the legislatures.
9. Long: As soon as more favourable conditions allow, if electoral reform progresses, IFES, UNDP and TAF should re-negotiate and re-design their electoral assistance activities with the ECP, as well as establish a clear division of labour between themselves. As far as possible two implementers engaging in the same electoral activity should be avoided.
10. Long: Implementers should seek to support a full cycle of an electoral activity, that is, not to commence assistance when the ECP's work is already underway and the design and operational planning for that activity have been done. Likewise, Paris Aid Effectiveness and effective electoral assistance principles should be applied and national capacity building included as a central element of every program.

Recommendations - observation

1. Short: TAF and donors should continue to support (financially, technically and politically) a coalition of domestic observation groups so that they can speak with a more powerful, unified voice. The short-term priorities should be the collection of credible data from the last electoral process, and its use in advocating for electoral reform discussed at the end of the report. The medium-term priority would be preparations for local government elections 2009.
2. Short: Assuming support from the FAFEN Board, continue to engage TAF to administer the basket and provide expert advocacy and project management skills to its CSOs. Ensure the development of a medium to long term capacity building strategy, including skills and capacity transfer from TAF to FAFEN and other CSOs on resource mobilisation, fund management and disbursement, donor relations and administering their complex CSO observer coalition. Consider introducing the BRIDGE program to CSOs.
3. Medium: Pending the success of the reform agenda and donor conditions related to it, (and pending the security situation), begin long-term international observation efforts at the start of the electoral cycle, including during preparations for boundary delimitation (if relevant) and preparing to improve the voters roll. This should be closely guided by the 2005 Declaration of Principles for International Electoral Observation

Recommendations – electoral assistance coordination fora

1. Short: All donors and implementers active in the 2007 – 2008 electoral process should re-engage through formal and informal structures and re-establish, in the first instance,

reliable and frequent information exchange. It is particularly important at this time to ensure political officers (re)engage given donor staff concerns political embassy staff are likely to be distracted by short-term political issues and crises.

2. Short: The first business of the first donors and implementers meeting should be to conduct a workshop with CSOs about their collective findings on the 2007 – 2008 electoral process. A regular formal or informal information sharing meeting on post-election activities and reform should then be promoted between these groups.
3. Short: The second business of the first meeting of donors and implementers should be to agree to urgently promote two levels of meetings with the ECP, (a) the first at the Ambassador level co-chaired by the ECP Chairman and the UNDP Resident Representative and / or an agreed lead Embassy, to meet at least every 2 months, and (b) a working level meeting co-chaired by appropriate ECP and implementer operational staff, based on a rotating Chair among internationals, and meeting at least monthly.

Each meeting should have established terms of reference, agendas and minutes, and allow for the invitation of other stakeholders to monitor or present on issues as appropriate. A decision whether to retain or replace the JDPM, TWG, and other formal and informal donor coordination structures should only be taken when the new national / international structures have been created.

When working with the ECP to design its coordination and information sharing structures, ensure political parties are briefed about all election work, ECP and electoral assistance.

4. Medium: Build on the 2007 – 2008 electoral process experience to increase coordination in other democracy and governance areas, for example, support to parliament, political parties, the judiciary and civil service reform. Other sectors may review lessons learnt from the electoral process and review and re-design their current coordination frameworks,
5. Long: Electoral assistance coordination of an international standard in a setting as complex as Pakistan is a full-time job. Assuming the next year will see a re-orientation of electoral assistance, and new funds will become available to take forward an extensive reform agenda: establish a joint national/international coordination secretariat staffed before the first funds are received by a donor.
6. Long: When the new electoral assistance strategy is known, and national (co)leadership is established, then create meeting structures, both formal and informal, which bring political officers and implementers together, rather than having them communicate only through representatives of the donor agencies.
7. Long: In a new electoral assistance strategy recognize the political nature of electoral assistance and include political as well as technical components in the structures.

Recommendations – donor coordination matrix

1. Short: Update the DCM to reflect the current post-election activities being conducted by international implementers
2. Short: As soon as feasible in the electoral reform process, make the DCM redundant and replace it with a nationally negotiated broader governance agenda. Develop such an agenda in a collaborative manner and based on the lessons of the last electoral processes. Such a framework should be consistent with the ownership, alignment and harmonisation principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

Recommendations - sustainability

1. Short: Consider re-designing all international coordination fora after establishing ECP (co)leadership of new structures because some may become redundant (see recommendations above about those fora)
2. Short: Seek endorsement from the ECP for them to invite BRIDGE partners (and donors to fund) a capacity building strategic needs assessment as a matter of priority, but certainly before the end of 2008. Include in the assessment the possibility of BRIDGE being used to facilitate workshops on electoral reform options.
3. Short: Support CSOs collate all electoral observer reports and other baseline electoral process data and ensure a thorough review of the systemic weaknesses in electoral processes in Pakistan. From this baseline identify cause, prognosis and remedy.
4. Medium: Seek support from the ECP for a medium-term international (UN perhaps) field presence in the lead up to local government elections, working alongside ECP staff at the provincial level or lower with the aim of building capacity, mentoring and supporting ECP operations.
5. Long: For all future international electoral assistance continue to find the best quality experts who are not only capable of conducting elections, but of organically building capacity, mentoring and working with national counterparts, transferring skills and leaving a positive legacy.
6. Long: Invest in longer term projects with political parties, rather than focus on narrow election driven issues such as party agent trainings and campaign workshops.

Recommendations – future electoral reform

1. Short: See above the recommendation to support CSOs to compile a single summary of electoral reform recommendations.
2. Short: See above recommendations for donor and implementer agreement at their first meeting on donor, implementer and CSO information sharing meetings, as well as two

types of regular and formal ECP, Embassy, donor and implementer meetings. In addition, in order to support electoral reform, agreement would need to be reached on systematic dialogue with Parliament, the Government, and political parties.

3. Short: In the new proposed coordination fora, the international community should establish its position regarding governance reform and develop talking points in a similar fashion to those from early 2007. Such a position should include clear benchmarks or conditions, following as far as possible principles of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness under ‘donors align with partners’ strategies.’
4. Short: To provide an expert assessment of next steps and to guide re-orientation of international support, a UN post-election needs assessment mission (NAM) should be urgently dispatched. As did the NAM in 2005, such an assessment could provide the UN system and other stakeholders more detailed recommendations for electoral assistance.
5. Medium: The option of supporting a national dialogue on governance reform, or specifically to create a broad-based commission or task force convened by Parliament or the Government should be considered. In the event of such a body, donors and implementers should establish their comparative advantages on each aspect of the reform agenda and seek to bring in international experts on the various issues. A team of experts, international, regional and local could be formed to periodically oversee and report on the reform.
6. Long: The international community should be committed to the ‘electoral cycle approach’ before the 2009 local government elections, and again before the next national elections. This will require Embassies, donors and their capitals to stay engaged politically, financially and technically in governance reform, in particular political and electoral reform for at least the next 5 years.

Appendix

E. Donor Funding for Electoral Assistance and Observation³⁵

✓ indicates non-earmarked basket funds

Implementer	Donor	Electoral Activity	\$ mill
DI	USAID		-
EC	EC	Observation – EU EOM	€5.67
IFES	DRL	Support to ECP's complaints mechanism	-
IFES	UNDP	Monitoring of polling official training	-
IFES	USAID		-
IRI	USAID		-
NDI	British High Commission	Pre-Election Assessment Mission	US\$.03
NDI	NED	Pre-Election Assessment Mission	US\$.09
NDI	Royal Dutch Embassy	Pre-Election Assessment Mission	US\$.04
NDI	US-DRL	Polling Agent / FATA voter awareness / Code of Conduct	US\$1.5
PACFREL			
PATTAN	EC	Analysis on local government elections	€0.03
PILDAT	EC	Regional dialogue on free and fair elections	€0.03
PILDAT / CGEP	TAF, German Foundation, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, DFID, UNDP and USAID		
TAF-Basket	CIDA ✓		US\$1.5
TAF-Basket	DFID ✓		
TAF-Basket	Royal Dutch Embassy ✓		
TAF-Basket	Royal Norway Embassy ✓		
TAF-Basket	SDC ✓		US\$6.50
TAF-Bilateral	AUSAID		US\$0.60
TAF-Bilateral	USAID		US\$0.70

³⁵ The evaluation team was not able to collect complete information on all activities, including other domestic and international electoral observation efforts.

Implementer	Donor	Electoral Activity	\$ mill
TAF-Bilateral	US-DRL		-
UNDP-SDEPP II	Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund		US\$3.85
UNDP-SNEP Basket	CIDA ✓		US\$0.86
UNDP-SNEP Basket	DFID ✓		US\$4.03
UNDP-SNEP Basket	EC ✓		€0.98
UNDP-SNEP Basket	Embassy of Japan	Earmarked for ballot boxes, seals & screens	US\$3.48
UNDP-SNEP Basket	Royal Dutch Embassy ✓		US\$2.40
UNDP-SNEP Basket	Royal Norwegian Embassy ✓		US\$2.03
UNDP-SNEP Basket	UNDP ✓		US\$0.50
UNDP-SNEP Basket	USAID ✓		US\$1.50

- UNDP-SDEPP II, Ph I, strengthen democratic governance through support to electoral processes:
 - (i) modernise ECP, and
 - (ii) increase women’s participation with CSOs at grassroots level;
 - advocacy, civic education and voter information;
 - improve measures for voter registration, forge stronger alliances with ECP and CSOs, media, research and academic institutions

- UNDP-SNEP
 - Voter registration voter education campaign, through 391 NEP member NGOs across Pakistan.
 - Training of ROs/AROs (1,100), Presiding Officers (51,000), and Asst Presiding Officers and Polling Officers (100,000), training methodology, strategy, materials design, procurement and distribution; independent monitoring
 - Electoral commodities: 430,000 ballot boxes, 6.5 million seals, and 300,000 voter screens
 - Party Polling Agent Handbooks printed (1.5 million)
 - Four background electoral research papers developed
 - Polling voter education campaign, emphasis on women and other socially excluded groups

Appendix

F: Accredited Observers and Media 2007 - 2008³⁶

Accredited observers

Organization	Groups	Began	National Constituencies	Accredited Observers	Funding Source
Domestic Observers					
CGEP	PILDAT & individuals	Dec '06			TAF basket
FAFEN	40 CSOs	Oct '07	264	19,000	TAF basket
PACFREL	8 CSOs in CCFE	Feb '07	110	2,200	CWS basket
The Researchers	Women Contested Constituencies	Nov '07	64	400	TAF basket
International Observers					
British High Commission				27	
Democracy International		Jan '08		40	USAID
European Union Election Observation Mission	23 Member States, plus 7 MEPs, 7 Royal Norwegian Embassy and 22 Canadian High Commission	Core team Dec '07; LTOs from 4 Jan '08	115	131	
Government of Japan	7 groups (Members from the Embassy and HQ)	Feb '08		23	The Government of Japan
IRI	45 LTOs and 90 STOs were planned	Nov '07, withdrew early '08		83	DRL
Spanish Embassy				5	
US Embassy		Nov '07		116	

³⁶ Information for this table is compiled from data supplied by the ECP and from available domestic and international observer reports, and their websites. ECP data mixed accredited observers and accredited media – these groups were separated for these two tables. There was not time to verify and complete the information so this is given as a guide only.

Accredited media

Media name	Accredited
BBC News	35
South Asian Free Media Association	18
Associated Press	17
TV Asahi	16
MOI	15
CNN	13
Sky News	9
Reuters	7
ITN	7
International Islamic University	6
ABC News	6
AFP	6
Al Jazeera TV	5
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	5
CBS News	5
ZDF	5
Xinhua	4
Ortus Japan	4
The New York Times	4
Japan TV	4
Nippon Hoso Kyokai	4
Observer	4
NDTV	4
ARD German TV	4
BBC	3
CZECH TV	3
Danish Broadcasting	3
CBC	3
Fox News	3
Kyodo News	3
Fuji Television Network Inc.	3
NRK	3
NTV	3
Nippon Television Network Corporation	3
Getty Images	3
Parep Pretoria	3
Parep Washington	3

Media name	Accredited
Russian TV Arrabic	3
TV-3	3
TV3-Television De Catalunya	3
TVP SA	2
VOA	2
TSR	2
SAFMA	2
RTE	2
Russian TV Arabic	2
TBS	2
Television	2
SVT	2
TV Chanil Zvezda	2
TV Net	2
TV Sweden	2
TV2	2
The Washington Post	2
Radio Television Portugal	2
Peoples Daily China	2
ORF	2
Parep Berlinn	2
Korean Broadcasting System	2
Middle East Broadcasting Centre	2
NTV Channel	2
NPR	2
IHRO	2
Independent Television News	2
Italian Public Television	2
Nepszabadsag	2
France 2 TV	2
De Morgen	2
Dagens Nyheter	2
CC TV	2
Dogan News Agency	2
Canada TV	2
Bulgarian National Television	2
Chicago Tribune	2
China Radio	2
1+1 TV Channel	2
Asahi Shimbun	2

Media name	Accredited
Al-Jazeera International	2
Al-Jazeera TV	1
Anandabazar PA	1
Ansa Italian News	1
Al-Arabia News Channel	1
ABC	1
Agency Crazia	1
China Radio International	1
Citizenship Immigration	1
Canwest News Canada	1
Capital Press Japan	1
Carazon	1
Catalunya Radio	1
Austrian Broadcast	1
DW Radio	1
E. N. A	1
EL Mundo	1
El Pais	1
Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies	1
Espresso	1
European Press Photo Agency	1
Centre for Media and Democracy	1
CNN IBN TV	1
CNN-IBN	1
Daily Frensh	1
DBC	1
Frankfurter RU	1
French Radio	1
FAFE	1
FAZ	1
Financial Times	1
Folha De S.Paulo	1
Network 18 IBN-7	1
New Delhi TV	1
Newsweek	1
Nikkei Japan Daily	1
ITV Chanil Zvezda	1
La Presse	1
Lester	1
MBC	1

Media name	Accredited
Microsoft Network	1
Indian Express	1
Indo Asia News Service	1
International Television News	1
International Public Relations Association	1
IFP	1
Ihlas News Agency	1
German Radio Network	1
German TV	1
GQ Magazine	1
IBN-7 network 18	1
Fur Die Freiheit	1
Deutseche Wale TV	1
NRC	1
Oglobo Newspaper	1
NY Time	1
NZZ	1
Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC)	1
MOAS Press	1
Korian Broadcasting System	1
Nova Television	1
Nova TV	1
Parep Bern	1
Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV)	1
Pareep Pretoria	1
Phoenix TV	1
Press Trust of India	1
Radio & Television De Portugal SA	1
Radio Canada	1
Radio Swiss	1
Rai Tadio Televisione Italiana	1
Parepsarajevo	1
The Yomiuri Shimbun	1
Time Magazine	1
Toronto Star Newspaper	1
Trouw	1
Swiss Public Radio	1
The Straits Times	1
The Times of India	1
The Asahi Shimbun	1

Media name	Accredited
The Australian Magazine	1
The Chosun Ilbo Daily	1
The Economist	1
The Guardian	1
The Hindu	1
The Hindu Newspaper	1
The Independent	1
The McClatchy Company	1
Society Independent Communications TV	1
USA Today	1
VRT	1
VRT Radio	1
Wall Street Journal	1
World Picture Network	1
Universidad Autonoma De Madrid	1

Appendix

G: Sample Donor Coordination Matrix: September 17, 2007

Donor Coordination Matrix of Financial & Technical Assistance

Summary of Objectives/ Activities	Activity	Proposed Funding Mechanisms	Partner	Comments
Overall Goal: Strengthened democratic electoral processes in Pakistan				
Result 1: 1. Voter Registration Process updated	1.1 \$9.3 million in sub-contract to Kalsoft JV to computerize voters roll	1.1 USAID	1.1 IFES	1.1 Data-entry of 52,102,428 million voters completed. Printed completed. Activity completed.
	1.2 Technical Assistance to ECP re voter registration processes and IT	1.2 USAID	1.2 IFES	1.2 IFES advisors reviewed software development for entry of display centre forms. Activity completed
	1.3 Developed a significantly enhanced ECP public awareness campaign with focus on display period and printing is being done after approval from ECP.	1.3 USAID	1.3 IFES	1.3 Material to be used for branding display centers (banners / posters) printed and have been distributed. Activity completed.
	1.4. Manuals and training programs for ECP staff managing developed for the display period, training to be imparted	1.4 USAID	1.4 IFES	1.4 Training manual for display centre staff in English, Urdu and Sindhi have been distributed to all districts. Activity completed.
	1.5 Pre qualifications called for undertaking V/R campaign. RFPs called for and closed on 27 th March, 2007. Evaluation completed approval obtained from ACP New York. Contract awarded to the firm and material printed	1.7 UNDP	1.7 UNDP , ECP and IFES	1.5.1 The number of display centers finalized by ECP (45,000) and distribution plan prepared
	1.6 UNDP has identified partners for distribution of material. The	1.6 UNDP	1.7 UNDP , ECP and IFES	Documentary developed and disseminated.

Summary of Objectives/ Activities	Activity	Proposed Funding Mechanisms	Partner	Comments
	<p>material has been distributed through 400 NGOs all over Pakistan through NEP members.</p> <p>1.7 UNDP prepared TV ads and Radio programs for the ECP. These have been aired by ECP at their own cost through ECP's budget</p> <p>1.8 FAFEN Audit Report disseminated; press statements on ECP comparison of 2002/2007 voters' lists; brief submitted to Supreme Court; meetings with ECP and NADRA</p>	<p>1.7 UNDP</p> <p>1.8 TAF (LMG)</p>	<p>1.7 UNDP, ECP</p> <p>1.8 FAFEN</p>	<p>1.7 Final product handed over to ECP</p>

Summary of Objectives/ Activities	Activity	Proposed Funding Mechanisms	Partner	Comments
<p>Result 2: 2. Election administration improved</p>	<p>2.1 Advisors working with ECP Secretariat to improve voter registration process, forms, IT and public awareness capabilities</p> <p>2.3 Procurement process completed for both item. Production and shipment started. Till date 162,000 voter screens have arrived in Pakistan and first shipment of ballot boxes will arrive in last week of September, 2007</p> <p>2.4 ECP requested UNDP for assistance in developing of a logistics plan for distribution of ballot boxes and voter screens. The plan has been finalized and given to ECP. The ECP has requested for funding the movement of voter screens. UNDP has agreed and completed the selection process. Movement to start from 1st week of October</p> <p>2.5 Pre qualifications have been floated for the training component. RFPs now advertised to get a better pool of organizations. Procurement process finalized and firms have been selected for training and monitoring.</p> <p>2.6 The Training Architecture and Design was developed in a consultative workshop on 05th March, 2007 for training of polling officials. Follow up workshop done on 20th April. Development of manuals for presiding officer, ROs/AROs and DROs completed</p>	<p>2.1 USAID</p> <p>2.3 UNDP (funds prioritized in PSC meeting)</p> <p>2.4 UNDP (funds prioritized in PSC meeting)</p> <p>2.5 UNDP (funds prioritized in PSC meeting)</p> <p>2.6 UNDP (funds prioritized in PSC meeting)</p>	<p>2.1 IFES</p> <p>2.3 UNDP , ECP and IFES</p> <p>2.4 UNDP and ECP</p> <p>2.5 UNDP & ECP</p> <p>2.7 UNDP & ECP</p>	<p>2.3. MoU signed between UNDP and IFES in this regard.</p> <p>ECP has requested for 100,000 more ballot boxes</p> <p>Consultant hired for developing of logistic plan. Has visited ware houses at Karachi port and also ECP ware houses. The plan will have been finalized .</p> <p>The existing process has been cancelled and bids called again</p> <p>2.6 All the PECs, some polling officials of all categories, RO/ARO, Donors, Renowned Training Specialists participated in both the workshop</p>

Summary of Objectives/ Activities	Activity	Proposed Funding Mechanisms	Partner	Comments
	<p>and approved by ECP.</p> <p>2.7 Quantities for printing of manuals determined by the project. Procurement process completed and printing to be completed by October 20, 2007.</p> <p>2.8 Training architecture developed for party polling agents training. The RFP has been floated and closes on 17th May. The process didn't yield results, work started on development of party agent handbooks and their printing. First draft of the Handbook to be finalized by next week.</p> <p>2.10 Pre qualifications completed for the research category. TORs developed for 2 research assignments and RFPs invited closed on 17th May. Evaluations completed and now with ECP for clearance.</p>	<p>2.7 UNDP (funds prioritized in PSC meeting)</p> <p>2.8 UNDP (funds prioritized in PSC meeting)</p> <p>2.9 UNDP, if savings result from other components</p>	2.7 UNDP & ECP	<p>A large quantities of handbooks are being printed for Polling staff, which is around 600,000</p> <p>2.9 Two areas of research identified after identifying the needs</p>
<p>Result 3: Legal framework for elections reviewed and updated</p>	<p>3.1 Terms of reference developed for the hiring of the international consultant and approval taken from PSC. Funding being mobilized for this purpose.</p>	3.1 UNDP	3.1 UNDP & ECP	
<p>Result 4: ECP and political parties regularly confer to address election-related issues</p>	<p>4.1 Pre qualification for advocacy category completed. TORs to be developed for the advocacy assignment and RFPs invited .</p>	4.1 UNDP (If additional funding of \$ 3 million mobilized then these activities can be funded)		

Summary of Objectives/ Activities	Activity	Proposed Funding Mechanisms	Partner	Comments
	<p>4.2 PILDAT funded to work with parties to adapt / update / improve ECP code of conduct</p> <p>4.3 FAFEN public statements reiterate need for ECP meetings with stakeholders, esp political parties</p>	<p>4.2 TAF (LMG)</p> <p>4.3 TAF (LMG)</p>	<p>4.2 PILDAT</p> <p>4.3 FAFEN</p>	
<p><u>Result 5:</u></p> <p>Citizens better informed of election issues and procedures (voter education)</p>	<p>5.1 First-time voters activities in Sindh will start in October.</p> <p>5.2 Strategic planning for Voter Education conducted in mid-August. Grants to NGOs for district-based voter ed activities to start in October. Voter ed materials development underway.</p> <p>5.3 New funding from DRL to increase women voters' participation in electoral process starting September with potential partners meeting and EoIs. Follow-up planning meeting Sept 22.</p> <p>5.6 Pre qualifications completed for voter education campaigns. RFPs for voter education floated and closing by end September, 2007</p> <p>5.7 Network for Electoral Participation being used for undertaking grass root level voter education campaign. First step evaluation completed and out of 400 about 115 NGOs selected for seeking proposals for voter</p>	<p>5.1 TAF (LMG) Seeking additional funding for first-time voter activities to repeat in other provinces and expand in Sindh.</p> <p>5.2. TAF (LMG – about 65 districts) (seeking other funds to expand voter ed outreach to general audiences and women)</p> <p>5.3 TAF with partners (DRL funding)</p> <p>5.6 UNDP (Funds prioritized in PSC meeting)</p> <p>5.7 UNDP</p>	<p>5.21 FAFEN NGO partners and others</p> <p>5.2. FAFEN NGO members plus other NGO partners</p> <p>5.3 NGO partners from FAFEN and others</p> <p>Firms</p> <p>Firms / NGOs</p>	

Summary of Objectives/ Activities	Activity	Proposed Funding Mechanisms	Partner	Comments
	<p>education. Last date for submission of proposals will be 1st October, 2007.</p> <p>5.8 The pre qualification of firms for media management category has been finalized. The TORs have been prepared for media training and RFPs invited closed on 09th May, 2007. Evaluations completed and case sent to approval to ACP New York</p>	5.8 UNDP, if some savings result from other components		Trainings of 1000 media persons is planned
<p><u>Result 6:</u> Independent election observation</p>	<p>6.1 FAFEN audit of draft electoral rolls has been completed and report released to the media. Full publication being printed.</p> <p>6.2 FAFEN strategic planning workshop conducted in early August to decide long-term pre-election and election day observation strategy. Plan of operation prepared. Training of long-term observers began in September</p> <p>6.3 PILDAT funded for Citizens' Group research and commentary on election process</p>	<p>6.1 TAF (LMG)</p> <p>6.2 TAF (LMG)</p> <p>6.3 TAF (LMG)</p>	<p>6.1 FAFEN</p> <p>6.2 FAFEN</p> <p>6.3 PILDAT</p>	
<p><u>Result 7:</u> Independence of ECP asserted</p>				
<p><u>Result 8:</u> Election dispute resolution process strengthen</p>				

Appendix

H. List of Abbreviations

ADB – Asian Development Bank

ANP – Pashtoon Secular Party

APDM – All Parties Democratic Movement

AusAID – Australian Government Overseas Aid program

BRIDGE – Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (an electoral administration professional development course)

CCFFE – Citizen’s Campaign for Free and Fair Elections (part of PACFREL)

CGEP – Citizens’ Group on Electoral Process (supported by PILDAT)

CIDA – Canadian International Development Agency

CSO – Civil Society Organisations

CWS – Church World Service

DAI – Development Alternatives Inc

DCM – Donor Coordination Matrix

DEX – UNDP Direct Execution Project

DFID – Department for International Development, UK

DI – Democracy International

DRL – US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour

EC – European Commission

ECP – Election Commission of Pakistan

EAD/DPA – Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political Affairs, UN Headquarters

EU – European Union

EU EOM – European Union Electoral Observer Mission

FAFEN – Free and Fair Election Network (supported by TAF)

FATA – Federally Administered Tribal Areas

FCO – Foreign and Commonwealth office

GoP – Government of Pakistan

ICG – International Crisis Group
JUI(F) – Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam
HRCP – Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
IDI – In-Depth Interview (face-to-face or telephone)
IFES – International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IRI – International Republican institute
JDPM – Joint Development/Political Meeting
LMG – Like-Minded Group
NADRA – National Database and Registration Authority
NAM – Needs Assessment Mission
NDI – National Democratic Institute
NED – National Endowment for Democracy
NWFP – North-Western Frontier Province
PACFREL – Pakistan Coalition for Free, Fair and Democratic Election
PCO – Provisional Constitutional Order
PILDAT – Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
PKMAP – Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party
PML(N) – Pakistani Muslim League
PML(Q) – Pakistani Muslim League
PPP – Pakistan People’s Party
SAP-PK – South Asia Partnership Pakistan
SDC – Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SDEPP – UNDP, Supporting Democratic Electoral Processes in Pakistan
SNEP – UNDP, Support for National Elections in Pakistan
TAF – The Asia Foundation
TWG – Technical Working Group
UNDP – United Nations Development Program
USAID – United States Agency for International Development