

**CONCEPT PAPER ON THE
OPORTUNITY, SCOPE AND METHOD OF A HANDBOOK ON
STRUCTURING ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES
(EMBS)**

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to present a framework for the discussion on the opportunity, scope and method for a handbook being researched and produced on structuring electoral management bodies under the auspices of International IDEA in 2004. More specifically, some ideas will be spelt out on *why* structuring EMBs is an increasingly important subject of study and practice, *how* this whole issue fits into the overall IDEA thematic emphasis on *sustainable democracy* and *sustainable electoral processes*, and *which content and method* are advisable for the production of a handbook on the subject. As the handbook research will involve some case studies, the paper will also spell out the criteria used for selecting the about 20 countries where case studies will be carried out.

THE FACTS

A new field of study and practice is currently unfolding under the heading of EMBs or electoral administration as part of the institutional arrangements for democratic governance. These are relevant institutions for democracy as a safeguard of the suffrage by guaranteeing the conduct of clean competitive elections. Recent experiences around the world have proved how powerful an impact an efficient and neutral electoral administration may have as a democratization instrument (i.e. Uruguay and Chile in the 1980's, Mexico and Ghana in late 1990's). Contrarily, where an incompetent or partisan biased electoral authority was in place, this has proved to be one of the weakest links in the democratization and/or sustainability processes (i.e. Peru, Ivory Coast, the Yugoslav Federation in 2000, Georgia in 2003).

More particularly, the history of independent electoral commissions is worth being considered as one of struggling for an effective universal practice of the suffrage, and also as that of an institutional device for the enhancement of the legitimacy of the electoral process. Elections were historically run by partisan controlled executives as the relative degree of party pluralism and media independence would allow. It was only under the increasingly controlling eye of oppositions and parliamentary committees that ministries of interior, and/or home offices and sheriffs learned how to conduct elections

which were acceptable for all contenders. After World War II, there was decolonization and new electoral openings in situations where no such citizen confidence existed in either colonial powers or new provisional governments. It was in this context that electoral authorities in the form of independent electoral commissions came to the forefront of electoral politics (i.e. India and Pakistan in the late 1940's, and much later Kenya, Ghana, Malta in the early 1960's). In Latin America this type of authority had been established by the first quarter of the twentieth century when oligarchic governments were replaced by more liberal oppositions in a number of countries (i.e. Uruguay, Chile, Colombia, and Costa Rica). By the time of the "third wave" from the late 1970's on, this has become the institutional model prevailing in the different regions of the world. As an outstanding example of the arguments raised in favor of establishing an independent electoral commission as an institution for democratic governance, it is worth examining the discussions held at the Constitutional Commission in India, in 1947 (Souza, 1998). As a most recent development it is not irrelevant that even such well-established democracies like the UK and Sweden have established National Electoral Commissions as recently as 2000; following earlier developments in the same direction within the realm of established democracies (i.e. the US establishing a Federal Electoral Commission in 1974, and Australia in 1984).

As recent examples on the relevance of independent electoral authorities for democratization and institution building, the cases can be mentioned of Uruguay and Chile in the 1980's where former democratically established EMBs certified failure at referendum by which well-entrenched dictators had tried to institutionalize autocratic rule. In other cases like Mexico and Ghana in the 1990's, it was the fairness and good sense of the EMB leadership which helped diffuse fears and mistrust on election results at critical transitional times. Contrarily, on the negative side of the picture, there are at least four cases with striking similarities –three in 2000 and one in 2003- where politicized electoral commissions were involved in an attempt to steal an election under the influence of an autocrat (Peru in April, the Yugoslav Federation in September, and Ivory Coast in October 2000; Georgia in November 2003). In all the four cases, a popular revolt in rejecting the results of a rigged election forced the fall of the autocrat (namely Fujimori, Milosevic, Gye, and Shevardnadze). These late examples have an additional interpretative interest in that a similar political phenomenon (i.e. a rigged election result sparking a near-revolutionary process with the breakdown of the regime) are taking place in different regions of the world and in countries with very different socio-cultural and economic conditions. This can be taken as a textbook example of the relatively high autonomy of political life, in this case of electoral politics.

A NEW FIELD OF STUDY AND PRACTICE

It is not the managing of elections which is new to human political experience, but the fact that elections are conducted –in so many countries and so frequently- in political environments where little of a neutral state administration exists, and political mistrust prevails between government and oppositions as well as among the populace with respect to the government. Another key concern is the lack of capacity for electoral management bodies to deliver elections in a manner that meets the critical goals of transparency, professionalism, and accuracy. In addition, EMBs receive large quantities of donor funding as well as support from their own government, but these stakeholders

in elections find it difficult to judge the cost effectiveness of this assistance and the quality of the services being rendered.

This is the democratizing context of the long list of “third wave” transition elections, and the shorter list of post-cold war post-conflict elections (López-Pintor, 1997), including post-September-11 elections (López-Pintor, 2004).

It is within this new historical environment that EMBs are emerging as a new field of study and practice as it is illustrated by recent research and policy oriented activities internationally funded, jointly with a burgeoning of national and regional associations of electoral officials worldwide (a most recent one that of municipal electoral officials in Bosnia-Herzegovina). Last but not least, the holding of workshops and seminars like the EMB Expert Group meeting in February 2004 is a good example of the relevance of the matter. These are all indicators of the emergence of a new field as much as of its relevance for democratization and sustainable democracy.

What efforts have been made to compile and analyze relevant information on EMBs at an international level? What kind of codified knowledge on the subject is currently available, which could be used for education/training purposes? How much of this would be further needed? Main research efforts have been limited to the following:

First, there is a section on “electoral administration” in the ACE (Administration and Cost of Elections) Project, which has been very successful if we can tell from the number of hits on the project web site and the demand for the CD ROM. On the whole, ACE was intended as a first step towards a kind of encyclopedia of elections to be kept unfolding over time as an electronic product. ACE turned out to be not only a pathbreaking instrument, but also an invaluable tool for those interested in the broader subject of elections; the approach being one of problem setting, where main issues are presented from a practical perspective, and then illustrated with country examples according to varying degrees of familiarity by the different authors with situations in the field. A related project is the Electoral Process Information Collection (EPIC), also a joint venture with other international organizations. The project is an online data base of election-related information. EPIC presents consistent and comparative country by country data on electoral systems, laws, management and administration. It is a living document which will continually be updated and expanded. There is also the BRIDGE project focusing on innovative methodologies for the training of electoral officers.

Second, there is the UNDP policy oriented research project ending in the first monographic book ever published on EMBs. In order to make it viable as a policy document, a first draft was widely consulted and discussed at an international level (2 workshops with the project sub-contractor IFES in Washington D.C.; a presentation at the gathering of the Global Electoral Administration Network, ‘GEO’, in Ottawa in April 1999; and a global conference under the auspices of UNDP and IFE/TRIF in Mexico in May 1999). As a policy document, the content of the UNDP book is organized in the following manner: main issues were raised in a systematic manner after extensive desk research was conducted and a significant number of contacts with experts and field officers were made worldwide. Field reports and unpublished papers from international professional conferences and training workshops were exhaustively searched. Certainly, the main findings of ACE were incorporated. As a policy tool, the

UNDP document searched and found the main facts of current institutional arrangements and practice of election administration, and looked to identify current developments as well as the frame for a consensus on inspiration for institutional design and on professional standards in conducting elections. As a matter of fact, most of the audience in this room may find a reflection in the acknowledgement section of the UNDP book, either personally or institutionally. The aims and main findings of that project as expressed at the executive summary of the book will be quoted here:

“This paper presents two major arguments about electoral management bodies (EMBs). First, they are increasingly developing worldwide as commissions that are both permanent and independent of the executive. Second, electoral administration that relies on permanent and professional staff is more cost-effective than ad hoc electoral bodies that use wholly temporary personnel. Empirical evidence from 148 countries is gathered here to support both these ideas.

Permanent, independent electoral authorities are emerging as the preferred form of EMBs in widely different states that have undertaken electoral reform. This model is followed – though at a distance – by one in which the election is run by the government, but regulated and monitored to some extent by an independent commission that also has adjudication capacity for questions of electoral conduct. Within both these EMB models, commission membership is either party-based or includes at least a few representatives of political parties. Elections conducted exclusively by the executive tend to be products of history rather than responses to contemporary needs. This paper presents a taxonomy that classifies 148 countries by region according to their type of electoral administration.

The idea that permanent EMBs with professional staff operate more efficiently than temporary bodies is supported by evidence of variations in electoral budgets (average cost per voter) relative to the length of the country’s experience in organizing elections. This paper analyses figures from 49 countries and presents a number of lessons learned from trends in electoral administration and national experiences with cost-saving measures.

Historical evidence, coupled with conclusions by observers and advocacy by electoral professionals, almost unanimously indicates that independent electoral bodies serve democratic stability better than elections run by the executive branch and that permanent EMBs are more cost-effective than temporary ones. This view has been expressed systematically by regional associations of electoral authorities in the Americas, Central and Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. Related documents that provide guidelines on the subject have been issued or endorsed by international organizations such as the UN, the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the British Commonwealth, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). In addition, field reports from international assistance agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in the United States almost unanimously point to these conclusions.”

The UNDP policy oriented product has had an impact in academic circles as well as among practitioners as can be attested from a number of publications and conference proceedings. Most notably in this connection, some late and current research efforts on the impact of election administration on the legitimacy of emerging democracies and on electoral governance can be brought to mention here (Elklit and Reynolds 2000; Pastor, 2000; Schedler, 2002). On the other hand, articles summarizing the main findings of the UNDP research were requested and published in journals of the electoral authorities of Canada and Mexico (López-Pintor, 1999b, 2001a). Some findings from the UNDP project have also been picked up by different publications in Latin America (López-Pintor, 2000b), Spain (López-Pintor, 2001b), and the United States (Fischer, 2001).

Thirdly, it is worth mentioning some EMBs-related research and publication activity animated by Andreas Schedler, a scholar of FLACSO in Mexico. On the one hand, an effort is being made to create an association of academic and professionals with a

research interest on EMBs. This has been called the Electoral Governance Network (EGO). In this context, a monographic issue of the International Political Science Review on Electoral Governance and Democratization was published as Volume 23 on January 2002. Subjects in the table of contents include an Introduction on the Comparative Study of Electoral Governance, a number of case studies, and articles on different issues of election management from a comparative perspective. Prior to this publication project, there was a four-chapter section of around 50 pages on “Electoral Administration” in the work edited by Schedler, Diamond and Plattner on *The Self-Restraining State* (Schedler et al., 1999). Besides the publications referred above, there are some new legal compendia, dictionaries and encyclopedias where a chapter is devoted to the subject *electoral administration* (IIDH-CAPEL, 2000; Maley, 2000; Jaramillo, 1998; Dundas, 1997).

Finally, there are two IFES projects. One is the old project of an updated EMBs Global Directory, whose second edition has not been completed, although a questionnaire was circulated in 1998 for the updating of the 1996 *International Directory of Election Offices*. The questionnaire is around 30-question long, and includes a number of substantial items on the structure and functioning of EMBs i.e. areas of responsibility of the electoral bodies; selection method, composition and functioning of the electoral bodies. As a latest development, UNDP is currently funding an IFES project for the development of a methodology on Cost of Registration and Elections, and this project is still in its starting phase.

THE NEED FOR A HANDBOOK ON STRUCTURING EMBS

The added value of the handbook:

Compared to other available products in the new field (i.e. ACE, UNDP book, articles and chapters, and some working papers), the handbook will not only be a monographic material on structuring EMBs, but it will also be exclusively oriented towards the improvement of practice; therefore it will be an educational, planning and applied research oriented tool. Nothing like this has been produced by any agency in the realm of elections yet. And this is still highly needed.

The intended benefits and beneficiaries of the handbook:

The handbook is specially intended to be used in integrated planning, training, applied research and assessment oriented activities either by electoral officials and agencies involved in electoral assistance on the one hand, and on the other hand, by academics and other researchers most notably media professionals. More specifically, a mapping of the field demand for this product would include the following:

a) *Electoral authorities* might use the handbook as a tool of management planning and implementation as well as for training support. This would also be needed by the professional associations of electoral officers, primarily for diffusion and training purposes.

b) Agents of *electoral assistance* and democracy promotion; both international and domestic, governmental and non-governmental (i.e. UN, EU, OSCE, OAS, the British

Commonwealth, USAID, National Endowment for Democracy, Swedish SIDA, Canadian CIDA, British DFID, Spanish AECI, the German Foundations, NDI, IRI, IFES, Carter Center, International Federation for Human Rights, Inter-American Institute of Human Rights IIDH/CAPEL, Latin American Studies Association, ERIS, IFES, NAMFREL of Philippines, TRANSPARENCIA of Peru).

c) The *academic and research community* could use it as a general framework providing an overview of the subject matter and also helping to finding a more specific focus for data gathering and analysis.

d) *Media people*: this handbook can be useful at least while the present stage of very limited awareness and practical information on the issues involved in electoral practice persists. In general, but more dramatically such would be the case in the context of emerging democracies; either of proto-democracies, pseudo-democracies or just electoral democracies without robust institutions of rule of law and representative system. In this respect, the experience at IDEA is that once a global product is offered and updated in web format, a substantial media demand remains over time. Such has been the case with ACE, Voter Turnout or Election System Design projects.

IDEA FACES THE CHALLENGE FOR THE PROJECT

A justification for IDEA taking in this project can be made both in terms of institutional philosophy as well as of program fitness and organizational convenience. On the one hand, this kind of project should be considered as highly relevant to IDEA institutional purposes. Working for the enhancement of the institutional capacity of EMBs is not only congenial with IDEA's mandate of democracy promotion and electoral assistance, but enters fully into the mandate of the Institute for enhancing and assist democratization and free elections worldwide. In this context, the Institute has always put an emphasis on sustainability: *sustainable democracy* and *sustainable electoral processes*. By taking in this project, IDEA's focus on the sustainability of electoral processes will be deepened since the strengthening of an impartial and professional electoral administration shall be considered a tenet of sustainable democracy, especially in countries where a tradition for democratic governance and a neutral civil service is weak or missing altogether.

By taking the initiative for a handbook on structuring EMBs, IDEA is aiming to serve democracy goals by basically assisting one of the most important clienteles of the Institute, that is the electoral authorities and election related practitioners in the different regions of the world. As a matter of fact, several work planning documents of the Institute have embraced the idea that work in the area of sustainable election processes would include the promotion and enhancement of quality and sustainability election structures and administration. This would include a commitment to enhancing the skills and the confidence of election managers (*quality*), as well as the permanence, professionalism, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the electoral process (*sustainability*).

On the other hand, the project would seem also appealing in terms of *opportunity*. There is a demand for such a product as most of us have had a chance to verify while discussion on the subject at the occasion of recent international conferences and workshops with relevant audiences (i.e. electoral officials, election assistance agencies,

electoral observers and researcher). This very meeting may be taken as an occasion to test on the point. In the same direction there is an increasing number of publications dealing with the subject as mentioned before (see also References).

Finally, there are reasons of *convenience and synergies* for IDEA to embrace a project like that which is being proposed. On the one hand, an argument on programmatic fit can be made. It is envisaged that this work will dovetail well with the work already underway on electoral legal frameworks, and will fit nicely with work on the ACE, EPIC, and BRIDGE projects. On the other hand, there are important synergies for this handbook with other IDEA projects with a permanent track (i.e. Election System Design, Voter Turnout, Financing of Political Parties) as they all somehow impinge on election administration and vice versa.

Such would be the *why* and *how* for IDEA taking in this project of a Handbook on EMB Structuring.

THE INTERNATIONAL IDEA HANDBOOK

Content, scope and method

The idea with the handbook is not to replicate or enlarge the ACE and EPIC electronic products, or the UNDP policy book, but to look into the subject with an aim to produce an educational tool, which could be basically used for study, training and applied research purposes, and thus complement other IDEA products. Specific experiences from which to draw lessons learned will be systematically looked for. In this respect, the conduct of a substantial number of case studies from where to draw empirically grounded conclusions will be necessary. Besides, a methodology would be developed for the analysis and assessment of costs of elections, and some educational devices could be delivered as well such as a number of outlines for training modules on the main topics (i.e. integrated planning, election costs evaluation, training of electoral officers at the central and local levels, media planning).

The content of a standard chapter would be structured according to the following scheme:

- 1) The theme will be presented from a general conceptual perspective.
- 2) Issues and different patterns of practice will be discussed in comparative terms with as much detail as possible. Empirical evidence on this respect shall be drawn from available literature, and especially from the different country case studies which will form part of the project.
- 3) Suggestions and recommendations would be made on the viability of alternative models of practice basically in connection with the political cultural traditions of a country, the transitional political environment, the infrastructural endowment of the state apparatus, and external resource availability. The study would distill some principles, trends, and best practices in the electoral field and highlight them as possible options for electoral reform.
- 4) A bibliographic/documentary reference not intending to be exhaustive will be offered (at least in the English language, but also with some significant references in Spanish and French).

Since the handbook might include both horizontal thematic and other type of chapters, it goes without saying that chapters dealing with *methodology* for assessing the cost of elections, and those devoted to summarizing the country *case studies* as well as those containing *training modules* should be structured in its own way as explained below.

More specifically on the cost of elections, the handbook could benefit from IFES current project as far as the time lines of both projects would not overlap.

The themes:

A tentative structure of the handbook is proposed with a draft table of contents comprising the following or similar chapters:

1. Historical political context.

EMBs shall be contextualized from a historical perspective in the different regions of the world. How they are constituted and staffed (i.e. government ministries vis-à-vis electoral commissions, political party based vs. independent, legal professions or civil society based). The typology developed by the UNDP project should work as a source of inspiration as well as a main reference on which to build on.

2. Constitutional and legal structures.

Responsibilities of electoral authorities shall be envisaged under different models of electoral administration depending on constitutional/legal arrangements. This has basically to do with the division of labor among and between the different institutions of the state structure with regard to the electoral process (i.e. regulatory/surveillance, implementation and adjudication functions on elections).

3. Structure of work.

This has to do with the division of labor within a given electoral body, and the different departments of an electoral administration. Decentralization issues are to be addressed here. The planning function: integrated strategic, management and operational planning. Issues of the EMB conduct would be discussed in this chapter and would include goals such as professionalism, efficiency, integrity, transparency, and accuracy, to mention but a few.

4. Financing EMBs.

How EMBs are financed, and how the resources to conduct elections are made available to them (i.e. ad hoc vs. stable finance; budget initiative from the EMB, the government, parliament; domestic vs. external finance).

As for the development of a *Methodology on the Cost of Elections*, it is election finance and budgeting which arose as a most controversial issue when discussing the UNDP draft at different venues. A small section on the cost of elections in US Dollars for 50 countries was included for the first time in the UNDP project, which generated much controversy. In fact it reached the intended purpose of removing the apathy on the

subject, and bringing to the forefront all the main elements of the problem. It is the time now to move further and produce at least an elementary methodology. The development of a methodology on election costs was almost unanimously considered an urgent need. Such a methodology for assessing and comparing the costs of elections shall be to some extent developed and included in the handbook. This would be positive not only from an intellectual/technical perspective, but also on cost-effectiveness considerations, both for national governments, donor countries and the international community. The application of this methodology would be illustrated with examples from different countries, particularly among those included in the case studies.

The methodology should at least include the following parameters:

- a) *Infrastructure costs* which are not usually included or expressed in the election budget, if they are actually covered by the current budget of different institutions cooperating in the electoral process (local civil servants, civil police, electricity and other utility costs of public offices or schools, etc.).
- b) *Adjustment* of the value of currency (either local or foreign used for accounting) to a fixed reference year; adjustment also between a given international currency (i.e. US \$) and living costs in a given country.
- c) The calculation of costs for voter *registration*, usually the most expensive single item of an electoral budget (whether it is ad hoc or permanent; if the later, which cost to attribute to the updating of voter rolls).
- d) The *funding of political parties* (whether there is public funding, and which part of this goes to election related matters; if not, how to calculate private funding of parties effectively).
- e) *Campaign costs* incurred by the state, incorporated or not to the election budget (i.e. state owned media, voter information and civic education campaigns).
- f) The more obvious costs of *routine specific items* of elections (i.e. ballot boxes, papers and other voting material, vote counting, mass communications).

5. Professionalisation.

This has to do with *elections management as a vocation*. In other terms, issues of electoral administration as a profession are to be dealt with like the following: staffing of EMBs (recruitment and training); career patterns of professional electoral officers; patterns of rewards and deprivations within the civil service, the political system and the society at large; the EMB in the public mind (the state of public opinion).

6. Accountability of EMBs.

Issues to be discussed here are: delivery, responsibility and accountability of EMBs both before the legally established institutions (i.e. parliaments, general accountant) and the citizenry (i.e. public opinion channels).

7. EMBs and the media

This is a matter of philosophy as much as it is technical and operational. There are issues of transparency (serving fundamental right of information); information and communication strategies (legitimization of the EMBs and enhancement of their institutional and organizational efficacy); political impact on democratization scene

(legitimacy of the electoral process as a whole); media expertise at EMBs (media experts and media centers).

8. The handbook will identify several other stakeholders that EMB may deal with on regular basis, i.e. political parties, government ministries, parliamentary committees, and civic organizations. It goes without saying that the EMB must maintain sound and constructive engagement with its stakeholders for the sake of promoting inclusive democracy and fair and transparent conduct on its part.

9. Sustainability of EMBs.

Issues to be included here are dealing with *needs assessment*; performance evaluation of initial experiences; availability of domestic and external resources at the establishment and stabilization of EMBs; and the role of *new technologies*.

A topic of increasing relevance, as post-conflict internationally managed elections remain a recurrent experience, is that of *transfer of authority* from international bodies to nationalized EMBs, and that of making the new EMB sustainable. Current seemingly successful experiences at the transfer of authority are those in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and East Timor, all of them heavily dependent on the international community until present. There are other conflictive pre-electoral environments like Afghanistan and Iraq, where questions of transfer and sustainability would have to be dealt in the near future.

Another related issue on sustainability has to do with reviewing the guiding criteria and practice of electoral international assistance to EMBs for the *second and third generation* elections. Continuing financial and technical assistance after a fresh electoral experience may not be the best recipe for sustainability of an electoral administration and a more cost-effective management of elections. In fact, a pattern may be emerging with heavily subsidized second and third generation elections, which turn out less efficiently conducted than previous elections in spite of having receded or subsided many of the uncertainties and threat of the time of transition or peace-keeping politics.

9. Country Case Studies.

A significant number of country case studies would be conducted and reported. The selection of countries from the different regions of the world could be made according to similar criteria to those used in the UNDP project of 2000. A number of countries were selected from different regions of the world according to criteria of: a) *socio-cultural traditions* (more than six linguistic traditions were involved including English, French, Russian, Spanish, Swana and Urdu speaking countries); b) different stages of *democratic consolidation*, and c) *size* of the electorate, ranging from older to emerging democracies. Among the stable democracies in the South Pacific, Latin America, Southern Africa, and Western Europe, the project included Australia, with around 12 million electors; Uruguay, with 2 million; Botswana, with 400,000; and Spain, with 31 million. Among the consolidating democracies in West Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Caribbean, the project concentrated on Senegal, with 3 million electors; Pakistan, with 56 million; Russia, with 108 million; and Haiti, with 4 million.

The number of country case studies for the handbook could include the same mentioned above plus another 12-16 countries falling into the same categories. For example, other stable democracies to be included –from small to large electorates- could be the following: New Zealand, Costa Rica, Israel, Sweden, Canada, and India. Among the consolidating democracies, the following could be included: Mauritius, El Salvador, Malawi, Namibia, Mongolia, Chile, Poland, the Philippines, Nigeria, and Brazil. A set of 24 countries like those mentioned all together would make a highly representative panorama of the variety of situations facing EMBs around the world.

The reasons why countries like those mentioned are proposed stem somehow directly from the four selecting criteria, which were mentioned above: region of the world, socio-cultural traditions, size of the electorate, and stage of democratic consolidation. Some further information on these criteria shall be added. First, *region* of the world should be considered a must, given the global scope of the project. As a second criterium, *socio-cultural traditions* do constitute a standard explanatory or conditioning factor of political and administrative behavior by permeating the different elements of the social fabric. The assumption is that the way in which elections are conducted is not fully independent from the broader value system and normative framework of the society. More specifically, the political cultural traditions (i.e. participatory, deferential, authoritarian) and the legal system (i.e. common law, civil law, customary law) are to be brought here. As for *size of the electorate*, both democratic theory and logistic administrative considerations are to be mentioned. On the one hand, it goes back to Aristotle and Rousseau –not to mention contemporary Robert Dahl among leading democracy theorists- the idea that the working of democracy is somehow related to the size of the citizen body. On the other hand, it is apparent that size of the electorate is of paramount importance for the logistics and management of elections. Finally, there is the degree or *stage of democratic consolidation* as a main circumstance affecting electoral politics in general as well as the institutionalization and operations of the EMB (i.e. EMB nomination and appointment procedures, budgetary independence, availability of a professional civil service and a neutral judiciary, dependable and supportive local government).

The chapters with country case studies should include for each country all the main topics of the substantive chapters of the handbook (i.e. a brief history of electoral administration; constitutional and legal arrangements; institutional structure of EMBs; structure of work; financing; professionalism of electoral officers; accountability; media relations; stakeholder management and issues of sustainability, challenges and opportunities).

Country case studies shall be only summarily reported as separate pieces in the text. But detailed country information on specific issues shall be extracted from the corresponding case studies and included while dealing horizontally with any given issues in thematic chapters.

10. Training modules.

A number of training modules (at least in outline format) would be produced along with the handbook. This would include, inter alia, a list of issues to be addressed in a given training session, reference information to be looked for in archives and election related records, materials to be provided for training, working group exercises, some basic

bibliographic reference if it exists. This will be an extension of the BRIDGE training project but with an EMB management bias, and it is hoped that the training material developed through this project will be incorporated in BRIDGE.

Editors and Contributors:

The making of the handbook will be under the responsibility of a project team including a main editor/coordinator and a number of experts (no more than 2-4) in different domains within the field of elections. An external Advisory Group will be established, some of whose members might make part of the project team as well.

Concerning authorship for the different chapters, a mix of academic, senior electoral officers, legal experts, electoral observation experts, and politicians would be desirable in order to ensure a proper response to the needs of prospective users.

Project Agenda

The project will be implemented from November 2003 – March 2006 within the following operational framework:

- November 2003:** Develop draft project outline for endorsement by IDEA
Identify members of Expert Group, to advise IDEA on handbook design and related project activities
Identify lead writer(s) who will develop case study template, analyse case studies and survey data, and finally compiling the handbook
- 15 January 2004:** Appoint and commission Expert Group
Finalize draft concept paper and survey questionnaire and forward to Expert Group
- 25 February 2004:** Convene workshop of Expert Group to discuss concept paper and approve questionnaire
- 01 March 2004:** Dispatch questionnaire to EPIC hubs and other regional networks
Commission case study authors
- May 2004:** Receive questionnaire back (in Stockholm)
- 15 June 2004** Receive of case studies (in Stockholm)
- July 2004:** Commission lead writer(s) to analyse data and develop the handbook
- September 2004:** Finalize development of handbook
Commence with development of training manual on EMB structuring for incorporation into BRIDGE
- October 2004:** Prepare for final editing, translation, and printing
- December 2004:** Receive handbook from printers
- January 2005:** Launch conference on the handbook (1) – *(for Asia)*
- February 2006:** Launch conference on the handbook (2) – *(Africa)*
- March 2006:** Launch conference on the handbook (3) – *(Latin America)*

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