

# EIDHR Evaluation of NEEDS Projects

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# Abbreviations

ANFREL	Asian Network for Free Elections
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASPR	Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution
CeSID	Centre for Free Elections and Democracy (Serbia)
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CT	Core Team
DCO	Deputy Chief Observer
DFA	Department for Foreign Affairs
DOF	Domestic Observer Forum
DOG	Domestic Observer Group
EC	European Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
EMB	Electoral Management Body
ENEMO	European Network of Election Monitoring Organisations
ERIS	Electoral Reform International Service
EU EOM	European Union Election Observation Mission
EU EOP	European Union Election Observation Project
ExM	Exploratory Mission
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom
FODEP	Foundation for Democratic Process (Zambia)
FP	Focal Point
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems
IT	Information Technologies
LTO	Long-Term Observer
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Member State of the EU
NAM	Needs Assessment Mission
NEEDS	Network of Europeans for Electoral and Democracy Support
NET	NEEDS Evaluation Team
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PCM	Project Cycle Management

PVT	Parallel Vote Tabulation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIDA	Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency
SMS	Short Message Service
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
STO	Short-Term Observer
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference

# 1 Introduction and Acknowledgments

The overall objective of this assignment is to provide the European Commission with an evaluation of the last two NEEDS projects and recommendations for the future project concerning the training of EU Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) experts and observers as well as support and technical assistance to Domestic Observers Organisations, and methodological support to EU EOMs. Furthermore, the NEEDS NET (NET) was tasked to propose amendments to the Terms of References for a future call for tender in the same field.

The evaluation was carried out from mid-January to mid-April 2007. It included extensive travel to EU Member States for in-depth interviews with Focal Points and on-site evaluation of training activities; visits to selected third countries and meetings with representatives of domestic observer groups that have benefited from NEEDS; interviews with EU experts and observers as well as contacts with EC officials; analysis of documents produced throughout the two projects and processing of feedback from various categories of beneficiaries. The main outputs of the evaluation are this report and suggested amendments to the Terms of Reference of the project contractor in view of a future Call for Tender.

The methodology of the evaluation was based on the principles of Project Cycle Management (PCM) and EU guidelines on evaluation, centred upon a set of established criteria such as *relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact* and *sustainability*. These parameters are used both as an analytical framework for the examination of the main four components of the NEEDS projects and the formulation of recommendations for the future.

The structure of the report is meant to provide the reader with the choice to read either the key findings and recommendations in the Executive Summary or the detailed analysis in the main body of the text (Chapters 3 to 7) or the conclusions in Chapter 8. Strictly speaking, the evaluation covers the two NEEDS projects carried out since 2002. However, the report covers a time span as back as 1999, when the first relevant activities were designed and undertaken by the EU (Chapter 2). This will help the reader grasp the full 'life cycle' and evolution of the EU election observation policy over the last years as well as the broader context of the NEEDS projects.

Acknowledgement is due to a number of institutions and individuals. The Focal Points of EU Member States were open to co-operation with the NET and willing to provide relevant information. The scores of EU observers and NEEDS trainees were happy to respond to the request for interviews and were a major source of insights into the intricacies of what is a very ambitious and multi-faceted project; it should also be mentioned that the vast majority of EU NEEDS trainees welcomed this evaluation.

Representatives of domestic observer groups (DOGs) in third countries interviewed also contributed to the evaluation with their perspective. Many thanks are due to the NEEDS project staff, who made available the information required for this assignment. None of this would have been possible without the full co-operation and support of a number of EC officials, both in Brussels and in the EC Delegations in related third countries. Last but not least, ECORYS and SOFRECO provided the necessary contractual framework and logistical support for the completion of this evaluation.

## 2 Executive Summary

The NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2 projects are part of a wider EU programme on democracy and human rights that is unique worldwide, thanks to its ambitious goals, scale and direct link to the highly visible election observation policy of the EU. Overall, NEEDS is a much-needed and largely successful programme which has contributed to a long list of EU Election Observation Missions (EOMs) since 2002. At the same time, a number of improvements will have to be considered, particularly with a view to growing challenges ahead. Figuratively speaking, while a solid edifice is already in place, it needs to be further ‘equipped’ and more rationally used in the future.

### 2.1 Key Findings

#### 2.1.1 Relevance

On the whole, the objectives of the NEEDS projects are highly relevant *per se*, though they have not been sufficiently integrated in a tightly knit concept. In particular, the relevance of EU observer training has been underpinned by the increasing demand for EU EOMs, but also by the required expertise in relation to technological developments, security challenges, mission management, EU visibility, etc. So far, the emphasis has been on the training of Long-Term Observers (LTOs) at the expense of Core Team (CT) members, which needs to be reviewed. The Domestic Observer Fora (DOFs) component is a meaningful long-term ‘investment’ in a powerful democratisation tool. In principle, the DOFs have covered highly relevant issues, though the context at sub-regional or local level has not been taken into consideration. The rationale behind the provision of Technical Assistance to domestic observer groups is largely justified by its use as a fast-response tool at the disposal of the EC, even if in practice project identification and implementation have revealed some challenges. The methodological assistance provided with regard to EOMs and a more consistent election observation methodology based on accumulated experience is indeed highly relevant. As regards the support provided to the Focal Points of Member States, it is necessitated by the recent enlargement of the EU to a 27-member entity, in which the full mobilisation of available human resources are of vital importance.

### 2.1.2 Efficiency

The efficiency of NEEDS activities has been largely satisfactory in management and operational terms. The project design and implementation modalities have contributed to the attainment of the envisaged goals, though some improvements as to the membership and management of the network can be considered and the duration of NEEDS-2 will have to be revisited. While training courses have been efficiently delivered, inconsistent procedures for the selection of trainees at the level of Member States are a serious hindrance that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The appraisal of trainees has also been a challenge which, however, is being addressed more successfully. At present, there is no integrated approach to the training of Short-Term observers (STOs), LTOs and CT members, and it is worth reflecting on an EU-wide initiative that would utilise commonalities between NEEDS and national training programmes; there is a significant – and fragmented – potential in Member States which should be targeted in the future. In facilitating DOFs, a task performed on a worldwide scale, NEEDS has rightly chosen to work with existing regional networks, even though the outreach to public authorities in third countries has been limited. The efficiency aspect of the TA component provides some useful lessons as to needs assessment and resourcing. Co-operation with the EC on the development of EOM-related guidelines and templates has been largely efficient, though some of these outputs could have been specified and delivered at an earlier stage. Assistance to Focal Points has been provided very efficiently and is highly appreciated by the beneficiaries.

### 2.1.3 Effectiveness

The NEEDS projects have been highly effective on the basis of outputs delivered. The training of EU observers is arguably the best component so far, as NEEDS is producing a high-quality training curriculum through an on-going process of standardisation of templates and the use of mission experience, even if some areas of necessary expertise still need to be covered. The training of Deputy Chief Observers (DCOs) and Security Experts needs to be upgraded through a more comprehensive curriculum and more appropriate techniques. Other issues to be addressed in the future relate to a better language balance, a complete set of reference tools and continual training, through e-learning as a complementary facility. The effectiveness of DOFs varies from region to region and has been somewhat limited, largely because of their agenda being too broad and the focus being on networking; as a result, the outputs of this component have not matched its potential. Of the two TA projects implemented by NEEDS, one has been highly effective and could very well be replicated elsewhere; the other one has been suspended. Assistance provided to EU EOMs is expected to lead to the development of a much more consistent EU election observation methodology and an ‘EU style’ in reporting, but what may still be needed with a view to mission management is a set of ‘standard operating procedures’. The support provided to Focal Points is conducive to the development of a common understanding between Member States which will have to be further boosted.

#### 2.1.4 Impact

Although the overall impact assessment of NEEDS activities requires a longer period of time, at this stage the conclusions are largely positive. A possible mid-term impact is to be seen in the inclusion of NEEDS curriculum items in the training programmes of a number of Member States and it would be safe to assume that NEEDS is already contributing to a pan-European process of high-quality observer training. There are some encouraging examples of positive results of NEEDS working as a catalyst with domestic observer groups, but if the impact is to be maximised a higher degree of follow-up coordination with EC services will be needed and a public communication strategy will have to be prioritised. The Global Observer Forum, a website tool developed by NEEDS, will have to be fully developed in the future as well. The production of standardised guidelines and templates for EU EOMs is expected to have a significant and tangible impact, possibly as early as the second half of 2007. A higher degree of approximation between Member States can be expected as an impact of the NEEDS projects, as long as more intensive consultations on relevant issues are held on an EU-wide scale in the future.

#### 2.1.5 Sustainability

The sustainability of follow-up activities can be assured, provided some further steps are considered. It is very encouraging that all the Member States have expressed their support for the extension of the programme beyond 2007. The financial sustainability of EIDHR-funded training appears to be assured, but a number of commonalities will also have to be sought with national training programmes and other available resources need to be utilised. ‘Regional’ networks of domestic observer groups may not become sufficiently active, unless a higher degree of coherence is ensured as to their membership. Technical Assistance provided to domestic observers is likely to remain dependent on political volatility and other unpredictable factors, but more thorough needs assessment procedures, the full engagement of EC Delegations and close coordination with Member States that provide bilateral funding could help address this challenge. As regards methodological assistance to Member States, while the current *modus operandi* has so far been adequate, it would be worth considering the creation of a more stable network structure of Focal Points.

## 2.2 Key Recommendations

### 2.2.1 Relevance

- The objectives of NEEDS should be retained, but their relevance will be increased through closer linkages between components;
- The next project should prioritise the training of CT members over that of LTOs and should lead to the production of high-quality standard-setting training content; and
- Subregional, instead of the current regional, DOFs should be envisaged, in order to be more specific and linked more closely to the local context.

### 2.2.2 Efficiency

- A network of Focal Points should be formally set up, in order to facilitate the approximation of national procedures for the selection of trainees. In addition, an estimate of the number and qualifications of EU observers needed over the next three years should be produced. Commonalities between EC-funded training courses and related activities at the level of Member States should be fully utilised, in the framework of an integrated approach to EU observer training. E.g. ‘cluster’ courses should be considered, so that Member States which do not have the capacity to train their STOs could work together with Member States that provide relevant training;
- Sufficient human resources should be envisaged and properly budgeted for in Technical Assistance projects. Closer coordination between EC services and Member States that provide bilateral funding to domestic observers will be needed; and
- A three year duration should be considered for a future project with a commensurate volume of outputs. While a slightly larger network may be considered in the future, it will have to be efficiently managed, with a strong lead partner and a clearly defined distribution of tasks. Overlaps in expertise between the partners should be avoided and the inclusion of other institutions (e.g. specialising in gender or minority issues) could be considered.

### 2.2.3 Effectiveness

- The training of DCOs should be seen as a priority, with a comprehensive curriculum covering a wide array of issues, such as data assessment, the use of international electoral standards, reporting formats, human resource management and mission security. The production of a set of standard operating procedures for DCOs and Core Teams should be considered in the future;
- Training courses for Security (and possibly Operations) Experts should become more practical and simulation-oriented. They should be held in ‘mission conditions’ and should also include the use of communication equipment;
- The training curriculum for Core Team members should cover in depth election observation techniques, the application of international electoral standards, daily mission work, language- and culture-specific issues, etc. Electoral assistance should be covered in the training curriculum for Election and Legal Experts with a view to the formulation of well-defined and ‘implementable’ follow-up recommendations;
- The training curriculum for both CT members and LTOs should be further enriched with case studies and examples of best practice. A number of these curriculum items can be drawn from the DOFs;
- The seminar groups should not include more than 20 trainees. Seminars for Core Team members should aim at the development of presentation skills of the trainees in view of in-country briefings given to observers on EOMs. Role plays and simulation games should be retained and even more extensively used as training techniques. A better language balance should be achieved, with the inclusion of French- and Spanish-speaking sessions and material in training courses;
- A strong in-built continual training and e-learning component should be envisaged in the training methodology. The NEEDS website could be interactive and its content should be substantially improved through the addition of best practice. Observers

should be regularly informed and encouraged to download background material from the website; and

- The DOF agenda should focus on a smaller number of specific themes (e.g. the application of election observation methodology, reporting and use of international standards for genuinely democratic elections). DOFs need to lead to concrete policy proposals, whenever appropriate, as well as to the identification of possible Technical Assistance projects.

#### 2.2.4 Impact

- A substantially enriched and regularly updated Global Observer Forum tool on the project website should be envisaged;
- A public communication component should be included in each Technical Assistance project. At the same time, an awareness campaign about EIDHR priorities and funding opportunities should be designed and implemented through EC Delegations;
- The deployment of a ‘long-term assessment mission’ should be considered.

#### 2.2.5 Sustainability

Exploring the potential of linking EU-backed training activities to related expertise available at the level of Member States should be considered. The areas of expertise in question relate to a better language balance, ICTs or civilian-military personnel in a non-conductive environment.



## 3 Life Cycle of the NEEDS Programme

Election observation emerged as a structured policy of the EU in 1999-2000, with the Communication of the Commission on EU Election Assistance and Observation (2000)<sup>1</sup>. Since 1999, three projects aiming at EU election observers' training and domestic observers organisations for a total amount of €5,372,424 million were financed under the EIDHR. It is reasonable to view these projects as constituent parts of a wider programme of the EU over the last eight years, along the lines of a common, if evolving, logic.

### 3.1 EU EOP

In 1999, the first project for electoral observation training and support of domestic organisations financed by the EC was the one entitled 'Election Observation - A Common European Approach'. It was supported by a grant contract to the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA) of €90,000, whereas the total cost of the project was €1,775,527. The EU EOP produced the Handbook for EU Election Observation Missions which has been one of the principal tools for the implementation of the Communication of the European Commission. In addition, the EU EOP team trained two officials from each Member State (15 at the time) in election observation principles and techniques.

### 3.2 NEEDS-1 project

In 2001, the EC financed the project NEEDS-1 (Network of Europeans for Electoral and Democracy Support), which was implemented over the period from 2002 to 2005. The contract was signed in August 2002 and received a grant of €1,617,289, with 10% of the overall funding coming from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Finland. NEEDS-1 was intended to contribute to the consolidation and transfer of a standard methodology – the Common European Approach – to election observation stakeholders both in the EU and partner countries.

The objectives of NEEDS-1 were defined as follows:

- Contribution to the consolidation of the Common European Approach to election observation and the development of a training curriculum and training tools;
- Training of EU Core Team members and LTOs;
- 'Best practice' capacity-building seminars in partner countries for civil society domestic observer groups;

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<sup>1</sup> COM (2000) 191 final.

- ‘Best practice’ seminar participation also extended to regional bodies and other relevant institutions, to enhance capacity and encourage feedback on issues that could further facilitate effective election observation in partner countries.

The members of the NEEDS-1 network were Electoral Reform International Service Ltd (ERIS) from the UK as a lead partner, Abo Akademi from Finland, the Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR) and Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna and Osservatorio di Pavia from Italy. Another partner, Prodémocratie from France, was initially involved in the network, but never became active and dropped out soon after the launch of the project.

As regards the main outputs of the NEEDS-1 project, they were:

- 6 seminars for CT members (90 beneficiaries);
- Initially, 5 seminars for LTOs (75 beneficiaries) and, upon an extension approved by the European Commission, 9 seminars for 210 LTOs and STOs;
- Seminars for domestic observer groups in Asia, Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, Eastern Europe/CIS and the Middle East-Mediterranean.<sup>2</sup>;
- Development of a Compendium of Election Agreements and Standards;
- Development of a Domestic Observer Handbook; and
- Production of a Public Information Pamphlet.

Furthermore, relevant regional bodies were also to be engaged in the project, such as the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR), etc.

### 3.3 NEEDS-2 project

In 2005 the European Commission launched a Call for Tender<sup>3</sup> in order to continue the same activities. The call was won by ERIS, the company leader of the NEEDS network. A service contract was signed between EC and NEEDS in August 2005 for a two-year project for a total amount of €1,799,910. The project is to wind up by August 2007 or shortly afterwards and, meanwhile, an evaluation mission (presented in Annex 1.1.) was deployed between January and April 2007.

The objectives of the on-going NEEDS-2 project are to:

- Further develop and consolidate a training curriculum for international and domestic observers and thereby increase their professionalism and capacity to deliver effective and credible election observation in EU partner countries;
- Further facilitate the creation of networks of domestic observer groups in third countries, through the Domestic Observer Fora;
- Facilitate the provision of targeted technical assistance to domestic observer groups in partner countries; and

<sup>2</sup> The Middle East-Mediterranean area was added to the ToR of NEEDS-1 at a later stage.

<sup>3</sup> EuropeAid/120031/C/SV/Multi.

- Further contribute to the array of methodological tools at the disposal of EU EOMs, the European Commission and EU Member States.

The members the NEEDS-2 network are ERIS as a lead partner, Abo Akademi, Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna, ASPR, Osservatorio di Pavia and a new one, MEMO 98 from Slovakia.

The main outputs of the NEEDS-2 project are:

- Training 25 LTO Coordinators, 25 Legal/Election Experts, 25 Media Analysts, 25 Security and Operations Experts as well as a seminar for Deputy Chief Observers (DCOs);
- Training 25 Focal Points from Member States;
- Training 200 Long-Term Observers (LTOs);
- Holding six DOFs in Asia, Africa (two DOFs<sup>4</sup>), Latin America<sup>5</sup>, Eastern Europe/CIS and the Middle East-Mediterranean;
- Identification and implementation of three TA projects - in Africa, Latin America and Asia; and
- Production of guidelines and templates to be used by EOMs.

The comparison of the goals and outputs of the two NEEDS shows not only the numerical increase of direct beneficiaries in the second one, but also the inclusion of a TA component and the provision of methodological assistance to the EC and Member States in relation to EOMs.

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<sup>4</sup> One in English-speaking Africa and another one in French-speaking Africa.

<sup>5</sup> Unlike the ToR of NEEDS-1, the Caribbean was not mentioned in the ToR of NEEDS-2.



## 4 Relevance

### 4.1 Training of EU observers

The relevance of the NEEDS training curriculum has been examined against the ever-growing requirements in terms of professional skills needed, technological developments, security challenges for EU EOMs, etc. For instance, with the spread of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), electronic voter registration and voting are increasingly being applied in countries observed by the EU. It has been an appropriate decision of the NEEDS-2 project team to include related topics in the training curriculum. Furthermore, the application of international electoral standards by EOMs needs to be better illustrated through specific examples and this is also being addressed by NEEDS-2 in 2007. At the same time, the EU visibility requirement has brought forward a new area of expertise to be provided to EOMs and this is why the envisaged seminar for Press Officers in May 2007 (after the completion of this evaluation mission) is deemed highly relevant.

So far, the majority of NEEDS trainees are LTOs and STOs (410 by the end of the NEEDS-2 project), whereas the total number of CT members trained will reach 210. The rationale behind these numbers is not clear and will have to be better justified in the future. As will be argued in other chapters of the report, stress needs to be laid on the training of DCOs and CT members, and setting standards for an integrated EU-wide training programme for EU observers.

### 4.2 Domestic Observer Fora

This component of the programme includes 11 DOFs facilitated by NEEDS – five by NEEDS-1 and six by NEEDS-2. The regions targeted have been Eastern Europe and the CIS, the Middle East and the Mediterranean, Asia, South America and Africa – areas where (with the exception of Eastern Europe and CIS<sup>6</sup>) the EU has been deploying EOMs since the 1990s. Notably, NEEDS-2 envisages two upcoming DOFs for Africa on a language basis, one for English-speaking Africa and another one for French-speaking Africa, which is quite reasonable. In principle, the DOFs have covered highly relevant issues that have been selected in consultation with local partners; at the same time, one of the findings of the evaluation team is that in most cases it was the DOF hosts who

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<sup>6</sup> It is not quite clear why this particular area has been included in the NEEDS programme. An explanation offered by NEEDS staff is that this is more of a 'legacy'. In the ToR of NEEDS-1 (Activity 3.4.), there is a reference to joint activities with domestic observer groups in the OSCE area: 'possibly Central/Eastern Europe'. While work with DOGs in eastern Europe and the CIS is relevant in the light of the EU Neighbourhood Policy, there seems to be no clear and official agreement between the EU and OSCE/ODIHR on co-operation in this geographical area.

suggested the topics, without the participants having any say on the matter (see Annex 3.4.). It would be fair to say that so far the approach to DOFs has been ‘regional’, which does not always take into consideration the context at local or sub-regional level. While one cannot underestimate the importance of interregional exchange of expertise and best practice disseminated through this component, the peculiarities and specific needs of local DOGs will have to be prioritised in the future.

The nine DOFs that have taken place so far have covered a wide range of topics and have brought together a long list of stakeholders. A brief outline is offered below, whereas the agenda of the DOFs is presented in detail in Annex 2.5.

#### 4.2.1 DOFs organised by NEEDS-1

- The Eastern Europe/CIS DOF was held in Zagreb, Croatia, in June 2003, in co-ordination with the OSCE/ODIHR. It was attended by representatives of 30 domestic observer groups from the OSCE region, including Central Asia and the Caucasus. In addition, there were representatives from Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and Peru, thus enabling participants to set up networks on an interregional level as well. The Zagreb DOF covered three main topics, namely, democratic transition, domestic election observation and relevant standards.<sup>7</sup>;
- The African DOF was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in November 2003, with representatives of 23 domestic observer groups from the east, west and south African region. The discussions focused on the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in democratic transition, election norms and standards, methodology of election observation, political violence, etc.;
- The Asian DOF took place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in February 2004, and was attended by representatives of 15 domestic observer groups. The main topics were democracy in Asia, norms and standards for elections, the upcoming Sri Lanka parliamentary elections in April 2004, legal framework and electoral administration, observation of voter registration and political violence, work with the media, money politics and other election-related issues as well as regional co-operation and the way forward for election observation in Asia;
- The South American DOF was held in Lima, Peru, in July 2004. It was attended by representatives of 20 domestic observer groups from the region, including Central America and the Caribbean area. The main topics were the EU policy on observation and support to the electoral process, a review of 15 years of election observation, the role of civil society in democratic transition in Latin America, domestic observation, parallel and quick counts, hate speech and conflict, money politics, etc.; and
- The Middle East and Mediterranean DOF took place in Amman, Jordan, in December 2004, with participants from 12 countries, representing more than 20 domestic observer groups across the region. The DOF covered the issues of the transition to democracy in the Middle East and the Mediterranean, the role of women in the region, civil society actors and their role in promoting change, domestic observation, regional and international networking, etc.

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<sup>7</sup> During this DOF, the participants adopted an important statement known as the ‘Zagreb Commitments’.

#### 4.2.2 DOFs organised by NEEDS-2

- The Asian DOF took place in Jakarta, Indonesia, in April 2006, and was attended by representatives of some 20 civil society organisations and domestic observer groups from Asia, but also from South and North America. The discussions focused on a presentation of EU policy on electoral support and election observation; political parties and campaign finance in Latin America, Europe and North America; best practice for legislative and administrative oversight on party financing and campaign expenditure; lobbying for legislative change; NGOs and election campaign; monitoring; Indonesia, South Korea and the Philippines as regional case studies, etc.
- The South American DOF was organised in Buenos Aires in July 2006 and brought together 26 participants representing a number of domestic observer groups in the region. The central theme of the DOF was 'Monitoring Political Party Financing and Campaign Expenditure' and the discussions included a general overview of Latin American regulatory frameworks and best practice, legislation reform, work with political parties, strategies for bridge-building between political parties and NGOs or between NGOs and regulators, media monitoring work with journalists, the role of the private sector in election campaigns, the misuse of public resources, etc.;
- The Eastern Europe/CIS DOF was held in Bratislava, Slovakia, in December 2006 on the theme of Information Technologies (IT) used by electoral management bodies (EMBs). The forum was attended by DOG representatives from 12 CSOs from east European and CIS countries, both EU member states and third countries, as well as by experts from the Council of Europe, OSCE/ODIHR, NDI, etc. The key objectives were to identify current practices across the OSCE region in the usage of IT and strategies observer groups can employ to effectively observe the electoral process;
- The Middle East and Mediterranean DOF was held in Casablanca, Morocco, in March 2007, with 'Election Observation in the Region' as its theme. It brought together representatives of 20 civil society organisations (CSOs) from 11 countries. The main topics discussed were the EU policy on election observation and support to domestic observer groups, international standards and commitments, the role of civil society in election observation and alliance-building with other stakeholders, international perspectives on and obstacles to female participation in elections, successful strategies for the promotion of female involvement, etc.

#### 4.2.3 Upcoming DOFs in English- and French-speaking Africa

Two more DOFs are to be held in English-speaking Africa (in Uganda) and French-speaking Africa (in Senegal) later in 2007, after the completion of this evaluation. The events in question are currently being in the process of preparation.

### 4.3 Technical Assistance projects

This component emerged in the NEEDS-2 project, the rationale being that the EC could consider the use of this tool in countries not observed by the EU and to the extent that some meaningful assistance could be provided in a targeted way to specific local domestic observer groups. So far, two TA projects have been carried out in Zambia and Ecuador. A brief outline is offered here, whereas the projects will be analysed in greater detail in other chapters of the report.

#### 4.3.1 Technical Assistance project in Ecuador

The TA project in Ecuador, jointly carried out by Osservatorio di Pavia and the local partner Participación Ciudadana, was structured in three phases, stretching from June to November 2006. A total of 30 people were trained: 15 media monitors in the Quito center and 15 more in Guayaquil. The project displays a high degree of relevance, as it helps local partners in South America address the important issue of media influence on the broader electoral cycle.

#### 4.3.2 Technical Assistance project in Zambia

A second TA project was planned in Zambia, but was not carried out eventually. The local partner FODEP was intended to acquire expertise in Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) and due preparation was made. However, disagreement over the use of EU funding prevented the project management team from giving necessary instruction for data collection and reporting. As a result, the local partner FODEP failed to produce a quick count on Election Day, which was the objective of the TA project. Regardless of the outcome (for reasons that relate to other factors, see Ch. 4), it should be noted that in the specific context of Zambia the relevance of the specific project is beyond doubt.

### 4.4 Assistance provided to the European Commission and Member States

#### 4.4.1 Assistance provided to the EC and EOMs

The idea behind this component relates to the need for EOMs to work along the lines of a consistent methodology which draws on accumulated experience. It is indeed highly relevant for the EU to take stock of what is already substantial election observation expertise, while at the same time best practice has not been fully utilised. The production of guidelines and templates based on this ‘collective wisdom’ is meant to help standardise EOM methodology and outputs, which have until recently been of varying quality.

NEEDS-2 has been tasked to produce – or update – a list of guidelines and templates pertaining to briefing and de-briefing of observers, report formats (preliminary statements, weekly or final reports), press releases, handbooks produced by previous projects, etc. All these are valuable tools at the disposal of EC and EOM staff and their standardisation or elaboration is an extremely relevant development.

As a result of this activity, the EU is expected to acquire the best set of tools for international observation that are currently available worldwide.

#### 4.4.2 Assistance provided to the Focal Points of Member States

The assistance provided by the NEEDS-2 project to the Focal Points of Member States takes various forms. Initially, it was envisaged as ‘training of 25 Focal Points’, but evolved with the addition of annual FP meetings. Given the number and diversity of institutional structures in a 27-member EU, closer coordination between the FPs is no doubt imperative. This is why the regular communication between the NEEDS-2 team and all the FPs is a substantial novelty of the project. The annual FP meetings facilitated by NEEDS are intended to help stakeholders (Member States, the EC and the project team) address a number of issues and work out a reasonable *modus operandi*. Last but not least, the selection and evaluation of NEEDS trainees as well as the proper use of relevant information in view of EOMs are of vital importance, as will be argued in other chapters of this report.



## 5 Efficiency

### 5.1 Operational set-up

#### 5.1.1 NEEDS composition

The network structure of NEEDS has been chosen on the basis of two main operational and political considerations. *Firstly*, it was rightly deemed necessary for NEEDS to draw on a large pool of expertise from specialised bodies that cover a range of relevant topics. *Secondly*, NEEDS is a pan-European effort aiming at the enforcement of an EU policy, and the decision for the creation of a network of partners from various parts of Europe is quite justified.

ERIS<sup>8</sup> specialises in the provision of expertise on democracy and good governance, notably in the fields of election assistance and election observation missions as well as the training of domestic and international observers. Being the lead institution of NEEDS, coordinates the design of training seminars, DOFs and TA assistance projects with the European Commission. It is also ERIS that decides (in close contact with the EC) on the choice of topics and trainers.

Abo Akademi specialises in human rights law and civilian crisis management, whereas in the NEEDS network it performs a double task. Firstly, it contributes to the development of the training curriculum, in particular as regards the analysis and updating of international electoral standards. Secondly, Abo Akademi has hosted a number of NEEDS seminars for Election and Legal experts.

ASPR is a training institution specialising in the promotion of peace and peaceful conflict resolution as well as development and environmental aspects. ASPR conducts research in line with its objectives, but is also involved in training and education and is the founder of the European University Centre for Peace Studies. The ASPR is working as member of NEEDS, taking part into the meetings, hosting seminars, co-participating in the creation of a common methodology and discussing the topics of the seminars.

Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna is an institution with substantial experience in training on election observation, civilian crisis management and conflict resolution. Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna brings in valuable expertise to the NEEDS network, notably in the area of

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8 ERIS has been tasked by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) of the UK to act de facto as a Focal Point, in that it is in charge of selection and recruitment of UK election observers. The FCO has contracted ERIS to identify the most credible UK candidates to participate in EU EOMs. ERIS is also one of three NGOs currently contracted to provide UK observers to OSCE EOMs, the other two being the British East West Centre and SOLACE.

training curriculum development and evaluation techniques, but also in the design and delivery of training programmes.

Osservatorio di Pavia has experience in media monitoring within international election observation missions, work on media standards and freedom of expression as well as the development of civil society capacity-building projects. Its key experience has been very helpful in the training of media experts for EU EOMs and domestic observers groups from partner countries.

MEMO 98 is the other network member specialising in media monitoring as well as technical assistance to civil society groups. The key experience of MEMO 98 includes media monitoring expertise and analysis on behalf of international institutions; capacity building for domestic observer groups on media monitoring. According to interlocutors of the NET, MEMO 98 and the Osservatorio di Pavia have clearly divided their roles: MEMO is focusing on East European countries and is assisting civil society groups, whereas the Osservatorio di Pavia is conducting media monitoring training for EU EOMs, including work on media standards and the freedom of expression. However, it is not quite clear why two similar institutions, both focusing on media, should be part of the NEEDS network. At the same time, none of the network partners specialises in gender or minority issues.

### 5.1.2 NEEDS management

The overall management of NEEDS is in the hands of the Project Director, until recently Mr Mark Stevens. He has received very positive comments from the vast majority of interlocutors of the NET. In February 2007, he left NEEDS and was replaced by Ms Hannah Roberts, herself an experienced observer and trainer in the project. While the experience and training skills of Mr Stevens are widely acknowledged, it is expected that his departure will not affect the efficiency of the network nor the quality of the training delivered. The Training Coordinator, Mr Anders Eriksson, is in charge of seminar preparation and liaising with all stakeholders, and has also received very positive comments from the interlocutors interviewed by the NET. Two more members of the management team are the Project Finance Officer and Project Administrator.

Decision-making procedures have somewhat changed from NEEDS-1 to NEEDS-2. The first project had a Steering Committee, bringing together representatives of all the project partners and an EC official (in the capacity of an observer). Over the second period (2005-2007), the network opted for a Scientific Committee. The explanation offered relates to the need for swifter decision-making at times, but the NET has also recorded an element of disagreement among the partners on certain issues, such as collective decision-making, the allocation of financial resources, evaluation procedures, etc. It is not uncommon that the management of a multi-national network may be accompanied by differences in views. All partners, but one<sup>9</sup>, appear to be satisfied with the NEEDS decision-making procedures and the personal performance of the management team.

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<sup>9</sup> What seems to be a minority view in the network is, among other things, that decision-making should be collective, that there should be an extensive self-evaluation discussion at the end of each training seminar, etc.

Network partners interviewed by the NET have indicated that relations with the European Commission (e.g. as regards services requested), rather than the internal management of NEEDS, may have to be better clarified. In conclusion, it could be said that the existing set-up of the NEEDS network is largely successful, though it could be further improved.

The reporting system has also changed from NEEDS-1 to NEEDS-2. During the first implementation period (2002-2005), the network used to submit to the European Commission quarterly reports and special reports after each seminar through the 'network hub'. Under NEEDS-2, the network submits yearly reports as well as reports on each seminar and individual trainees' appraisal sheets, and participates in meetings at the EC headquarters whenever needed. The impression of the NET is that the reporting system has been reasonable and efficient.

### 5.1.3 Resource disbursement

The financial management of the NEEDS programme has not been assessed within the framework of this assignment, as the NET has not been mandated to carry out a financial audit (see Annex 1.1.). In general, it is noted that the main types of expenditure in the NEEDS-1 budget (a total of €1.796.841) are Human Resources (€1.031.672 or 57.4%) and Travel (€26.200 or 18.1%), which is not unreasonable, given the project focus on training. 90% of the NEEDS-1 funding was provided by the European Commission and 10% by the government of Finland. Towards the end of the NEEDS-1 implementation period, some unspent funding (approximately €400,000) was disbursed on additional project activities, upon consultation with the European Commission. In particular, NEEDS organised four more seminars for LTOs and STOs, and an additional Domestic Observer Forum covering the Middle East-Mediterranean region.

As for NEEDS-2 (with a total budget of €1.799.910), its implementation is still on-going. The resources of NEEDS-2 are evenly split between the components of 'fees' and 'incidental expenditure', in the range of €900,000 each. It is expected that there will be a slight under-spend and an addendum will be requested by NEEDS for a two-month project extension. The list of likely additional activities will include a Focal Point meeting, a meeting of experts, a review of the updated Observer Handbook, printing costs, etc.

Overall, the budget appears to have been sufficient for both NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2. However, it is not clear whether at the time of design of both projects the cost of envisaged activities and related outputs was properly calculated. To a certain extent, this may reflect the 'experimental' nature of NEEDS-1, in the absence of a similar EU project in the past. As regards NEEDS-2, the inclusion of a new component, Technical Assistance, may also have rendered precise budgeting by NEEDS more difficult.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, the NEEDS 'formula' has enabled the EC to have a fast response mechanism in terms of technical assistance provision to domestic observer groups in third countries and this should also be taken into account.

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<sup>10</sup> A 'flat rate' of three man-months per Technical Assistance project is indicated in the budget of the NEEDS-2 project.

#### 5.1.4 Duration of the NEEDS projects

NEEDS-1 was carried out over a period of three years.<sup>11</sup> On the contrary, NEEDS-2 has a two-year duration, which may have caused some difficulties, in conjunction with the envisaged outputs - numbers of trainees and DOFs and, in addition, the TA projects as a new component. The two-year duration of the NEEDS-2 project (minus the lead-in time), with all the events to be organised means in practice that an average of one event has had to be organised every month. It is worth mentioning that in NEEDS-1 the project team had to organise 16 events (11 seminars for EU observers and five DOFs) over a three-year period, whereas in NEEDS-2 the respective outputs are 21 events (15 seminars for EU observers and 6 DOFs). While the NEEDS-2 team has largely been successful in delivering, the two-year duration has also brought about certain strain in operational terms. The EC has indicated that, if NEEDS still has outstanding work at the end of the project (end of August 2007), a continued time period of NEEDS activities would be considered.

## 5.2 Training of EU observers

### 5.2.1 Organisation of NEEDS seminars

The organisation of NEEDS seminars for EU observers has been largely efficient. 82.8% of the respondents state that the information provided prior to seminars has been adequate, though considerably less (60.9%) consider venues and logistics one of the positive aspects of the training courses (see Annex 3.2.). NEEDS staff have rightly chosen to organise seminars in a number of locations in the EU in order to (i) efficiently use project resources; (ii) utilise the capacity of various Member States, particularly in an enlarged EU. Other issues presented below call for a more extensive discussion.

### 5.2.2 Trainees' selection process

It is hardly an overstatement to say that this is a core aspect of the NEEDS programme. Figuratively speaking, EOMs would not be reliable 'armies' without properly trained 'soldiers'. However, this particular issue is a cause for concern. The most prominent characteristic of the selection process of NEEDS trainees at this stage is the lack of consistent procedures, which has been highlighted on a number of occasions but has yet to be properly addressed. While this fact does not relate exclusively to NEEDS, it can have repercussions on the quality of NEEDS seminars and, subsequently, the performance of EOMs. This, in turn, may affect the effectiveness of the programme and its entire impact.

Part of the explanation relates to institutional aspects. Given the number of Member States which has risen dramatically from 15 to 27 since 2004, the degree of institutional diversity has also risen accordingly.

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<sup>11</sup> Initially, NEEDS-1 was designed as a two-year project. Its duration was extended three times to reach eventually 36 months.

As regards the recruitment, training and selection of observers both for NEEDS training and EOMs, some Member States have delegated this function to specialised NGOs or consultancies, as is the case in the UK, Ireland, Sweden, Germany (as well as non-EU Norway), etc. Other Member States have retained this function as internal services within their Ministries (or Departments) of Foreign Affairs. Those Focal Points who are career diplomats frequently have to change their job which creates a continuity problem. In smaller Member States Focal Points are often called on to handle different dossiers at the same time, election observation accounting for a tiny share of their overall workload.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, there are considerably different levels of competition between prospective NEEDS trainees and EOM participants in different Member States. Some small Member States only have 30 to 40 observers on their national rosters (e.g. Cyprus), whereas the number of potential applicants for NEEDS seminars in large Member States is manifold (e.g. Germany has some 1,000 observers on its roster).

What further accentuates the problem, are the different selection procedures applied by Focal Points in different Member States.<sup>13</sup> In some Member States applicants for NEEDS seminars – and EOMs – are subjected to thorough examinations (including medical checks-ups and psychological tests), unlike other Member States where the qualifications of applicants seem to be barely checked at all.<sup>14</sup> Some Focal Points feel that candidates from their respective Member States are not accepted for NEEDS seminars (or EOMs) and that higher levels of transparency and ‘even-handedness’ should be ensured. It is also worrying that only 40.5% of the beneficiaries interviewed by the NET consider the selection procedures for NEEDS seminars (and, subsequently, for EOMs) ‘clear and consistent’, whereas 42.9% find them either ‘not clear’ or ‘clear but not consistently applied’ (see Annex 3.2.). At the same time, it should be noted that the evaluation covers the entire five-year period between 2002 and 2007, and the NET acknowledges that there have been significant improvements lately.

One of the implications of this lack of consistency is that, while EC officials have been pursuing a ‘fair share’ policy,<sup>15</sup> it has not always been easy for them to select appropriate applicants for training. For some seminars it has proven difficult to reach adequate numbers of suitably qualified persons<sup>16</sup> and this has manifested itself in a higher number of people appraised by NEEDS to be ‘requiring more experience’ than initially expected.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> In certain cases, no more than an estimated 5% to 10%.

<sup>13</sup> Selection criteria for participation in EOMs differ as well. For instance, six out of the current 27 EU Member States have posted their national selection criteria for participants in EOMs to the relevant AIDCO webpage.

<sup>14</sup> As recorded in the minutes of the Malta FP meeting: ‘Different situation from one country to another: some have their own roster, organise training, selections on the basis of talks, etc. Certain Member States put their trust in information given by their Observers in their CVs ; others, on the contrary, evaluate and check information and ask for certificates, including medical certificates.’

<sup>15</sup> Apart from trying to select the best possible applicants for seminars, EC officials (facilitated by NEEDS) have also achieved a very reasonable gender and nationality balance of the trainees. E.g. see Annex 2.4. on the breakdown of NEEDS-2 trainees.

<sup>16</sup> As was the case with a CT seminar to be held in Austria in October 2006, including Operations Experts, but there was only one suitable applicant.

<sup>17</sup> ‘NEEDS is continuing to stress to Focal Points the need to respect the stated criteria for participants for each seminar. This is vital to ensure the standards and suitability of the participants’. NEEDS-2 Year One Interim Report, p. 11.

It should also be noted that some 20% of the trainees initially invited to seminars are in the mean time selected for EOMs as well and, as a result, the EC has to select less qualified applicants for training.

So far, not all NEEDS trainees have been selected (or have been available) for EOMs; at the same time, not all participants in EOMs have attended NEEDS seminars or other related training courses. It is widely acknowledged that, with the growing number of EU EOMs per year the strain on Member States, which are the *par excellence* providers of observers, has been rising over the last several years. It should be noted that at present there is no estimate of the number and qualifications of observers needed for EU EOMs over the next years; nor is there any clear understanding of the potential collective pool of expertise in the 27 Member States. Therefore, the selection of trainees and EOM members as well as some sort of planning needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

### 5.2.3 NEEDS appraisal system

A system for the appraisal of NEEDS trainees is in place, with the evaluation criteria displayed on the NEEDS website (see Annex 3.3.) The criteria are considered by the NET largely reasonable and the procedure for the announcement of appraisals is fairly transparent, though it may not have been consistent enough at earlier stages of the NEEDS programme (notably, during NEEDS-1). The participants in NEEDS seminars are informed about the evaluation process at the time they are invited and are once again informed of the procedure at the beginning of each seminar. Approximately a week after the seminar, the NEEDS Training Coordinator sends the appraisal by e-mail to the respective participant and the document is attached to his/her CV on the AIDCO roster. NEEDS trainees have the chance to ask for clarifications and the Training Coordinator provides further details upon request; furthermore, the NEEDS trainees can challenge their individual appraisals by making a rebuttal comment.

It should be noted that only 46.9% of the respondents interviewed by the NET (from both NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2) find their appraisals produced by the NEEDS staff ‘accurate and objective’ (see Annex 3.2.).<sup>18</sup> This can be seen in the light of the increasing competition within an enlarged EU, as all the trainees wish to be ‘highly recommended’ in order to be selected for EU EOMs. The number of trainees who do not agree with their individual appraisal is higher among those who have attended LTO seminars. Arguably, the objective and accurate appraisal of LTOs is harder because of the size of their groups, up to 40 trainees at a time in NEEDS-2, which may not always allow for adequate evaluation of their personal qualifications. Furthermore, some NEEDS trainees state that they are not aware of their appraisals produced by the NEEDS project team, though this appears to be no longer the case, as there is a much closer linkage now between the NEEDS Training Coordinator, trainees, the AIDCO roster<sup>19</sup> and the Focal Points of Member States.

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<sup>18</sup> One of the respondents captures the view of many trainees: ‘As objective as possible, given the number of people attending the course and the limited time to appraise the participants. Inevitably, categorising people is simplistic, but I am not sure how this problem could be overcome. Not clear the extent to which these evaluations are taken into account for selection [for EOMs].’

<sup>19</sup> The AIDCO roster, including the individual appraisals of each NEEDS trainee, became fully operational in late 2006.

Moreover, the NET has recorded some views from trainees, such as:

- They are not always aware of the weight of that appraisal in view of their selection for EOMs;<sup>20</sup>;
- They have no knowledge of the selection criteria in other Member States, including an element of surprise when meeting trainees from other Member States.<sup>21</sup>;
- Some trainees, though not many, make the point that their performance during an indoors seminar is hard to evaluate objectively, whereas EOMs are the real test for skills and professionalism.

As for feedback on the quality of the NEEDS seminars by trainees, very few Member States seem to have set clear and formal procedures. Receiving feedback (reports or memos, in writing or informally) is a more or less institutionalised mechanism in most Member States as regards EOMs, but not NEEDS seminars (see Annexes 3.1. and 3.2.). Furthermore, feedback from NEEDS trainees is not being systematically processed by Member States, which also hinders possible improvements in the training process. It is true that most Focal Points have attended NEEDS seminars themselves and think highly of the programme. Nonetheless, this does not seem to justify the lack of procedures for a systematic feedback from NEEDS trainees.

#### 5.2.4 An integrated training approach needed

At present, there appears to be no integrated approach to the training of STOs, LTOs and CT members on an EU scale. The training of election observers resembles the educational system: a number of problems recorded in tertiary institutions (colleges and universities) can actually be traced back to primary and secondary educational institutions. Similarly, unless STOs are properly trained, their training is likely to pose increased difficulties for NEEDS during seminars for LTOs and CT members. Therefore, one has to view the training of EU election observers as a seamless process in its entirety. While NEEDS has played a major part in raising the professional standards of a large number of EU observers over the last five years, it cannot be the only tool for the training of observers needed for EU EOMS.

NEEDS has been providing training mostly to CT members and LTOs. There seems to be a growing understanding among Member States that they should undertake the training of STOs, whereas it has been agreed that the training effort of Member States should fall into their area of competence.<sup>22</sup> This fact has two implications:

- (i) Some Member States are more active than others by organising their national training seminars and that further accentuates the differences in terms of numbers and training levels of EU observers.<sup>23</sup>

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20 Less than 10% believe that these appraisals are taken into account for selection for EOMs (see Annex 3.2.).

21 An interviewee has stated to the NET: 'Prior to my participation in the [NEEDS] seminar, I thought that the procedure was conducted on the basis of certain criteria – i.e. educational/professional background, experience and so on. [However], when I met the other colleagues it became clear that was not the case'. Similar views are expressed by a number of NEEDS trainees.

22 As recorded in the minutes of the meeting between the EC and FPs of MSs in Malta, September 2006.

23 Also recorded in the minutes of the Malta meeting: 'Certain Member States underline the significant number of trained observers and consider [that they] have a sufficient reserve'.

(ii) While various MSs organise related courses, occasionally with NEEDS staff, these activities are not part and parcel of an integrated EU-wide programme.

Therefore, an idea to be considered would be that those Member States that do not have the capacity to train their STOs and LTOs at national level could take advantage of the above-mentioned training courses. One could well envisage ‘cluster’ training courses covering more than just the host Member States, i.e. with the participation of trainees from other Member States as well.

In fact, this is already happening and a number of examples illustrate possible linkages between NEEDS and national training courses for EU observers. For instance:

- MEMO 98 has co-organised, together with NEEDS, two training seminars for international observers in Bratislava in November 2004, both introductory courses for LTOs. Furthermore, the MFA of Slovakia is planning training seminars for future STOs that could be coordinated by MEMO 98;
- In 2006, the MFA of Ireland contracted ERIS to hold a seminar for 25 Irish STOs, though not strictly within the framework of NEEDS;
- Austria, Germany, Estonia, Lithuania and Malta (as well as Norway) have also held STO and LTO training courses, with the assistance of NEEDS project staff (though not under NEEDS auspices) and in the presence of EC officials. It is noted that trainees from Hungary have already benefited from the national training courses in Germany, whereas Lithuanian and Latvian observers have attended similar events in Estonia.

Two issues that need to be addressed in this respect are:

- (i) The full compatibility of national training courses with NEEDS methodology, and
- (ii) A spin-off effect benefiting all Member States, including those that do not have the capacity to host their own seminars.

Compatibility is not always ensured, as the organisers of national training courses often include broader aspects of democratisation and human rights in the training agenda. That, of course, would necessitate a much closer coordination between the Focal Points and cost-sharing arrangements between the Member States involved.

### 5.3 Domestic Observer Fora

In terms of efficiency, the NEEDS project staff have rightly chosen to ‘invest’ in and utilise existing regional networks (e.g. ANFREL in Asia, the Lima Accord or Transparency International in Latin America), respectively reinforcing those networks. This decision is sensible for the following reasons:

- Existing networks are living structures that do not have to be created ‘from scratch’;
- Regional networks of domestic observer groups have much better knowledge of local conditions and actors, including public authorities;
- DOF beneficiaries are stakeholders that remain in place after the DOFs are over and thus help disseminate the outputs on the ground.

What appears to call for some reflection is the extent, to which local and regional public authorities have been involved in the DOFs organised by NEEDS. The project staff highlights certain difficulties that they have encountered and admit that this objective has

not been adequately met: ‘NEEDS has managed to include some national authorities in the DOFs, but less so representatives of regional authorities.’<sup>24</sup> It is not clear whether these DOFs have in all cases reached out to small civil society organisations (CSOs) at local level, away from the capital cities of beneficiary countries. In addition, the NEEDS project staff may not have been sufficiently qualified to deal with all the DOFs, e.g. as regards knowledge of the specific regions or language skills.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, the sheer scale of this component and the number of activities carried out by NEEDS, nine DOFs to date and two more coming up, are a testament to a fairly high degree of efficiency displayed.

## 5.4 Technical Assistance projects

### 5.4.1 Technical Assistance project in Ecuador

This TA project was efficiently designed and successfully conducted with Participación Ciudadana, Ecuador. It was carried out in three phases, over a 17-week span of time. An expert from Osservatorio di Pavia visited Quito and carried out training for local media analysts. Subsequently, the Director of Participación Ciudadana visited Pavia for a training course which focused on different media monitoring techniques and the economical sustainability of media monitoring activities. The project also included support (‘tutoring’) during the election campaign period as all reports and statistics were scrutinised by experts from Pavia.

### 5.4.2 Technical Assistance project in Zambia

On the contrary, the TA project in Zambia has not been a success and can provide some useful lessons. NEEDS identified the project and experts were recruited from CeSID (Serbia) to help the local partner FODEP acquire expertise in Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT). FODEP requested financial assistance for equipment purchase which, however, was not within the contract agreement. FODEP were able to obtain equipment and had the field staff operating. However, the senior managers failed to give the necessary instruction for data collection and reporting. As a result, the local partner FODEP failed to produce a quick count on Election Day (28 September 2006). Therefore the data became ineffective, arriving well after Election Day and long after the departure of the CeSID expert.

The TA project in Zambia was suspended due to the lead local NGO demanding more money than initially agreed, despite the fact that there was a contract agreement spelling out the money allocation. If there is a lesson coming out of this experience, it may be that the credibility and operational capacity of local partners for TA projects need to be thoroughly ‘screened’ at the project identification stage; notably, some concerns were

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<sup>24</sup> NEEDS-2 Year One Interim Report, p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> For instance, not all the NEEDS staff who have attended DOFs are in command of French or Spanish or have relevant EOM experience in these regions.

already evident in the Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) report on Zambia.<sup>26</sup> In addition, a hands-on management (including a longer physical presence on the ground) will have to be envisaged and, therefore, sufficient resources will have to be allocated to TA projects, as pointed out by NEEDS.<sup>27</sup>

## 5.5 Assistance provided to the European Commission and Member States

### 5.5.1 Assistance provided to the EC and EOMs

The guidelines for EOMs and relevant templates delivered so far have been produced by experienced election observers, who have served on a number of missions. It has been the right approach taken by NEEDS to rely predominantly on practitioners and to draw on the ‘collective memory’ retained after a long list of EU EOMs over the last years. At the same time, the contribution of academic researchers (e.g. from Abo Akademi on electoral standards) has also been beneficial, in that it has provided the necessary scientific depth to the analysis.

A comment is due on the list of all these outputs delivered to the EC and increasingly being used by EOMs. While the delivery of such outputs is mentioned in the ToR of NEED-2, the precise list has emerged during the implementation period of the project through a process of updating. Notably, the outputs to be delivered to the EC by NEEDS are broadly defined as ‘templates and other necessary tools’.<sup>28</sup> Arguably, it might have helped NEEDS in terms of planning and timing of delivery, if these expected outputs had been clearly spelled out in the ToR of the second NEEDS project.<sup>29</sup> The on-going delivery of these outputs could have taken place earlier and could have benefited a number of EOMs already. At the same time, it may be that the ‘service contract’ logic of NEEDS-2 did not become sufficiently clear at the beginning of the project, partly because of an EC staff shortage in 2005 when the implementation period started.

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26 Pp. 4-5 of the report: ‘[The local partners] were less clear on how NEEDS could assist them. Thus it was less evident that the NEEDS support was advisable. Although the three other organisations had highlighted the need for longer term observation and had emphasised areas where they felt their technical expertise could be best deployed, funds were not available to cover longer term observation and shorter term observation of all polling stations on the day of the elections. While all four organisations understood that funds were finite they were not so certain that the decision to only observe polling day was appropriate given their diagnosis of the electoral process and environment. Notwithstanding these concerns all four were willing to form a loose network, agree a common deployment plan and some form of agreed statement on polling. However all three were still unclear how that deployment plan would be agreed (by province, by constituency, by polling station?) and how they would share information...’.

27 NEEDS Report on Technical Assistance to FODEP, Zambia, p. 3.

28 The precise wording in the ToR of NEEDS-2, 4.2., Point 5 (in French) is: ‘Création et mise à jour de l’ensemble de «templates» et autres outils nécessaires aux Missions d’observation électorale de l’Union européenne: grilles d’observation, modèles de rapport, listes de contact, des liens utiles pour les missions, compendium.’

29 Another example is the issue of printing the updated Handbook on EU EOMs. It has only recently been decided that NEEDS will edit and print out the English edition, whereas the EC will take care of the translation and printing of the French and Spanish versions of the Handbook.

### 5.5.2 Assistance to Member States

Communication with Focal Points has been effected mostly through the NEEDS Training Coordinator who is seen by most NET interlocutors from Member States as being very efficient and reliable. NEEDS has been regularly in touch with Focal Points on issues pertaining to forthcoming training seminars, trainee appraisals, FP meetings, etc. 81.3% of the Focal Points interviewed by the NET state that they would even like to see a more intensive flow of information (see Annex 3.1.).



## 6 Effectiveness

### 6.1 Training of EU observers

The overall effectiveness of NEEDS training provided to EU observers deserves to be highlighted and commended. The main outputs, such as seminars and numbers of trainees, are being delivered as envisaged and in certain cases exceed the initial targets (See Annex 2.9.). Most trainees display high levels of satisfaction and state that they have definitely benefited from attending these seminars. At the same time, some aspects of this component call for reflection with a view to future challenges. A more detailed analysis of the specific elements of NEEDS training follows.

#### 6.1.1 Training curriculum

The training curriculum has developed significantly since the beginning of the NEEDS-1 project, in the sense that it has become more comprehensive and yet more specific at the same time. This has been achieved through:

- The split of LTO trainees into categories of ‘experienced’ or ‘less experienced’ ones was introduced at the beginning of NEEDS-2. In the case of LTOs, there has been – rightly so – a distinction between a more specific training curriculum for ‘experienced’ observers and a more general one for ‘less experienced’ LTOs. However, it is less clear why there should be such a distinction for media analysts, while there is no such categorisation for other CT positions.<sup>30</sup>;
- A certain degree of ‘specialisation’ of the NEEDS partners in specific seminars that they host (e.g. Abo Akademi for Legal/Election Experts and ASPR for LTO Coordinators as well as for Security and Operations Experts);
- An on-going process of standardisation of templates (e.g. observer sheets, weekly report forms, preliminary statements and final reports) and guidelines (e.g. on briefing and de-briefing);
- The increasing use of ‘best practice’ examples in the training process, drawn from the mission experience of NEEDS trainers;
- The last category of issues comes prominent in the feedback provided by NEEDS trainees to the NET: 45.3% of the respondents suggest that more cases of best practice should be presented during the seminars (see Annex 3.2.).

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30 In addition, NEEDS-1 seminars for ‘beginner’ media analysts were unnecessarily long.

At the same time, some areas of expertise may have to be covered in a more targeted way in the future, though they are already being addressed during the last NEEDS-2 seminars. The list of these areas includes:

- Institutional issues, such as EU structures (institutions, tasks and responsibilities) and forms of interaction between EU EOMs and other electoral stakeholders, such as electoral management bodies (EMBs), political parties, other international and domestic observer groups, Member State embassies, local and international media, etc. Also, the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation should be presented in detail to trainees;
- Electoral issues, e.g. the participation of female voters and ethnic minorities, the weight of voter registration in the broad electoral cycle, the typology of fraud, electronic voting<sup>31</sup> and other technological developments<sup>32</sup>, observation of and reporting on election campaign activities, campaign spending, etc. It is noted that 51.6% of the respondents expect additional areas of expertise to be covered during the seminars and, in fact, this is the best scoring recommendation (see Annex 3.2.);
- Electoral assistance, i.e. formulation of well-defined and ‘implementable’ recommendations for the provision of follow-up technical assistance to national electoral authorities, domestic observer groups and other stakeholders. Relevant issues could be included in the training curriculum for Election and Legal Experts;
- Daily mission work, such as a ‘translation’ of the Code of Conduct and an emphasis on the necessary professional attitude of all observers through a list of examples, types of security challenges, hotspot identification and recognition, interviewing techniques during meetings with local interlocutors, teamwork, recruitment and training of local staff, etc.;
- Language-specific issues, in view of EOM deployment to areas with a particular linguistic profile, such as French-, Spanish- and possibly Portuguese-speaking countries. It would be particularly useful if an acceptable ‘electoral and social phraseology’ in the above languages was highlighted during the seminars;
- Culture-specific issues, such as religious sensitivities, an acceptable dress code for observers, appropriate behaviour and respect for local habits, awareness of the weight of specific social structures (e.g. families, clans and tribes), etc.

Another challenge lying ahead arises from the ever-growing requirements for Security Experts. Security awareness has always been a significant part of NEEDS training, as an EU imperative.<sup>33</sup> However, so far seminars for Security Experts have followed more or less the same ‘indoors’ format as the training courses for any other CT members. In the future, relevant training for Security (and possibly Operations) Experts should become more practical, simulation-oriented and more closely related to the use of communication equipment. There may already be some examples available: an interesting development have been the two pre-departure seminars in Pisa held for the CT members and LTOs before the two missions to Afghanistan in 2004 and 2005, with a strong component on military-civilian co-operation.

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31 E-voting was first included in the agenda of the Bratislava DOF in December 2006. It was then introduced in the seminar training curriculum for Election and Legal Experts in Abo in March 2007.

32 For instance, text messaging or Short Message Service (SMS) is becoming a popular form of election campaigning in a number of countries worldwide.

33 While a number of EU observers regularly take part in ODIHR election observation missions, it should be noted that generally the EU has been observing elections in more challenging environments.

Although these seminars were not within the NEEDS work programme (they were identified as necessary by the ExMs to Afghanistan), it is worth reflecting whether a similar pattern could be included in the future training curriculum for Security (and Operations) Experts.

In general, there appears to be an increasing realisation of the importance of CT members as compared to LTOs. This applies in particular to Deputy Chief Observers (DCOs) who are called on to shoulder a large amount of responsibility and managerial workload at the same time. It has been acknowledged<sup>34</sup> that DCOs need more comprehensive training due to their demanding role, e.g. in terms of administrative work, crisis management or handling delicate political, diplomatic and electoral issues, etc. This is why the DCO training curriculum should help them improve their skills in assessing observation information, the use of international electoral standards, reporting formats, human resource management and, of course, security issues.

It should also be kept in mind that NEEDS seminars cannot but provide ‘blanket’ training, no matter how specific it is. Any seminar of this type can only address some ‘horizontal’ issues, which will then be illustrated by examples. It cannot possibly cover the local peculiarities of all the countries observed by EU EOMs. What remains crucial in view of EOMs is the specific briefing that LTOs and STOs are given by CT members in country. This comes to stress the importance of presentation skills that should be acquired by DCOs and CT members during NEEDS seminars.<sup>35</sup>

### 6.1.2 Training methodology

The training methodology of NEEDS has evolved considerably throughout the ‘life cycle’ of the programme. From a much more academic format at the earlier stages of NEEDS-1 it has now included a number of interaction-based techniques, e.g. simulation and role plays. That allows for an increased amount of targeted skill development, such as conducting meetings, dealing with the media, teamwork, communication in a multi-cultural environment, etc. On the other hand, this requires small groups of trainees which has not always been the case, particularly with LTOs.

Consideration should be given to some issues which have not yet been adequately addressed by the NEEDS programme. One of them relates to the language balance of NEEDS training, a theme that has been recurring throughout the entire evaluation mission. In most Member States command of English comes first among observers, followed by command of French and Spanish. However, one cannot neglect the fact that nearly one-third of EU EOMs are deployed to French-speaking countries and another one-third to Spanish-speaking ones. 43.8% of the Focal Points interviewed by the NET wish to see a better language balance in the training of EU observers, though the respective share among trainees slips to 21.9% (see Annexes 3.1. and 3.2.). Moreover, as long as NEEDS training has so far been conducted in English, this may have prevented a number of potential French- and Spanish-speaking trainees from attending NEEDS seminars. What could be considered for the future are some French- and Spanish-

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<sup>34</sup> See conclusions of the DCO workshop held in Brussels in November 2006.

<sup>35</sup> This item has recently been included in the NEEDS training curriculum.

speaking seminars or at least certain sessions, which has already been applied experimentally (in Abo in March 2007). At the same time, a small number of training sessions cannot ensure adequate levels of linguistic proficiency of the trainees, unless they are indeed in solid command of the languages in question and are properly selected for participation in the seminars.

Another possibility to be considered for the future is the recruitment of highly qualified trainers and election experts from third countries, e.g. from Asia, Africa or Latin America. In the case of French-, Spanish- or Portuguese-speakers, their involvement will help address the ‘language’ issue, but will also bring in a cultural added value. They could be recruited for specific sessions, so that their lack of EOM experience does not affect the overall quality of the training.

Furthermore, one should view NEEDS seminars in their true dimension. Firstly, while they have been highly successful and beneficial, they provide some necessary technical skills, which could then be useful to EOMs thanks to the will and professional attitude of EU observers themselves; mere participation in seminars does not mean much unless trainees want to keep evolving. Secondly, the ever-changing requirements posed by EOMs cannot possibly be captured by NEEDS in their entirety, unless there is a solid continual training component built into the training system. Part of the answer may be in the potential of e-learning.

It should be noted that so far e-learning has not been a substantial component of NEEDS training. It is felt by the majority of interlocutors interviewed by the NET that e-learning cannot replace the direct contact and interaction offered by NEEDS seminars. However, despite its inherent limitations, e-learning could be helpful for the provision of background information, possibly to STOs or less experienced LTOs. It is worth reflecting on the potential of relevant facilities, e.g. starting from the NEEDS website, which could be more curriculum-based, more user-friendly and thus more conducive to activities related to e-learning. For instance, the NEEDS website could be better formatted and its content could be substantially improved through the addition of ‘best practice’ cases. Of course, any e-learning device will have to be thoroughly tested out before put to use.

### 6.1.3 Training material

The issue of training material calls for some discussion, as established by the NET. According to trainees interviewed during the evaluation, the share of those who consider training material a positive aspect of NEEDS seminars does not exceed 54.7% (see Annex 3.2.), the lowest scoring of the four main parameters examined, the others being the curriculum, trainers and venue/logistics. This may be attributed to the fact that NEEDS has not yet obtained its own and fully equipped ‘library’. While some of the main reference tools are available and others are currently being updated, in certain cases NEEDS has been using ODIHR material<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> E.g. The OSCE/ODIHR Handbook for Monitoring Women’s Participation in Elections.

A number of NET interlocutors have pointed out that they would find useful a CD Rom Compendium<sup>37</sup>, updated bibliography and a glossary of terms. Another issue raised by some NEEDS trainees and Focal Points relates to the majority of reference tools being only available in English. The Handbook for EU EOMs produced in three languages is an exception rather than the rule.

#### 6.1.4 Quality of trainers

NEEDS recruits experts with extensive field experience from EU EOM Core Teams and has by now developed an extensive human resource network among such experts. Of the four parameters of the NEEDS seminars examined by the NET, the quality of trainers is the best scoring aspect, at 81.3% (see Annex 3.2.). On the other hand, a number of respondents point out in their interviews with the evaluation team that the quality of trainers varies considerably. Therefore, a noble challenge for NEEDS staff to address in the future will be to live up to the high expectations of trainees, especially after the departure of the former Project Director and lead trainer, Mr Stevens.

Another positive point about NEEDS seminars is the strong component of transparency in the evaluation of trainers by trainees. After each seminar, relevant data are presented on the NEEDS website, including judgments of the trainees about individual trainers. This feedback is regularly discussed by NEEDS staff and is then taken into account in view of follow-up seminars.

## 6.2 Domestic Observer Fora

The NET has not been able to contact all the 200-odd beneficiaries of DOFs organised by NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2. However, the evaluation team has established that the majority of DOF beneficiaries interviewed appreciate the opportunity to meet their counterparts, mostly with a view to networking prospects. They have indeed become familiar with techniques and possible strategies through the regional and interregional exchange of experience provided, but the overarching factor determining their action remains the local context in their respective countries. Experience has shown that a broad range of topics to be discussed at DOFs may be less effective, and therefore a DOF agenda should focus on a smaller number of specific themes (e.g. the application of election observation methodology, reporting and use of international standards for genuinely democratic elections). While no side-effects have been recorded during the evaluation, the expectations from this component may have been met only to a certain extent. As regards the contribution of DOFs to the overall EIDHR objectives, the impression of the NET is that at this stage it remains somewhat limited.

A major factor to be taken into account is the role of the external environment (political, economic, cultural, security, etc.) in regions targeted by NEEDS. Relevant parameters vary considerably from region to region and even from country to country. It is difficult, therefore, to identify common denominators that could apply to regions as wide-spread as

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<sup>37</sup> This tool was first handed out to trainees during the Abo seminar for Legal and Election Experts in March, 2007.

Asia, Africa and Latin America. One should not expect Yemen to be similar to Morocco (both represented at the Casablanca DOF) only because of a common religion and language; in terms of external environment, Yemen is much closer to East Africa or certain areas of South Asia than to Morocco. Similarly, there are many differences between, e.g. Sri Lanka and South Korea in Asia or between Argentina and El Salvador in Latin America. This is why it is suggested that the next project should consider 'subregional' DOFs, rather than the current regional ones.

In terms of possible follow-up programming on the part of EC services, this could only be achieved if DOFs are linked to the formulation of policy proposals and project identification, and if their composition is marked by a higher degree of coherence. As NEEDS points out, due to the wide range of countries represented in DOFs it has been hard to develop specific targeted proposals.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, DOF participants welcome any opportunities for funding either from the EU or other sources, such as the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), etc.

Another issue to be taken into account is the fact that domestic observers groups often receive bilateral funding from EU embassies and there seems to be little coordination of this form of assistance. Not all DOF beneficiaries are aware of the opportunities provided by EIDHR, which stresses the necessity for an awareness campaign to be considered in the future.

### 6.3 Technical Assistance projects

The TA project in Ecuador appears to be highly effective, leading to a measurable contribution of NEEDS to the democratisation process in the targeted country. The performance of the beneficiary organisation during the parliamentary elections in November 2006 (see Annex 2.6.) clearly illustrates the capacity-building effect of the exercise, taking into account that Participación Ciudadana produced well-structured and credible media monitoring reports. The mix of training and distance support ('tutoring') as well as the public communication component (a roundtable with media representatives) successfully applied in this project should definitely be considered for replication in related activities in the future.

The effectiveness of the TA in Zambia cannot be evaluated, due to its suspension.

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<sup>38</sup> NEEDS-2 Year One Interim Report, p. 11.

## 6.4 Assistance provided to the European Commission and Member States

### 6.4.1 Assistance provided to the EC and EU EOMs

Some guidelines and templates for use by EOMs have been provided for EC comment, and others will be delivered shortly. Upon approval these outputs will be made available for public use through the main NEEDS website. The outputs delivered or in the process of being delivered (see Annex 2.8.)<sup>39</sup> are a substantial contribution to the success of the NEEDS programme. What has been produced so far is of a very high quality and is definitely expected to improve the performance of missions in the future.

The principal effects of the templates can be listed as follows:

- A higher degree of standardisation of EU EOM reports (e.g. STO, LTO and CT reports, preliminary statements and final reports), thus contributing to a more consistent election observation methodology and increased credibility. These outputs are largely based on ‘best practice’ accumulated by EU EOMs so far. No doubt, these outputs will contribute to a higher degree of uniformity of EU EOM reports, while at the same time to in-depth analysis and presentation of findings. These outputs will place the EU in the leading position in the world and could therefore be made available to other international and domestic groups for their use in the future;
- The creation of a library of models of good statements and the development of an ‘EU style’, with a standard format and language, necessary to increase consistency and recognition.<sup>40</sup>

Guidelines produced by NEEDS are expected to lead to tangible improvement in the overall performance of EOMs, mostly as regards Core Team members, but the beneficial effect will spread out through the entire mission. In particular:

- The CT Terms of Reference (ToR), updated by the European Commission, are intended to further specify the tasks of Core Team members and thus increase the efficiency of their work. The draft ToR were discussed by NEEDS experts during the Abo seminar in March 2007 and were to be delivered to the European Commission shortly afterwards; and
- The guidelines on LTO/STO deployment plans, together with a more systematic use of deployment charts and maps, are expected to contribute to both increased security and the optimisation of election observation.

However, what may need to be considered is the development of some CT situation-based ‘rules and procedures’. Terms of Reference are a ‘static’ description of duties, whereas the dynamic nature of interaction can only be captured through a list of challenges that CT members are likely to face on missions. While the CT Terms of Reference spell out who is doing what under normal circumstances, it is less clear who is doing what – and who takes the lead – in extraordinary situations (e.g. security crises). It is, therefore, suggested that the development of a set of ‘standard operating procedures’ (SOPs) be considered in the future project.

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<sup>39</sup> Available on a hidden part of the NEEDS website: <http://www.needs-network.org/guide/Index.html>.

<sup>40</sup> This is one of the recommendations formulated during the DCO seminar held Brussels in November 2006.

A third category of highly needed outputs that are already being delivered by NEEDS includes reference tools, such as:

- An updated version of Benchmarks for Electoral Standards. A new chapter in this book is being introduced in order to help raise the quality of EU EOM reports and statements. The main thrust of the updating is the ‘translation’ of international electoral standards through ‘best practice’ examples; and
- Furthermore, the Handbook for EU EOMs is also being updated, which will help observers familiarise themselves with changing realities in election administration and observation.

#### 6.4.2 Assistance provided to Member States

Assistance provided by NEEDS to the Focal Points has been very effective during NEEDS-2, when it appeared as an additional activity. Apart from the regular provision of information by the Training Coordinator, Focal Points have also benefited significantly from their participation in seminars and FP meetings. The list of topics discussed by FPs in this exchange normally includes:

- EU policy on election observation;
- Election observation methodology;
- Professional qualifications of election observers;
- Security and health requirements for election observers; and
- Recruitment and evaluation of election observers.

Annual FP meetings are appreciated by all the beneficiaries (at a remarkable 100%, see Annex 3.1.) as a first-class opportunity for them to meet counterparts, and to raise issues with NEEDS and the European Commission. The FP meeting that took place in Malta in 2006 is seen as the best ever held, thanks to the frank and open exchange of views which has helped all parties come closer to a common understanding of the intricacies of EU EOMs and training needed. Most FPs regard these annual meetings as a first step towards the creation of a network for training<sup>41</sup>, information exchange, interaction and approximation of views of the Member States as well as for increased consistency of the observer selection and evaluation system.

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<sup>41</sup> Some Focal Points think that these events should be organised twice a year – (i) as training seminars for FPs and (ii) as network meetings.

## 7 Impact

The impact of NEEDS activities may require a longer period of time (e.g. NEEDS-2 is still an on-going project), but at this stage the conclusions are largely positive. It is safe to assume that NEEDS training has contributed to the image of EU EOMs as professional and credible observer groups, thus vindicating the choice of the EU election observation policy as a high priority.

### 7.1 Training of EU observers

The short-term impact of the programme training is already visible, as recorded by the NET on the basis of interviews with EU observers who have attended NEEDS seminars. The long-term impact is harder to assess, as mission experience tends to overshadow the input of the seminar training *per se*. Thus, NET interlocutors who have benefited from NEEDS training some time ago state that they do not recall all the details about the seminars. An interesting tool developed by the project team, at the initiative of the Training Coordinator, is an evaluation carried out several months or a year after NEEDS seminars, thus allowing for some post-seminar impact assessment. A post-seminar evaluation was carried out for the LTO seminar held in Tallinn in November 2005). A questionnaire was sent out to the participants with questions about the quality of the training in relation to their EOM experience after the seminar. It is worth developing this tool more systematically in the future and including it in the self-evaluation methodology of the next project.

Another short-term impact is the fact that many NEEDS trainees serve as observers on ODIHR missions and thus disseminate the skills acquired through the training received. A possible mid-term impact is to be seen in the inclusion of NEEDS curriculum items in the training programmes of a number of Member States, often with the participation of ODIHR trainers and mission members. It would be safe to assume that NEEDS has contributed to – and will continue to influence – a pan-European process of observer training and relevant standard-setting.

### 7.2 Domestic Observer Fora

The impact of NEEDS on DOF beneficiaries and follow-up results require some time to be fully assessed. At this stage, NEEDS is more of a facilitator and a catalyst than a direct provider or services: this means that the DOF benefits need to be nurtured and further utilised by DOF beneficiaries themselves. One encouraging indication of a positive NEEDS impact appears to be the Islah network of domestic observer groups, active in the

Middle East and the Mediterranean. A NET interlocutor interviewed during the evaluation states that the network has grown since the Amman DOF (December 2004) and is now coordinating several regional projects. In other cases, DOF beneficiaries may not be in need of this type of facilitation, as they are already part of far-flung networks. For example, most of the participants in the Buenos Aires DOF belong to members of the Acuerdo de Lima (Lima Accord) and Transparencia Internacional (TI) networks and have taken part in many local, regional and international fora.<sup>42</sup>

If NEEDS impact is to be maximised, it would be a good idea for other EIDHR instruments to follow-up on DOFs which, of course, would require close coordination between relevant EC services. The NET has recorded one CSO benefiting from Casablanca DOF (March 2007) which has already received funding from EIDHR, Lot 3.<sup>43</sup> It does not seem that there has been any coordination between the two financial instruments in this particular case.

One of the ideas generated by the NEEDS-2 (without being included in the ToR of the project) team has been the launch a Global Observer Forum, with a presentation of links to domestic observers groups throughout the world. The initial idea was that the website should serve as a 'repository' for existing material for domestic observers and also as a networking tool, whereby NEEDS can collect contacts for domestic observers around the world, starting with DOF beneficiaries. The concept is innovative and deserves to become a full-fledged project activity in the future.

As regards the overall EU visibility vis-à-vis the general public and domestic observer groups in third countries, the NET finds that this could be achieved through the strong commitment of EC Delegations to DOFs. NEEDS could presumably create a momentum by facilitating DOFs, which will however need to be followed up on by EC Delegations in respective countries.

### 7.3 Technical Assistance projects

The NET has not been able to obtain a final report on the TA project carried out in Ecuador, one covering Phase 3 as well. The impact of the TA project in Zambia cannot be evaluated, though some follow-up action is being considered by the European Commission. In both cases, a review of impact cannot take place at this stage and a relevant exercise may have to be considered during the next project.

However, drawing some lessons from the TA project carried out in Ecuador, it will be useful for future projects to retain the public communication component as well, in order to ensure adequate media coverage and awareness of the EU involvement in the democratisation process.

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<sup>42</sup> For instance, some of them will be attending a forum held by Transparency International in Madrid in April 2007.

<sup>43</sup> *Forum des Alternatives Maroc (FMAS)* receives funds for the European Union for the project 'Pour une observation citoyenne des élections' (some 200,000 euros, i.e. approximately 80% of the overall budget).

## 7.4 Assistance provided to the European Commission and Member States

### 7.4.1 Assistance to the European Commission and EOMs

Until recently, there has been a visible lack of consistency in EOM analysis and reporting. Thanks to NEEDS, the issue is already being addressed. This strand of the NEEDS programme is expected to have a significant and tangible impact, though this may require a span of several months at least. Presumably, towards the end of 2007, after the first EOMs have tested the NEEDS outputs (e.g. guidelines and templates) some initial signs of this impact will become discernible. The EU EOMs to Timor Leste and Nigeria are expected to be the first missions that will make use of these outputs.

As regards the visibility of NEEDS, it has developed a website<sup>44</sup> which is increasingly turning into one of the programme's principal assets. The website appeared towards the end of the NEEDS-1 project, but it clearly became a professional tool during NEEDS-2. It is being used as part of the project's communication strategy, providing access to information and material on forthcoming and previous seminars, as well as hosting capacity-building materials for observers.

The NEEDS website certainly provides adequate information to potential participants in forthcoming seminars about the training curriculum and application procedures. Also, it provides links to related EU websites and EU EOMs reports, though the EC involvement in the NEEDS programme is less evident. The website content is currently incomplete as regards the TA component and, in part, the Global Domestic Forum initiative. It should also be noted that, while the website is regularly visited by EU observers interested in NEEDS training, domestic observers in third countries seem to be using it to a much lesser extent. In addition, the NEEDS team could have considered installing a 'counter' device which would have allowed for some feedback on the attractiveness of the website and the most visited pages.

An interesting question to be addressed is whether the label 'NEEDS' should be retained in the future project. The NEEDS project is increasingly well-known among practitioners, thus raising the profile of the EU and enlarging the prospective expertise resource base. Another way forward would be to consider a new brand name or acronym which would more accurately reflect the election-related nature of the programme and would clearly refer to the EU.

### 7.4.2 Assistance to Member States

As regards the assistance provided to the Focal Points of Member States, the certainly rely on NEEDS. Although the degree of expectations varies, most of them consider the programme an important vehicle for the provision of highly needed methodological assistance in terms of observer training, EU EOM standardisation and closer co-operation between Member States on related issues.

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<sup>44</sup> [www.needs-network.org](http://www.needs-network.org).

The short-term impact of NEEDS is already visible, as illustrated by the positive comments on the Malta FP meeting in 2006. The view of the NET is that, if the impact of relevant projects on Member States is to be maximised, a stronger inter-MS consultation and approximation mechanism should be envisaged in the future.

## 8 Sustainability

### 8.1 Training of EU observers

The main findings coming out of the evaluation are as follows:

- In terms of policy sustainability, all the Member States and the European Commission have expressed their support for the extension of the programme beyond 2007. In addition, the success and visibility of the EU election observation policy (of which this training effort is part and parcel), further guarantee the sustainability of the programme;
- The financial sustainability of EC-backed training activities appears to be assured, thanks to EIDHR funding. Non-EU Member States, such as Norway and Switzerland<sup>45</sup>, could very well be part of the programme as long as relevant financial provisions are duly included. At the same time, an EC-backed programme may not achieve to meet the demand for observer training in the EU and commonalities will have to be sought with national training programmes. The potential of continual training and e-learning should be seriously considered as complementary components of the future training effort; and
- The institutional sustainability is enhanced by the dynamic already created by NEEDS, but it will need to be further buttressed through reasonable and operationally sound arrangements as to the structure and outreach of the responsible training institution.

### 8.2 Domestic Observer Fora

The NET considers that:

- The policy sustainability of this component will be strengthened if it is linked more closely to the formulation of policy proposals and TA project identification;
- The financial sustainability of the DOF component will clearly depend on the political will of the European Commission and Member States (through their embassies in recipient countries); and
- The institutional sustainability of DOFs will be enhanced if ‘subregional’ events are prioritised, so that a higher degree of coherence is ensured as to membership and outputs.

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<sup>45</sup> Recently some interest has been displayed by Swiss authorities and the first participant from Switzerland will take part in the upcoming seminar in Ljubljana (April 2007).

### 8.3 Technical Assistance projects

It is suggested that that:

- The policy sustainability of technical assistance is underpinned by its high political relevance, though the optimal financial and institutional arrangements will need to be considered;
- In terms of financial sustainability, the volatile external environment in many third countries targeted by EIDHR renders them difficult partners. This is why TA assistance projects require sufficient funds and human resources that will have to be available over a longer period of time in view of disbursement whenever possible. Furthermore, closer linkages will be needed between EIDHR and Member States that provide bilateral funding to domestic observer groups in recipient countries; and
- As for the institutional sustainability of this component, the next project could once again be the ‘vehicle’ for a very meaningful intervention, provided there is a high level of coordination between all relevant EC services, both in Brussels and third countries.

### 8.4 Assistance provided to the European Commission and Member States

It is pointed out that:

- In terms of policy sustainability, the NET stresses the strong support expressed by all the Member States for the continuation of the current project beyond 2007;
- The financial sustainability of this component is considered assured, provided there is no substantial change in the list of current activities (methodological assistance, FP meetings, networking, etc.); and
- The current *modus operandi* appears to be adequate to ensure the institutional sustainability of assistance provision to the European Commission and Member States. It would, however, be worth developing a more tightly knit network of Focal Points, so that the methodological tools are fully utilised by beneficiaries.

## 9 Conclusions

### 9.1 Relevance

- NEEDS is a unique programme worldwide, due to its ambitious goals, scale and direct link to the highly visible election observation policy of the EU. The relevance of the NEEDS projects has kept evolving over eight years and throughout the ‘life cycle’ from the launch of the EU EOP in 1999 to the end of NEEDS-2 later in 2007. The four objectives are largely relevant *per se*, though at this stage they remain to a large extent ‘parallel’ components and need to be integrated into a tightly knit concept through closer linkages to each other;
- The need for EU observer training is underpinned by the ever-increasing demand for EU EOMs (currently, at 12 to 14 EOMs deployed on an annual basis); hence the indisputable relevance of this objective of the NEEDS projects. So far, the emphasis has been on LTOs, whereas the training of DCOs and Core Team members will have to be prioritised in the future. Apart from ‘quantitative’ measurements, election observation is becoming an increasingly demanding exercise in terms of required expertise as well, related to technological developments (e.g. e-voting or telecommunication equipment), mission management, more effective application of international electoral standards, security challenges, EU visibility, etc.;
- As regards the relevance of Domestic Observer Fora, this component is a meaningful long-term ‘investment’ in domestic observation as a deterrent against electoral fraud and a powerful democratisation tool. In principle, the DOFs have covered highly relevant issues, even though the regional approach to DOFs does not always take into consideration the context at sub-regional or local level. The evaluation team finds that this component of the NEEDS programme could have been even more relevant, if regional peculiarities and specific needs of DOF beneficiaries had been taken into consideration in a more targeted way. While one cannot underestimate the importance of interregional exchange of expertise and best practice disseminated through this component, the peculiarities and specific needs of local DOGs will have to be prioritised in the future;
- The idea behind the Technical Assistance projects that have been included in NEEDS-2 is that they could be used as tools in countries not observed by the EU and to the extent that some meaningful assistance could be provided swiftly and in a targeted way to specific domestic observer groups. In principle, the rationale is fully justified, even if in practice the implementation of one of the two projects has proven problematic and one more project is yet to be identified. This component is marked by a high degree of flexibility, which is needed due to often unpredictable circumstances in the target areas;
- The assistance provided to the EC with regard to EOMs relates to the requirement for a consistent election observation methodology which draws on accumulated

experience. It is indeed highly relevant for the EU to take stock of its substantial expertise and best practice accumulated so far. The production of guidelines and templates based on this ‘collective wisdom’ is meant to help consolidate and standardise EOM methodology and outputs, which have until recently been of varying quality; and

- The support provided to the Focal Points of Member States, which are the providers of EOM observers, is necessitated by the sheer size of a 27-member EU. The recent enlargement has underlined the need for a closer coordination between the Member States, which is why regular communication between NEEDS-2 and all the Focal Points is a very relevant novelty of the project. Last but not least, making the best of the huge available resources in the 27 Member States is indeed of vital importance.

## 9.2 Efficiency

- The network structure of NEEDS has been chosen on the basis of two main operational and political considerations. Firstly, it was rightly deemed necessary for NEEDS to draw on a large pool of expertise from specialised bodies that cover a range of relevant topics. Secondly, NEEDS is a pan-European effort aiming at the enforcement of an EU policy, and the decision for the creation of a network of partners from various parts of Europe is quite justified;
- The composition of the network has remained largely the same in both NEEDS projects, with a strong lead partner and five more institutions. At the same time, the possible overlap in NEEDS-2 between two similar institutions, both focusing on media, has not been sufficiently clarified. Decision-making procedures have somewhat changed from NEEDS-1 to NEEDS-2, the main idea being the need for swift action, though the evaluation team recorded an element of disagreement among the partners on certain issues. The reporting system has also been reasonable and efficient. On the whole, it could be said that the existing set-up of the NEEDS network is successful, though it could be further improved – e.g. through avoidance of overlaps in the expertise of network members and the inclusion of partners specialising in gender and minority issues;
- The financial management of the NEEDS programme has not been assessed within the framework of this assignment. However, the evaluation team finds the distribution of main types of expenditure in line with what is predominantly a training programme. The resources allocated to both NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2 seem to have been sufficient, though mostly for the training of EU observers and less so for other components, e.g. in the case of Technical Assistance projects. The two-year duration of NEEDS-2, in conjunction with the expected outputs (e.g. an average of one event every month), may have to be revisited;
- The trainees’ selection process certainly is a core aspect of the NEEDS programme which, however, is a cause for concern. Part of the explanation relates to the number of Member States in the recently enlarged EU and the degree of institutional diversity; secondly, there are considerably different levels of competition between prospective NEEDS trainees and EOM participants in different Member States; thirdly, there are different selection criteria applied by Focal Points in different Member States. As a result, while NEEDS and the EC have been pursuing a ‘fair share’ policy, it has not always been easy for them to select appropriate applicants.

Therefore, a more consistent process of selection of trainees (and EOM members) needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency;

- A system for the appraisal of NEEDS trainees is in place, with reasonable evaluation criteria and a fairly transparent procedure for the announcement of appraisals, though this does not seem to have been the case at earlier stages of the NEEDS programme. While the appraisal procedures have been improving, they have caused some dissatisfaction among those evaluated. As regards feedback from trainees on the quality of NEEDS seminars, very few Member States seem to have set clear and formal procedures;
- At present, there is no integrated approach to the training of STOs, LTOs and CT members on an EU scale. The evaluation team believes that the training of EU election observers should be seen as a seamless process in its entirety. While NEEDS has played a major part in raising the professional standards of a large number of EU observers over the last five years, much more needs to be done in the future by all stakeholders in the process. It is worth reflecting on the potential of Member States which have their national training programmes and how these facilities could be utilised in a EU-wide integrated training initiative (e.g. through ‘cluster’ training courses, i.e. events that could be hosted by some Member States and could be attended by trainees from other Member States as well);
- In organising Domestic Observer Fora, the NEEDS project staff have rightly chosen to ‘invest’ in existing regional networks in targeted areas. It is less clear, however, to what extent regional public authorities or local civil society actors from remote areas have been involved in these DOFs. Nonetheless, the sheer scale of this component and the number of activities carried out by NEEDS, nine DOFs to date and two more coming up, are a testament to a fairly high degree of efficiency displayed;
- Of the two Technical Assistance projects, one (in Ecuador) was efficiently designed and successfully conducted with a local partner. On the contrary, the TA project in Zambia has not been a success and can provide some useful lessons. It may be that some concerns of the Needs Assessment Mission were not duly heeded, but in any case the risk factors in this component will need to be taken into account in the future. In addition, human resources may not have been sufficient in this particular case;
- As regards assistance provided to the European Commission, the guidelines for EOMs and relevant templates delivered or being delivered have been produced by experienced election observers, who have served on a number of missions. It has been the right approach taken by NEEDS to draw on the ‘collective memory’ retained after a long list of EU EOMs over the last years. At the same time, it might have helped NEEDS in terms of planning and timing of delivery, if these expected outputs had been clearly spelled out in the ToR of the second NEEDS project or the roles of the European Commission and the project team had been better clarified;
- Communication with Focal Points has been efficient and is highly appreciated by the beneficiaries. Annual FP meetings are viewed as a first-class opportunity for a frank and open exchange of views which has helped all parties come closer to a common understanding of the intricacies of EU EOMs and training needed; and
- Finally, an interesting question would be: To what extent do the results of the project justify the return of investment in terms of time and budget? In purely financial terms, NEEDS definitely displays a high rate of return on investment, as the resources allocated to NEEDS are only a tiny fraction of the total cost of EU election

observation over the same period of time. Indeed, the €3.6m aggregate cost of NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2 amounts roughly to the budget of two middle-size EOMs. At the same time, an equally interesting question would be whether investment in the training of observers as a share of EOM cost should not be further increased?

### 9.3 Effectiveness

- The training curriculum has developed significantly since the beginning of the NEEDS-1 project, in the sense that it has become more comprehensive and yet more specific at the same time, according to the target group. An on-going process of standardisation of templates and the increasing use of mission experience by trainers has helped raise the quality of the NEEDS seminars. On the other hand, some areas of expertise may have to be covered in a more targeted way in the future. The list of these areas includes institutional and electoral issues, but also ‘daily matters’ and cultural sensitivities in the areas observed;
- A challenge lying ahead arises from the ever-growing requirements for Security Experts. So far, seminars for Security Experts have followed more or less the same ‘indoors’ format as the training courses for any other CT members, whereas training for Security (and possibly Operations) Experts in the future will need to be more practical and simulation-oriented. Similarly, it has been acknowledged that DCOs need more comprehensive training due to their demanding role and workload;
- It should also be kept in mind that as a rule NEEDS seminars provide ‘indoors’ training, no matter how comprehensive it is, and they cannot possibly capture the local peculiarities of all the countries observed by EU EOMs nor real mission conditions. What remains crucial in view of EOMs are the specific briefings that LTOs and STOs are given by CT members in country, which underlines the importance of presentation skills that should be acquired by DCOs and CT members during NEEDS seminars. This component has been included in the training curriculum of NEEDS-2, but needs to be further developed in the future;
- The training methodology of NEEDS has evolved considerably throughout the ‘life cycle’ of the programme. It has now included a number of interaction-based techniques or a growing number of case studies, which allow for an increased amount of targeted skill development. However, consideration should be given to some issues which have not yet been duly addressed by the NEEDS programme. One of them relates to the language balance of NEEDS training. What could be considered for the future is the inclusion of some French- and Spanish-speaking seminars or at least certain sessions, which has already been applied experimentally within the framework of NEEDS-2. Another possibility to be explored is the recruitment of highly qualified trainers and election experts from third countries, e.g. from Asia, Africa, Latin America or the Middle East-Mediterranean. In the case of French- and Spanish- (or Portuguese-) speakers, their involvement will help address the ‘language balance’ issue, but will also bring in a cultural added value;
- Furthermore, while NEEDS seminars have been highly successful and effective, the ever-changing requirements posed by EOMs cannot possibly be covered by NEEDS in their entirety, unless there is a solid continual training component built into the training system. Part of the answer may be in the potential of e-learning, which has not been a substantial component of NEEDS training so far. Despite its inherent

limitations, e-learning could be helpful for the provision of background information, possibly to STOs or less experienced LTOs, e.g. through the use of the NEEDS website, which could be more curriculum-based, more user-friendly and thus more conducive to relevant training activities;

- NEEDS training material calls for some discussion, as established by the evaluation team. This may be partly attributed to the fact that NEEDS has not yet obtained its own and fully equipped 'library'. A number of trainees interviewed have pointed out that they would find useful a CD Rom Compendium (which has only recently been introduced in the training), updated bibliography and a glossary of terms. Another issue raised by EU observers relates to the majority of reference tools being only available in English. At the same time, a very positive development to be highlighted is the on-going updating of the Compendium of International Election Standards, with the inclusion of 'best practice' examples;
- NEEDS trainers are mostly experts with extensive field experience from EU EOM Core Teams, which has been beneficial. It should be noted that of the four parameters of the NEEDS seminars examined by the NET, the quality of trainers is the best scoring aspect, though the consistency of training skills in the entire team needs to be paid attention to. Another positive point about NEEDS seminar is the strong component of transparency in the evaluation of trainers by trainees. This feedback is regularly discussed by NEEDS staff and is then taken into account in view of follow-up seminars;
- As regards DOFs, the evaluation team has established that the large majority of DOF beneficiaries appreciate relevant activities, mostly in view of networking. Experience has shown that too broad a range of topics to be discussed at DOFs may be less effective, and therefore DOFs should focus on a smaller number of specific themes. While no side-effects have been recorded during the evaluation, the expectations from this component may have been met only to a certain extent. A major factor to be taken into account is the role of the external environment (political, economic, cultural, security, etc.) in regions targeted by NEEDS. It is difficult to identify common denominators that could apply to regions as wide-spread as Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East-Mediterranean or the CIS. This is why it is suggested that the next project should consider 'subregional' DOFs rather than the current regional ones;
- In terms of possible follow-up programming on the part of EC services, this could only be achieved if DOFs are linked to the formulation of policy proposals and project identification, and their composition is marked by a higher degree of coherence. Another issue to be taken into account is the fact that domestic observers groups often receive bilateral funding from EU embassies and there seems to be little coordination in the provision of this form of assistance. Not all DOF beneficiaries are sufficiently informed about opportunities provided by EIDHR, which underlines the need for an awareness campaign to be considered in the future;
- The TA project in Ecuador appears to be highly effective, leading to a measurable contribution of NEEDS to the democratisation process in the targeted country. The mix of training and distance support ('tutoring') successfully applied in this project should definitely be considered for replication in related activities in the future. The effectiveness of the TA in Zambia cannot be evaluated, due to its suspension;
- Guidelines and templates for EOMs are currently being tested and will be made available for public use shortly. The evaluation team considers these outputs a

substantial contribution to the success of the NEEDS programme. The effects of the templates relate to a more consistent election observation methodology and increased credibility of the EU EOMs, the creation of a library of models of good statements and the development of an 'EU style', smooth co-operation within Core Teams and EOMs, etc. While these are high-quality outputs, it is noted that they could have become effective earlier and could have benefited a number of EOMs already;

- What may, however, have to be envisaged for the future is the development of some CT situation-based 'rules and procedures'. ToR are a 'static' description of individual duties, whereas the dynamic nature of interaction can only be captured through a list of challenges that CT members may have to address on missions in extraordinary situations (e.g. security crises). It is, therefore, suggested that the development of a set of 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs) be considered in the future project;
- A third category of NEEDS outputs includes much-needed reference tools, such as an updated version of Benchmarks for Electoral Standards, with a 'translation' of international electoral standards through 'best practice' examples. The Handbook for EU EOMs is also being updated, which will help observers familiarise themselves with changing realities in election administration and observation; and
- Assistance provided by NEEDS to the Focal Points has been very effective and highly appreciated, notably during NEEDS-2. Particularly successful has been the Malta FP meeting (2006), which has highlighted the determination of Focal Points to exchange views on a regular basis and to work closely together. This development is prominent in the feedback from Focal Points to the evaluation team.

## 9.4 Impact

- Although the impact assessment of NEEDS activities may require a longer period of time, at this stage the conclusions are largely positive. It is safe to assume that NEEDS training has contributed to the image of EU EOMs as professional and credible observer groups, thus vindicating the choice of the EU election observation policy as a high priority. The short-term impact of the programme training is already visible, based on feedback from EU observers. An interesting tool developed by the project team is an evaluation carried out several months or a year after NEEDS seminars, thus allowing for some post-seminar impact assessment. A possible mid-term impact is to be seen in the inclusion of NEEDS curriculum items in the training programmes of a number of Member States, often with the participation of ODIHR trainers and mission members. It is reasonable to conclude that NEEDS is already contributing to a pan-European process of observer training and relevant standard-setting;
- As regards the impact on domestic observer groups, at this stage NEEDS is more of a facilitator and a catalyst than a direct provider of services. There are some encouraging indications of a positive NEEDS impact in Latin America or the Middle East and the Mediterranean. In other cases, DOF beneficiaries may not be in need of this specific type of facilitation, as they are already part of far-flung networks. If NEEDS impact is to be maximised, it would be a good idea for other EIDHR instruments to follow-up on DOFs which, of course, would require close coordination between relevant EC services or Member States present in respective countries. One of the ideas generated by NEEDS-2 (though not in the ToR) has been the launch of a

Global Observer Forum on the project website and this activity deserves to be accomplished in the future;

- As regards the overall EU visibility vis-à-vis the general public and domestic observer groups in third countries, the NET finds that this could be achieved through the strong commitment of EC Delegations to DOFs. NEEDS could presumably create a momentum by facilitating DOFs, which will however need to be followed up on by EC Delegations in respective countries. As for TA, it is too early for some meaningful impact assessment, but a possible lesson from Ecuador is that future projects should also contain a public communication component, in order to ensure adequate media coverage and awareness of the EU involvement in the democratisation process; and
- Regarding assistance to the EC on EU EOMs, the production of guidelines and templates is expected to have a significant and tangible impact, though this may require a span of several months at least. The issue of NEEDS and EU visibility will have to be addressed more comprehensively in the future. For instance, while the NEEDS website provides adequate information to potential participants in forthcoming seminars about the training curriculum and application procedures, the EC involvement in the NEEDS programme is less evident and domestic observers in third countries seem to be using it to a much lesser extent. As for the impact on Member States, the evaluation team considers that a stronger inter-MS consultation and approximation mechanism should be envisaged in the future.

## 9.5 Sustainability

- The evaluation team finds the policy sustainability of EU observer training assured, given that all the Member States and the European Commission have expressed their support for the extension of the programme beyond 2007. Furthermore, EIDHR funding appears to be envisaged for an EC-backed programme, whereas non-EU Member States (Norway and Switzerland) could very well benefit, as long as relevant financial provisions are duly planned. At the same time, commonalities will have to be sought with national training programmes of EU Member States. The potential of continual training and e-learning should also be seriously considered as complementary components of the future training effort; and
- The sustainability of the DOFs will be strengthened if it is linked more closely to the formulation of policy proposals and TA project identification. Furthermore, 'subregional' networks should be prioritised, so that a higher degree of coherence is ensured as to membership and outputs. Regarding future TA projects, it is assumed that their high political relevance provides a safeguard, as long as the optimal financial and institutional arrangements are considered. The volatile external environment in many third countries targeted by EIDHR necessitates EIDHR funds that should be available over a longer period of time in view of disbursement, in close coordination with Member States that also provide funding to domestic observer groups.

It is pointed out that methodological assistance to be provided to the EC and Member States appears to be assured by the strong support for the continuation of the current project beyond 2007. The current *modus operandi* appears to be adequate, though it would be worth developing a network of Focal Points, so that the methodological tools are fully utilised on a pan-European scale.

## 10 Recommendations

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
Relevance		
The four objectives are to a large extent 'parallel' components.	1. The objectives need to be integrated into a tightly knit concept, through closer linkages to each other.	The EC will finalise the Call for Tender, on the basis of the NEEDS evaluation and related recommendations.
Training of EU observers		
More LTOs and STOs than DCOs and CT members trained by the end of NEEDS-2. At the same time, increasing demand for highly qualified DCOs and CT members.	2. The next project should emphasise the training of CT member rather than LTOs. The training of STOs should be undertaken by their respective Member States.	It has been suggested that the next project should envisage the direct training of 135 CT members and 120 LTOs. The other LTOs and all the STOs needed for EOMs will be trained by Member States.
Domestic Observer Fora		
Too large a scale of DOFs, not always reflecting local peculiarities and specific needs.	3. Subregional, instead of the current regional, DOFs should be envisaged, in order to be more specific and linked more closely to the local context.	The Consultant will propose the composition of DOFs and the EC will approve it, the goal being more coherent DOFs and closer to the local context.
Efficiency		
Training of EU Observers		
At present, no clear picture of the available human resources in the EU. Similarly, little knowledge of how many observers will be needed in the future.	4. The next Consultant should produce an estimate of the number and qualifications of EU observers needed over the next three years.	The Consultant will produce the estimate on the basis of data provided by the Focal Points; the publication of the estimate will be subject to EC approval. Ideally, the estimate will be the basis for an action plan

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
		(2008-2010) to be considered by Member States in designing their national training programmes.
Different national policies on observer selection and recruitment for training seminars and EOMs.	5. Focal Points should seek a higher degree of approximation of national selection and recruitment policies.	The Consultant will gather evidence from Focal Points on their national selection and recruitment procedures; upon approval by the EC, the Consultant will present to the Focal Points an 'approximation and optimisation' plan.
Lack of a clear policy on the training of STOs and LTOs in EU Member States. An integrated approach to the training of EU observers needed.	6. Commonalities between EC-funded training courses and related activities at the level of Member States should be fully utilised, in the framework of an integrated approach to EU observer training.	The network of Focal Points will have a Steering Committee, which will collect information from Member States at regular intervals and will circulate monthly updates on upcoming seminars across the EU (and other associated countries).
Not all Member States have the capacity to train their STOs and LTOs. At the same time, some Member States have well-developed national training programmes.	7. 'Cluster' training courses should be considered, so that Member States which do not have the capacity to train their STOs could work together with Member States that have relevant training programmes.	Upon the circulation of FP network monthly updates, host Member States will issue an invitation to all the other Member States to consider sending their nationals to the upcoming seminars. Priority will be given to Member States that do not have their own national training programmes for EU observers. Cost-sharing arrangements will be worked out between the host Member States and those sending trainees to the 'cluster' seminars.
Domestic Observer Fora		
Insufficient coordination between the EC and Member States vis-à-vis domestic observers.	8. Closer coordination between EC services and Member States that provide bilateral funding to domestic observers will be needed.	Before approval of Technical Assistance projects, the EC Delegations will consult with (i) EC Headquarters, and (ii) the embassies of Member States in the beneficiary countries, so that possible overlaps in funding or missed opportunities are avoided.

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
Technical Assistance projects		
Longer physical presents of EU experts and hands-on management may be needed.	9. Sufficient human resources should be envisaged and properly budgeted for in Technical Assistance projects.	Instead of the three man-months allocated to TA projects in NEEDS-2, it is suggested that five (5) man-months per TA project be envisaged by the EC in the next Call for Tender.
Assistance to Member States		
FPs only meet once a year and do not have regular contacts. At the same time, there is demand for closer co-operation.	10. A network of Focal Points should be formally set up, in order to facilitate the approximation of diverse procedures and the identification of commonalities.	The idea of a FP network could be 'floated' and tested in Madrid next September. Upon the launch of the new project, the Consultant will organise a constituent network meeting (in early 2008), where a three-member Steering Committee will be elected for a one-year term. The same will happen in early 2009 and early 2010. The two main functions of the network will be: (i) providing the Consultant with evidence for the production of a draft 'approximation and optimisation plan' which will lead to the adoption of a Common Approach to Selection and Training by Focal Points, and (ii) circulating information about upcoming 'cluster' seminars held in various Member States.
Management issues		
The two-year duration of NEEDS-2, in conjunction with the expected outputs, means an average of one event a month.	11. A three-year duration should be considered for a future project with a commensurate volume of outputs. In any case, there should be no more than nine events a year, to allow for proper planning and timing.	This will allow for optimal planning of what is a complex, four-component, project. In addition, the EC will find it easier to follow closely the progress of project activities and to intervene, whenever necessary.
NEEDS project staff are experienced primarily in election observation and training, but do not necessarily have the required managerial skills. The complexity of NEEDS-2 (e.g. with the TA component and assistance to Member States) exceeds mere observer training.	12. An institutional (and possibly management) expert should be included in the project team. The expert in question could be in charge of liaising with the EC, Member States, DOF partners and TA beneficiaries as well as of planning and contracting.	The profile of the expert in question will combine: (i) expertise in institutional building and network management, (ii) diplomatic skills, and (iii) experience in conceptualising and planning. He/she will be tasked to contribute to: (i) the creation and facilitation of the FP network, (ii) follow-up on DOFs, and (iii) identification of possible TA projects.

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
The presence of two institutions specialising in media monitoring may be hard to justify.	13. Possible overlaps in expertise should be paid attention to. Instead, the inclusion of other institutions (e.g. specialising in gender or minority issues) could be considered.	The Consultant will bring in a wide range of relevant expertise (preferably including gender and minority issues as well) which, however, will not be at the expense of the operational set-up and the necessary flexible management.
Cases of disagreement between network partners on roles and decision-making procedures.	14. While a slightly larger network may be considered, it will have to be efficiently managed, with a strong lead partner and a clearly defined distribution of tasks.	The Consultant will present in its proposal a reasonable management structure, with decision-making procedures and a distribution of tasks that will be clearly defined in advance.
The relationship between the EC and NEEDS-2 has not been sufficiently clear, at the beginning at least.	15. Liaising between the Consultant and the European Commission could be further improved if the Consultant had an office in Brussels.	The Consultant will be in a position to react swiftly to EC requests for updates on the project progress, consultations, etc.
Effectiveness		
Training of EU Observers		
DCOs are called on to play a very significant and demanding role.	16. The training of DCOs should be seen as a priority, with a comprehensive curriculum covering a wide array of issues: data assessment, the use of international electoral standards, reporting formats, human resource management, institutional relations of EOMs and mission security.	In designing training seminars for DCOs, the Consultant will prioritise the issues of data assessment, the use of international electoral standards, reporting formats, human resource management, institutional relations of EOMs and mission security. The EC will be consulted with on the main curriculum items.
Seminars for Security Experts have so far followed an 'indoors' format.	17. Training courses for Security (and possibly Operations) Experts should become more practical and simulation-oriented. They should be held in 'mission conditions' and should also include the use of communication equipment.	The Consultant will design a more practical and simulation-oriented format for the training of Security and Operations Experts, and will suggest possible locations. The EC will approve the suggested format and locations.
Some areas of expertise have not been covered in a sufficiently targeted way.	18. The training curriculum for Core Team members should cover in depth the institutional framework of EOMs, election observation techniques (notably, related to technological developments, gender and minorities), daily mission work,	In designing training seminars for Core Team members, the Consultant will prioritise the issues of EOM institutional aspects, election observation techniques (technological developments, gender and minorities), daily mission work, language- and culture-specific issues,

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
	language- and culture-specific issues, etc.	etc. The EC will be consulted with on the main curriculum items.
At this stage, the training curriculum for Core Team members does not cover the provision of electoral assistance.	19. Electoral assistance should be covered in the training curriculum for Election and Legal Experts with a view to the formulation of well-defined and 'implementable' recommendations for post-EOM technical assistance to be provided by the EC to electoral stakeholders.	In designing training seminars for Election and Legal Experts, the Consultant will include exercises in drafting well-defined and 'implementable' recommendations for post-EOM technical assistance. The EC will be consulted with on the content of this specific curriculum item.
NEEDS seminars cannot cover the local peculiarities of all the countries observed by the EU.	20. Seminars for Core Team members should aim at the development of presentation skills of the trainees in view of in-country briefings given to observers on EOMs	In designing training seminars for Core Team members, the Consultant will pay due attention to practical exercises aimed at the development of presentation skills of the trainees (e.g. for in-country briefings and de-briefings of EU observers).
Role plays and simulation games are highly appreciated by trainees and have proven their beneficial effect.	21. Role plays and simulation games should be retained and even more extensively used as training techniques.	In designing training seminars for Core Team members and LTOs, the Consultant will prioritise the use of role plays and simulation games as training techniques.
Demand from trainees for more case studies and best practice examples during NEEDS seminars.	22. The training curriculum should be further enriched with case studies and examples of best practice.	In designing training seminars for Core Team members and LTOs, the Consultant will make extensive use of case studies and examples of best practice. A number of these items could be 'borrowed' from the DOF component (Objective 3).
So far, NEEDS seminars have been held exclusively in English.	23. A better language balance should be achieved, with the inclusion of French- and Spanish-speaking sessions and material in training courses.	The Consultant will design sessions and seminars to be delivered exclusively in French and Spanish, upon the production of training material in the respective languages by the EC.
Although NEEDS seminars have been highly successful and beneficial, they cannot possibly provide all the expertise needed by EU observers.	24. A strong in-built continual training component should be envisaged in the training methodology.	The Consultant will envisage the dispatch of updates to trainees long after they have attended a seminar.

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
E-learning has not been a substantial component of NEEDS training so far.	25. The NEEDS website could be better formatted and its content should be substantially improved through the addition of best practice. It should also be designed to allow for interaction and, possibly, debates. For instance, the project website could serve as a 'closed circuit' with a password, so that there are interactive discussions between participants.	The Consultant will design and significantly enrich the project website (as compared to the NEEDS-2 website) with the addition of best practice. Furthermore, the Consultant could design - and act as a moderator - a 'closed circuit' (chatroom) with a password and a Question-and-Answer tool at the disposal of EU observers. The lists of EU observers will be provided to the Consultant by the FP network.
	26. Observers should be regularly informed and encouraged to download background material from the website. An awareness campaign should be considered.	The Consultant will regularly inform EU observers about updates on the project website. The FP network will also be involved in awareness-raising among EU observers in their respective Member States.
DOFs have not fully utilised. At the same time, growing demand for case studies during NEEDS seminars.	27. Useful lessons and case studies can be drawn from the DOFs that should then be 'fed' into the training curriculum.	In organising DOFs, the Consultant will actively seek to record useful case studies which can then be presented during training seminars for EU experts and observers (Objective 1 activities).
Different levels of STO training and pre-departure briefing provided by FPs.	28. A tape could be produced by the next Consultant on the main principles of EOMs and could be used by all FPs during pre-departure briefings. Similarly, one should reflect on the expediency of producing a uniform 'synopsis' or a 'one-stop' handbook for STOs from all the Member States.	The Consultant will design and, upon approval by the EC, produce (i) a tape on the main principles of EOMs which will then be used by FPs during pre-departure briefings provided to observers from their respective Member States, and (ii) a 'one-stop' handbook for STOs, also to be handed out by FPs.
NEEDS training is carried out in a European cultural setting.	29. The participation of trainers from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East-Mediterranean in training seminars should be considered.	The Consultant will identify highly qualified electoral experts from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East-Mediterranean and, upon approval by the EC, will use them as trainers during seminars for DCOs, CT members and LTOs.
Groups of up to 40 trainees are much too big, thus leading to little interaction between participants and arguably not very accurate appraisals by NEEDS staff.	30. The seminar groups should not include more than 20 trainees.	The Consultant will make sure that seminar groups do not include more than 20 trainees.

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
Domestic Observer Fora		
Too broad a range of topics limiting the effectiveness of DOFs.	31. The DOF agenda should focus on a smaller number of specific themes (e.g. the application of election observation methodology, reporting and use of international standards for genuinely democratic elections).	In designing DOFs, the Consultant will make sure that agenda focuses on a smaller number of specific themes (e.g. the application of election observation methodology, reporting and use of international standards for genuinely democratic elections).
DOFs do not produce any specific outputs, apart from discussions and networking.	32. DOFs need to lead to concrete policy proposals, whenever appropriate (depending on the political context).	In organising DOFs, the Consultant will actively seek the formulation of policy proposals by beneficiaries as a specific DOF output.
Projects not identified through the insights of DOFs beneficiaries, which is a missed opportunity. Similarly, risk factors in the identification of TA projects are not always properly assessed.	33. A closer link should be considered between Domestic Observer Fora and Technical Assistance projects. Therefore, one of the objectives of DOFs could be TA project identification.	In organising DOFs, the Consultant will actively seek the identification of possible Technical Assistance projects as a specific DOF output. Out of these outputs, the Consultant will select at least nine (9) project proposals and will present them to the EC for approval.
Size and diversity of Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East-Mediterranean and the CIS area 'diluting' the coherence of the DOFs.	34. DOG websites should be created on a regional or subregional basis and could then link in to each other.	The Consultant will facilitate the creation of websites by DOGs on a regional or sub-regional basis by highlighting the benefits of networking and exchange of experience between DOF beneficiaries. In addition, the project website will provide links to all the regional or sub-regional DOG websites through its Global Observer Forum tool.
Assistance to European Commission		
The CT ToR currently being updated are a 'static' tool and do not reflect 'dynamic situations', such as crises on missions.	35. The Consultant should be tasked to produce Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for DCOs and Core Team members.	The Consultant will draft a set of Standard Operating Procedures for DCOs and Core Team members which, upon approval by the EC, will be included in the training curriculum.
Impact		
Technical Assistance projects		
Success stories are not always properly promoted.	36. A public communication component should be included in each TA project.	The Consultant will envisage a public communication component (e.g. press conferences, roundtables with stakeholders, etc.) in all the TA projects.

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
Domestic Observer Fora		
Not all DOF beneficiaries are aware of funding opportunities provided by EIDHR.	37. An awareness campaign about EIDHR priorities and funding opportunities should be designed by the Consultant and implemented through EC Delegations.	Based on findings from DOFs, the Consultant will design an awareness campaign about EIDHR priorities and funding opportunities, and targeting DOGs in third countries. The EC Headquarters will coordinate this campaign through EC Delegations in selected countries.
The Global Observer Forum launched by NEEDS-2 is still incomplete.	38. A substantially enriched and regularly updated Global Observer Forum tool on the project website should be envisaged.	The Consultant will substantially improve and actively use the Global Observer Forum to: (i) provide information about international electoral standards and observation methodology; (ii) present examples of best practice, and (iii) present regional and sub-regional associations of DOGs that have benefited from the DOF component.
Assistance to the European Commission and Member States		
The long-term impact of the NEEDS programme is yet to emerge, as it requires a longer period of time.	39. The deployment of a 'long-term impact assessment mission' should be considered.	An impact assessment of NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2 will be carried out at least a year after the completion of the latter project, i.e. it could start at the end of 2008 or the beginning of 2009. The impact assessment team will not be linked to the Consultant selected for the implementation of the next project (2008-2010).
Sustainability		
Training of EU Observers		
Substantial expertise available in Member States, but not fully utilised at this stage.	40. Exploring the potential of linking EU-backed training activities to related expertise available at the level of Member States should be considered. The areas of expertise in question relate to language balance, ICTs or civilian-military personnel in a non-conductive environment.	The Consultant will be tasked to identify organisations in Member States with appropriate expertise relating to linguistically balanced training of observers, ICTs or civilian-military co-operation in a non-conductive environment. In addition, the Consultant will actively seek to create linkages to these organisations and to ensure their engagement in the integrated EU-wide training programme aimed at by the end of the project. This engagement could be achieved through, e.g. co-

FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION <i>(Who's doing What)</i>
		hosting training seminars with these institutions, the use of trainers from these institutions, dissemination of the project training curriculum and material to these institutions, etc.



# Annexes



# Annex 1

## Description of the Evaluation

### 1.1. Terms of Reference of the NEEDS Evaluation Team (excerpts)

#### 1.1.1. Global objectives

The overall objective is to give to the European Commission evaluation on the last two NEEDS projects and give recommendations for the future project concerning trainings of EU EOM experts and observers, support and technical assistance to Domestic Observers Organizations (DO) and some methodological support to EU EOMs.

The scope of the evaluation covers the 2 NEEDS projects carried out since 2001. A desk study, which will be the first phase of the evaluation, will define indicators of the evaluation

The users of the evaluation will mainly be the EIDHR/ and Electoral Observations concerned parties within the Commission and Member states.

#### 1.1.2. Specific objective(s)

(i) The main purpose of this evaluation is to assess:

- The usefulness and relevance of NEEDS projects to EU EOM experts and observers training, DO support and Technical assistance and guidelines for EU EOMs.
- The impact and sustainability of NEEDS projects to EU EOM experts and observers training, DO support and Technical assistance and guidelines for EU EOMs.
- The effectiveness and efficiency of NEEDS projects to EU EOM experts and observers training, DO support and Technical assistance and guidelines for EU EOMs.

(ii) To give recommendations on how to better implement:

- Training for EU EOM experts and observers.
- Technical assistance and support to domestic observer organisations.
- Guidelines for EU EOMs.

(iii) To propose Term of References for a future call for tender in the same field.

Based on this assessment the evaluation should come to a general overall judgment of the extent to which the NEEDS project have contributed to the progress towards the quality of EU EOMs.

### *1.1.3. Requested services including methodology to be applied*

The evaluation process, techniques and research methods will include the following steps:

- Desk study. On the basis of the findings of the desk study, actions to be included in the Activities and Field Study should be selected.
- Activities and Field Study.
- Reporting.
- Feedback– Debriefing meeting in Brussels when the evaluators have submitted a draft of the full report to the EC.

## **1.2. Notes on methodology**

### *1.2.1. Steps as per the Terms of Reference of the NEEDS Evaluation Team*

The Desk Study contained the list of EU Member States to be included in the statistical sample as well as a detailed schedule of visits (both within the EU and to third countries). The Desk Study was approved by the European Commission. Next, the Activities and Field Study were carried out as planned and within the limits of the timeframe set out in the Terms of Reference of the evaluation assignment. The reporting component was also observed and a draft report was submitted to the European Commission in March 2007. As for the envisaged feedback, a de-briefing meeting with the European Commission was held in Brussels at the end of the assignment on 26 April 2007.

One of the lessons learned is that the duration of the evaluation was shorter than what was needed. The NET was tasked to carry out the evaluation within 55 man-days. The time spent on travel required at the Activities and Field Study stage (some 60%) was at the expense of the reporting component and it is estimated that the optimal duration of the assignment should have been in the range of 70 man-days.

### *1.2.2. Structure of the sample:*

The data were retrieved through direct interviews and e-mail questionnaires, but also through direct observation of NEEDS events, such as seminars for EU observers and one Domestic Observer Forum. These visits gave the evaluators the opportunity not only to observe the training process, but also to interview both beneficiaries and NEEDS staff/trainers. The assessment of Technical Assistance projects was based on reports produced by NEEDS as well as interviews with NEEDS staff and EC officials.

Overall, the NET interviewed more than 130 interlocutors (presented in Annex 1.3.) from the following categories:

- (i) Focal Points of EU Member States and non-EU countries;
- (ii) European NEEDS trainees;
- (iii) Representatives of domestic observer groups that have benefited from DOFs;
- (iv) NEEDS partners and trainers;
- (v) EC officials.

Regarding Member States, a deliberate attempt was made at producing a representative sample of the EU, which covers:

- New and old Member States (with reference to the 2004 enlargement);

- Southern, Central European and northern Member States;
- Large, middle-size and small Member States.

The evaluators had direct contact (through visits) with the Focal Points of more than half the Member States – 14 out of 27<sup>46</sup>, but it should be noted that the actual number of targeted Member States was 25, as by the end of the evaluation mission Bulgaria and Romania had not appointed their respective Focal Points). Three more Member States, the Czech Republic, Portugal and The Netherlands, have been included in the statistical sample on the basis of e-mail questionnaires<sup>47</sup>. Furthermore, the evaluation team visited Norway as a ‘case study’ of a non-EU country which is often involved in EU EOMs and NEEDS training.

As regards European NEEDS trainees, several beneficiaries were interviewed in during the seminars in Stadtschlaining (February 2007) and Abo (March 2007), whereas 250 e-mail questionnaires were sent to beneficiaries of previous seminars organised by NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2 over the 2002-2007 period. Overall, the evaluation team interviewed 64 trainees, which accounts for 11.4% of the 562 European NEEDS trainees to date. With the 17 Focal Points included, the list of European beneficiaries rises to 81 or 14.4% of the total. The sample is highly representative, as it includes:

- Beneficiaries from 25 countries - 24 EU member states<sup>48</sup> and Norway;
- Beneficiaries of both NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2;
- Both Core Team members (all positions) and LTOs;
- Male and female observers;
- Experienced and less experienced observers;
- Observers and Member State representatives.

As regards DOF beneficiaries, the evaluation team visited Bratislava, Buenos Aires, Colombo and Casablanca, the venues of four of the nine DOFs that have taken place so far. The Casablanca event was attended while it was taking place. The visits to Argentina, Sri Lanka and Morocco were coordinated with the respective EC Delegations. The feedback from DOF beneficiaries is presented in qualitative terms, with the main findings from interviews. A quantitative statistical analysis was not produced by the evaluators, as it would not have been representative. It is noted that e-mail questionnaires were sent to a number of DOF beneficiaries, but the response has been limited to date.

All the NEEDS partners were contacted directly through visits. The evaluation team met representatives of ERIS, ASPR, Abo Akademi, MEMO 98, Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna and Osservatorio di Pavia. The meetings allowed for in-depth interviews and insights into the conceptual and operational aspects of the programme.

A number of points were recorded by the evaluation team through contacts with EC officials. The evaluation team has taken into consideration views expressed by officials in RELEX and AIDCO in Brussels, but also in EC Delegations in the third countries visited.

<sup>46</sup> The evaluators interviewed directly the Focal Points of the following Member States: Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

<sup>47</sup> The Focal Points of the other Member States were also contacted by e-mail, but have not replied to date.

<sup>48</sup> The Member States which are not represented in this sample are Bulgaria, Cyprus and Poland. Bulgarian and Cypriot observers have not yet participated in NEEDS seminars, whereas Polish trainees have not responded to date.

**Annex 1.3.**  
**List of interlocutors**

<b><i>Focal Points</i></b>	
Isabel MENCHÓN LÓPEZ, Focal Point of Spain	Patricial WALL, DFA of Ireland
Oceane LAHANQUE, Focal Point of France	Andrea CAMPBELL, Focal Point of the UK
Françoise TCHOUDJEM, Focal Point of France	Doros VENEZIS, Focal Point of Cyprus
Zuzana TOPOLSKA, Focal Point of Slovakia	Celia KUNINGAS, Focal Point of Estonia
Gyula MISI, Focal Point of Hungary	Daniel SCHAER, Focal Point of Estonia
Vassilios KONSTANTINEAS, Focal Point of Greece	Sergio Guimarães, Focal Point of Portugal
Sotirios APOSTOLOPOULOS, Focal Point of Greece	Annamaija RAMADAN, Focal Point of Finland
Theodora GIOVANNI, Focal Point of Greece	Pia ÖSTE, Focal Point of Sweden, SIDA, Sweden
Kate BOYLAN, Focal Point, Ireland	Annalena EHRMAN, Recruiter, SIDA, Sweden
Abdi HASSAN, Focal Point of Ireland	Kristin MÖCKE, Focal Point of Germany
Frank FLOOD, DFA of Ireland	Denis VALOIS, Focal Point of Belgium
Marylee WALL, DFA of Ireland	Kenneth de Figueiredo , Focal Point of Norway
Oldrich Lacina, Focal Point of the Czech Republic	Nathalie SOEREL, Focal Point of The Netherlands
<b><i>NEEDS Partners and Experts</i></b>	
Mark STEVENTS, ERIS, former NEEDS Director	Giovanna MAIOLA, Osservatorio di Pavia
Hannah ROBERTS, ERIS, NEEDS Director	Anders ERIKSSON, Training Coordinator
Rastilav KUŽEI, Executive Director, MEMO 98, Bratislava, Slovakia	Delphine BLANCHET, NEEDS Trainer
Ivan GORDARSAK, MEMO 98. Bratislava, Slovakia	Richard CHAMBERS, NEEDS Trainer
Andrea DE GUTTRY, Scuola Sant'Anna, Pisa, Director	Carlo ACCAME, NEEDS Trainer
Andrea MALNATI, Osservatorio di Pavia	Markku SUKSI, Abo Akademi, Finland
Giuseppe MILAZZO, Osservatorio di Pavia	Arno TRUGER, Director, ASPR, Stadtschlaining, Austria
<b><i>NEEDS European trainees</i></b>	

Juan RIBO CHALMETA, Spain	Armin RABITSCH, Austria
Martin KUNZE, Germany	Michael LIDAUER, Austria
Mauro CALVO, Spain	Anne BOURLOND, Belgium
José María PARDEIRO, Spain	Myriam MARTINS, Belgium
Anne SERAFINI, France	Ingrid JEDECKOVA, Czech Republic
Bernadett MACSKÁSY, Hungary	Pavel KOMPER, Czech Republic
Javier DÍAZ-ROJAS, Hungary	Marianne GUNDERSEN, Denmark
Eduardo SALVADOR-ACEBEDO, Spain	Peter-Bastian HALBERG, Denmark
Salvador GINÉ-LACASA, Spain	Janno SIMM, Estonia
Jitka ADAMCIKOVA, Czech Republic	Tiina VAHTRAS, Estonia
Christina WAGNER, Germany	Ingmar HERMANSSON, Finland
Therese Comodini CACHIA, Malta	Juhani KURRONEN, Finland
Silvia de Felix Gracia, Spain	Myriam GAUME, France
Óscar ALARCÓN, Spain	Nicolas TEINDAS, France
Elmars SVEKIS, Latvia	Hans KABOTH, Germany
Dainida VALSIUNAITE, Lithuania	Marlene SIECK, Germany
Jurga LUKSAITE, Lithuania	Christina PAPADOPOULOU, Greece
Jean PECKELS, Luxembourg	Eirini-Maria GOUNARI, Greece
Jan HEERKENS, The Netherlands	Marián MIKLOS, Hungary
Marloes van GILS, The Netherlands	Marianna GALL, Hungary
Carlos ANASTASIO, Portugal	Maca HOURIHANE, Ireland
Cristina ALVES, Portugal	Claudio GIULIETTI, Italy
Raul Lucian MURESAN, Romania	Roberto LORA, Italy
Lucia BALOGOVA, Slovakia	Cecilia HÖGLUND, Sweden
Roman BABJAK, Slovakia	Roger BRANDIN, Sweden
Petra GRADISEK, Slovenia	Matthew WHATLEY, UK
Fotini RANTSIOU, Greece	Violeta DEMAJ, Austria
Nota SARAFUDDI, Greece	Benedikt VULSTEKE, Belgium
Ragnhild HOLLEKIM, Norway	Katelijne HERMANS, Belgium
Mafalda Cruz GOMEZ, Portugal	Ivan BLAHA, Czech Republic
Juan Pedro GARCIA, Spain	Pekka VIHERVAS, Finland
Laia CASTELLS, Spain	Alexandre CASTANIAS, France
Manuel SANCHEZ, Spain	Vincent LOUIS, France
Salvador GINÉ LACASA, Spain	Iris ROTZOLL, Germany
Christian KAPFENSTEINER, Austria	Elise FORD, UK
Ivana KRATKA, Czech Republic	

***Domestic Observers and Other Interlocutors in Third Countries***

Laura ALONSO, Poder Ciudadano, Argentina	Emma Dekker, Transparencia, Perú
Analía LADISA, Poder Ciudadano, Argentina	Kingsley RODRIGO, PAFFREL, Sri Lanka
Eliana LUNA, FAVIM, Argentina	J.C. WELIAMUNA, Transparency International, Sri Lanka
Inés SELWOOD, CIPPEC, Argentina	Sunanda DESHAPRIYA, Centre for Policy

	Alternatives, Sri Lanka
Natalia MOLINA, Geos – Red Principio del Principio, Argentina	Dayananda DISSANAYAKE, Election Commissioner, Sri Lanka
Roberto GOSSI, Uruguay Transparente, Uruguay	Ranil WIKREMASIGHE, Former Prime Minister, Sri Lanka
Silvana LAUZÁN, Participa, Chile	R. SAMPATHAN, Chairman of Tamil National Alliance
Percy MEDINA, Transparencia, Peru	Jim OLIVER, NDI, Sri Lanka, Director
Mario DOMÍNGUEZ, Fundemos, Bolivia	Kamal LAHBIB, FMAS, Morocco
Jorge VALLADARES, Transparencia, Perú	Intissar ABEDLFATAH QAREEB, PCPD, Palestine
Ramiro ORIAS, Red Participación y Justicia, Bolivia	Hani Mahmoud Othman HOURANI, UJRC, Jordan
Roxana SALAZAR, Transparencia, Costa Rica	Fatima MBAYE, AMDH, Mauritania
Alessandra FONTANA, Transparencia Internacional, Brazil	
<b>EC Officials</b>	
Isabel MOHEDANO-SOHM, AIDCO, Brussels	Victor MADEIRA DOS SANTOS, former AIDCO, Brussels
Andrew BRUCE, RELEX, Brussels	René MALLY, EC Delegation, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Anabelle HAGON, AIDCO, Brussels	Roshan LYMAN, EC Delegation in Colombo, Sri Lanka
Fabio BARGIACCHI, former EC (AIDCO), Brussels	Mário-Rui QUEIRÓ, AIDCO, Brussels
Olivier RUYSSSEN, AIDCO, Brussels	Anne GLOOR, RELEX, Brussels



## Annex 2

### Main outputs of the NEEDS projects

#### Annex 2.1. Seminars and DOFs Delivered by NEEDS-1

<i>Seminars for EU Observers</i>
LTOs (Introductory Course), Stadtschlaining, Austria. 2-5 November 2002
Experienced LTOs, Stadtschlaining, Austria. 7-11 November 2002
CT Members (Introductory Course), Uppsala, Sweden. 5-11 April 2002
LTOs (Introductory Course), Pisa, Italy, 5-8 June 2003
Media Analysts, Pavia, Italy, 22 Sept.-3 Oct. and 22-31 October 2003
CT Members, Abo, Finland, 20-26 October 2003
CT Members (Introductory Course) in London. UK, 11-14 December 2003
CT Members (LTO Co-ordinators and Operations), Stadtschlaining, Austria. 13-19 February 2004
CT Members, Abo, Finland, 22-28 May 2004
LTOs (Introductory Course), Pisa, Italy, 3-6 June 2004
LTOs (Introductory Course), Tallinn, Estonia, 16-20 October 2004
LTOs (Introductory Course), Bratislava, Slovakia, 13-17 November 2004
LTOs (Introductory Course) in Bratislava, Slovakia, 17-21 November 2004
LTOs (Introductory Course), Valletta, Malta 20-26 January 2005
Workshop on 'EU Election Observation: Achievements and Challenges', Brussels, 8-12 March 2005.

<i>DOFs</i>
European DOF, Zagreb, Croatia, 25-29 June 2003
African DOF, Nairobi, 21-25 November 2003
Asian DOF, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 10-13 February 2004
South American DOF, Lima, Peru, 13-16 July 2004
Middle East and Mediterranean Region DOF, Amman, Jordan, 6-11 December 2004

**Annex 2.2.**  
**Seminars and DOFs Delivered by NEEDS-2**  
**(as of March 2007)**

<b>Seminars for EU Observers</b>
Media Experts Roundtable, Pavia, Italy, 28 February – 2 March, 2006
Election/Legal Analyst I, Abo, Finland, 10-17 March 2006
LTO (Introductory), Budapest, Hungary, 5-10 May 2006
Focal Point Seminar, Malta, 11-12 September, 2006
Observer Co-ordinator/Security Expert seminar, Stadtschlaining, Austria, 7-13 October, 2006
Media Expert Seminar, Pavia, Italy, 12-15 16-27 October, 2006
DCO Work Shop, Brussels, Belgium, 12-15 November, 2006
LTO (Experienced), Madrid, Spain, 30 November - 5 December, 2006
Observer Co-ordinator / Operation & Security Expert seminar, Stadtschlaining, Austria, 9 - 15 February 2007
Election/Legal Analyst II, Abo, Finland, 9-16 March, 2007

<b>DOFs</b>
Asian DOF, Jakarta, Indonesia, 22-24 April, 2006
South American DOF, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 26-28 July, 2006
European DOF, Bratislava, Slovak Republic, 12-14 December, 2006
Middle East and Mediterranean Region DOF, Casablanca, Morocco, 23-25 December, 2007

<b>Technical Assistance projects</b>
Ecuador, Technical Assistance in Media Monitoring, 2006
Zambia, Technical Support for a Parallel Vote Tabulation, 2006

**Annex 2.3.**  
**Total of NEEDS-1 EU trainees**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>
Core Team members	87
LTOs (beginners and experienced)	106
LTOs/STOs (project extension)	105
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>

**Annex 2.4.**  
**Total and Breakdown of NEEDS-2 EU trainees by Country and Gender**  
**(as of mid-March 2007)**

Observers			Focal Points	Member State
Male	Female	Subtotal		
12	3	15	2	Austria
2	7	9	2	Belgium
0	0	0	2	Cyprus
6	6	12	2	Czech Republic
2	1	3	2	Denmark
4	6	10	2	Estonia
7	4	11	2	Finland
6	12	18	1	France
8	10	18	2	Germany
2	6	8	2	Greece
9	9	18	2	Hungary
7	3	10	2	Ireland
9	8	17	1	Italy
2	2	4	3	Latvia
5	6	11	2	Lithuania
3	1	4	0	Luxembourg
2	2	4	3	Malta
3	1	4	0	Norway
5	2	7	2	Poland
3	6	9	2	Portugal
10	4	14	1	Slovakia
1	3	4	2	Slovenia
13	5	18	2	Spain
5	4	9	3	Sweden
8	3	11	1	The Netherlands
7	8	15	2	UK
1	0	1	0	Romania
<b>142</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>47</b>	

**TOTAL: 311**

**Annex 2.5.**  
**DOF Agendas**

**NEEDS 1**

**Zagreb DOF, 25-29 June 2003**

The DOF in Zagreb, Croatia, was organized in co-ordination with the OSCE/ODIHR. There were representatives from 30 DO groups from the OSCE region, including Central Asia and the Caucasus. In addition there were representatives from Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and Peru.

Main topics covered:

- Facilitating Democratic Transition for Over a Decade.
- Strengthening Domestic Election Observation.
- Advancing Standards for Domestic Election Observation.

**Nairobi DOF, 21-25 November 2003**

The African DOF in Nairobi, Kenya, had representatives from 23 DO groups from east, west and south African region.

Main topics covered:

- The Role of Civil Society Organisations in Democratic Transition
- Election Principles, Norms and Standards
- Assessing and Comparing Methods Used to Observe the Electoral Process and Environment
- Observation and Audit of the Voter Register/Registration Process
- Political Violence and Domestic Observation
- Adherence to Electoral Laws and the Abuse of State Resources and Observation of Election and Post Election Days
- Political Parties during the Campaign Period
- Overview of European Union Policy on Support to Elections
- Co-operation with Domestic Stakeholders and International Actors
- Gender Monitoring, Maintaining Impartiality and Quality
- Retaining Institutional Memory and Networking.

**Colombo DOF, 10-13 February 2004**

The Asian DOF, Colombo, Sri Lanka, had representatives from 15 domestic observer groups from Asia.

Main topics covered:

- Democracy in Asia,
- Norms and Standards for Elections
- Sri Lanka Elections 2004
- Assessing Legal Framework and Electoral Administration

- Observing Voter Registration
- Observing Political Violence
- Dealing with Media
- Gender Monitoring
- Money Politics, Monitoring Candidate Registration
- Observing Voting and Counting
- Code of Conduct and Training
- Observing Abuse of State Resources
- Regional Co-operation and the Way Forward for Election Observation in Asia.

#### **Lima DOF, 13-16 July 2004**

The South American DOF in Lima, Peru, had representatives from 20 domestic observer groups from the area, including Central America and the Caribbean region.

Main topics covered:

- Overview of the European Union Policy on Observation and Support to Electoral Process
- A History of 15 years of Electoral Observation
- The Role of the Civil Society in Facilitating Democratic Transition in Latin America
- Strengthening the Capacity of Election Observation in Latin America
- Principles, Norms and Standards for Democratic Elections
- Impartial and Credible Domestic Observation: Codes of Conduct, Dealing with Media and Press Statements and Relation with Domestic and International Actors
- Observing the Voter Registration and Auditing the Voter Register
- Media Monitoring
- Observing Election Day and after Observing of Conduct of Voting and Counting
- Parallel and Quick Counts
- Monitoring Election Disputes
- Observing Political Violence
- Hate Speech and Conflict: Role of Domestic Observers
- Monitoring Abuse of State Resources
- Promotion of Pacts between Candidates
- Money Politics
- Gender Monitoring
- Promotion of Political Reforms
- Promotion of National Dialogues
- Current Issues in the Region: the Cases of Venezuela and Haiti
- Transition from Electoral Vigilance to Vigilance to Democracy.

#### **Amman DOF, 6-11 December 2004**

The Middle East and Mediterranean Region DOF in Amman, Jordan, was attended by representative from 12 countries, representing more than 20 DO groups in the region.

The main topics were:

- The Move Towards Democracy in the Middle East and Mediterranean

Regions: Achievements and Challenges

- Democratic Reforms in the Middle East and Mediterranean Regions: The Role of Civil Society Organisation
- The Middle East Perspective
- Standards for Democratic Elections
- Electoral Systems: Ensuring Participation and Representation
- Media and Electoral Process: Freedom with Responsibility
- Media Monitoring
- The Role of Women in the Middle East and Mediterranean Regions
- Benchmarks for Representation and Participation
- The role of Civil Society in Promoting Change
- Election Observation: Achievements and Challenges
- Civil Society Organisations and the Observation of Elections
- Support Mechanisms for Civil Society Organisation in the Promotion of Democratic Reforms: The Case of Regional and International
- Networking
- EU Policy in Election Support and Assistance.

## NEEDS-2

### Jakarta DOF, 22-24 April 2006

The theme of the Asian DOF in Jakarta, Indonesia, was “Money Politics: Monitoring Political Party Financing and Campaign Expenditure”. It had 18 NGO participants, two representatives from the European Commission, a representative of the National Democratic Institute and two outside experts (one from UK and one from Argentina).

Main topics covered:

- [EU presentation](#)
- [Political Party & Election Campaign Financing - Latin America](#)
- [Political Party & Election Campaign Financing - Europe & North America](#)
- [Best Practice for Legislative and Administrative Oversight on Party Financing and Campaign Expenditure](#)
- [How can NGOs Effectively Lobby for Legislative Change and Better Practice](#)
- [Regional Case Study](#) - Indonesia
- [How NGOs Can Effectively Monitor Election Campaign Income and Expenditure](#)
- [Regional Case Study](#) - South Korea
- [Misuse of State Resources](#)
- [Regional Case Study](#) - Philippines

### Buenos Aires DOF, 25–28 July 2006

The theme of the Latin American DOF, Buenos Aires, Argentina, was: “Monitoring Political Party Financing and Campaign Expenditure”. The Forum was attended by 26 participants from 19 different organizations from 17 countries of Latin America, two representatives from the European Commission and NEEDS staff.

Main topics covered:

- General overview about Latin American regulatory frameworks and practices
- From laws to best practices
- Strengths and weaknesses of legislation in Latin America
- Is it possible to promote best practices without reforming legislation?
- How to work with, assist and/or monitor political parties? Do we have to work with, assist and/or monitor political parties?
- Is it possible to build a bridge between parties and NGOs? One model for all parties or tailor-making?
- Which tools, information and expertise can NGOs offer to parties? Can we develop any tools together with parties?
- How to work with, assist and/or monitor regulators? Do we have to work with, assist and/or monitor regulators?
- Is it possible to build a bridge between NGOs and regulators? One model for all or tailor-making?
- Which tools, information and expertise can NGOs offer to regulators? Can we develop any?
- How to work with, assist and/or monitor the media: electoral advertising and coverage of electoral broadcasting? Do we have to work with, assist and/or monitor media and journalists?
- Is it possible to build a bridge between NGOs and media? One plan for all or tailor-making?
- How to make private sector get involved in transparent political funding: donations, lobbying, favours and TI's Business Principles
- Do we have to work with, assist and monitor private sector? Why? Is it possible? How to do it? Identify sources of reluctance or acceptance
- Is it possible to build a bridge between NGOs and the private sector? One plan for all or tailor-making?
- Which tools, information and expertise can NGOs offer to the private sector?
- Misuse of public resources: How to monitor, prevent and/or control governments: advertising and patronage
- Do we have to work with, assist and monitor governments and prevent the misuse of public resources?

**Bratislava DOF, 12-14 December 2006**

The theme of the European DOF in Bratislava, Slovakia, was "The Use of IT in the Electoral Process and the Implications for Observation Methodology". It had representatives from 12 CSOs from the targeted region.. In addition there were representatives from the EC, the Council of Europe, the OSCE/ODIHR and the NDI.

Main topics covered:

- Overview of the work of election commissions
- Ways in which IT is being used: Voter registration, Polling station mapping, Voting – various types of "e-voting", Transmission of polling station results, Tabulation, Publication of results
- Criteria and Best Practices for incorporating increased use of IT
- E-Voting – Practices in e-voting and principles/best practices to ensure integrity of the vote, secrecy and transparency
- Overview of international and regional standards and best practices for elections
- Identification of potential areas of concern regarding increased use of IT
- NDI – West Bank & Gaza
- Carter Centre – Venezuela

- OSCE/ODIHR
- NGO / ENEMO (European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations)
- What are the key shortcomings within existing observation methodology to adequately observe use of IT in Electoral Process
- What are the main challenges EOMs have faced so far
- Identification of benchmarks for assessment
- Identification of specific practices that have proven successful
- Identification of key expertise required by EOMs
- What types of follow-up can NGOs / INGOs / IGOs undertake to address the challenges

### **Casablanca DOF, 23-25 March 2007**

The theme of the Middle East and Mediterranean Region DOF in Casablanca, Morocco, was "Election Observation in the Region". It had representatives of 20 DOGs from 11 countries. In addition there were representatives from the EC Delegation in Rabat and NEEDS staff.

#### Main topics covered:

- EU EOMs: The policy and work of the commission in relation to elections
- Support to domestic observers
- Responses to problematic elections
- International standards and commitments
- Applying international standards and international best practice
- Analysing legal frameworks
- Role of civil society in election observation
- Challenges faced
- Solutions found
- Developing allies (with authorities, parties, the international community etc.)
- Distinctions between conflict and peace situations
- Establishing credibility
- Developing allies
- Increasing capacity
- Working with different organisations in coalition
- Recruiting, training and managing observers (long term and for Election Day)
- Gathering reporting over the long-term election period
- Gathering reporting from Election Day coverage
- Checking results tabulations
- How to communicate your work to build awareness and confidence in your observation
- How to draft an effective report
- When and how to release reports
- Lobbying
- International perspectives on gender participation
- Obstacles to female participation in election activities
- Successful strategies for promoting female involvement
- Preventing election fraud in female polling stations
- Promoting women's involvement in election observation
- Summary of the Forum
- Identification of ways forward for non-partisan domestic observation in the region.

### **DOF in Senegal – Africa, French Speaking Forum**

*April 2007? – pending, under preparation*

**DOF in Uganda** – Africa, English Speaking Forum  
*July 2007? – pending, under preparation*

**Annex 2.6.**  
**Outline of the Technical Assistance Project in Ecuador**

**Project Goals**

- Capacity building of the Ecuadorian NGO Participación Ciudadana, through training of media monitors and 'tutoring'.
- A comprehensive analysis of the media during the campaign of the presidential elections in Ecuador in November 2006.

**Methodology**

Training provided to local media monitors by an expert from Osservatorio di Pavia

- Training of 15 media monitors in Quito
- Training of 15 media monitors in Guayaquil

Training provided to the Director of Participación Ciudadana in Pavia

- Media monitoring techniques
- Economic sustainability of media monitoring activities.

Support provided during the campaign (29 August to 15 October 2006)

- 'Tutoring' through the scrutiny and quality assurance of reports and statistics produced by the beneficiary NGO during the election campaign.

**Outputs**

- Monitoring of the following TV channels:  
Gamavi Gamavisión, Teamazonas, RTS, Ecuavisa, TC, Canal UNO and Ecuavisa Internacional
- Monitoring of the following radio stations:  
Sonorama, Bolívar, Quito, Tarqui, FM Mundo, Democracia, Centro, Visión, Sucre, City, Super k800, Caravana, Morena, CRE, Tropicana and TC Radio
- Monitoring the following newspapers:  
El Comercio, Hoy, Últimas Noticias, La Hora, Metrohoy, El Universo, El Expreso, Telégrafo and Súper.

**Annex 2.7.**  
**NEEDS Publications and Website**

**NEEDS Publications**

- *Public Information Pamphlet* (in English)
- *Handbook for EU Election Observation Missions* (in English, French and Spanish)<sup>49</sup>
- *'Benchmarks for Electoral Standards: A Guide for EUEOMs'* (in English)
- *'Promoting and Defending Democracy: The Work of Domestic Election Observer Groups Around the World'* (in English)

**Structure of NEEDS-2 Website**

- NEEDS Network Profile (presentation of NEEDS partners)
- Training Seminars (agenda of seminars and application procedures)
- Support to Domestic Observers (presentation of DOF and the Global Observer Forum, whereas information on TA projects is not available)
- Publications (also with links to other available resources)

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<sup>49</sup> The first version of this Handbook was produced by EU EOP and is now being updated by NEEDS-2.

**Annex 2.8.**  
**EOM Guidelines and Templates To Be Delivered by NEEDS-2**

**Guidelines on the Deployment of Long-Term Observers**

- Geographical coverage
- Population centres
- Problematic areas
- Minorities
- Issue-related themes
- Logistics/Security

**Guidelines on EOM Weekly Reports**

1. Purpose of Weekly Reports
2. Target Audience of Weekly Reports
3. Preparation of Weekly Reports
4. Frequency of Weekly Reports
5. Weekly Reports: a 'How-To' Guide

**Templates of EOM Weekly Reports**

1. Model Template
2. Examples
  - Opening
  - Mid-mission 1
  - Mid-mission 2
  - Post-election

**Guidelines on Long-Term Observer Reports**

1. Purpose of LTO Reports
2. Type and Frequency of LTO reports
  - Weekly Reports
    - Weekly LTO Overview (or 'Weekly Checklists')
    - Weekly LTO Reports
  - Ad Hoc Reports
    - Spot/Incident Reports
    - Campaign Rally Reports
    - Pre-election LTO Reports
    - Final LTO Reports
3. Target Audience for LTO reports
4. LTO Reports: A 'How To' Guide
5. Use of Weekly Reports
  - Analysis of Weekly Reports
  - Analysis of ad hoc Reports
  - Filing of Reports

**Templates and Examples**

1. Weekly Overview/Checklist
2. Weekly Report – Opening
3. Weekly Report – Detailed
4. Spot/Incident Report
5. Campaign Rally Report
6. Pre-Election Report
7. Final Report

- 8. Guidelines for meetings
- 9. Summary of Weekly Reports

#### **Guidelines on STO Report Forms**

- Report Form on Voting Procedures
- Model STO Report Form on Voting
- Report Form on Counting Procedures
- Model STO Report Form on the Count
- Regional/Constituency Commission Reports
- **Analysing the Observation Data**
- Observation of the Voting Process
- Qualitative Comments by Observers
- Relationships Between Questions
- The Vote Count

10.1

10.2 Templates

- Voting Report Form
- Counting Report Form
- Output (Aggregate Figures)

#### **Guidelines for Briefings of Long-term Observers**

10.3. Model Structure of Briefing

- The mandate and structure of the mission and the observer Code of Conduct,
- Political, electoral and social background of the country,
- List of required meetings and main questions and issues to follow,
- Reporting format and timetable,
- Logistic support to STOs,
- LTO deployment information, and
- Financial and administrative tasks of the LTO

10.4 Guidelines for the Production of an LTO Briefing Pack

10.5 Model LTO Briefing Pack

10.6 The Observation Mission

- Background to EU Observation Missions
- Official Documentation
- Mission Structure and Code of Conduct
- Provisional EUEOM Timetable

#### **10.7 Background**

- Articles: Political and Electoral Background

##### *The Election*

- The Election at a Glance
- Political Party Spectrum
- The Electoral System

##### *Laws*

- Election Code and Relevant Laws and Regulations

##### *Long-term Observation*

- Role of the Long-term Observer
- LTO Deployment Areas
- EOM Weekly Reporting Structure
- Guidelines for Meetings

- Guidelines for National Staff
- Logistics and Finance Information
- Language Guide/Terminology/Map
- Telephone Contact List
- Health and Security Information

### **Templates and Examples**

#### LTO Briefing Schedule

- LTO Briefing Pack – Examples
- Code of Conduct
- Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation. At a glance - template
- Key words (terminology)

### **Guidelines for Media Reporting**

#### A. Preliminary Statement

- 1) Media Environment and Coverage.
- 2) The media monitoring results posted on the Mission website.
  - Opening part: brief description of the media sample and the period monitored.
  - Results for each monitored media outlet.

#### B. Final Report

- Media Landscape
- Legal Framework for the Media and Elections
- Monitoring of Media Coverage of the Elections

#### C. Weekly Report

- 1) Weekly Report One - 'Start of Mission'
- 2) Mid-Mission Weekly Reports

#### D. Press Digest

### **Templates and Examples**

### **Guidelines on Producing Preliminary Statements**

- A. The Role of a Preliminary Statement
- B. Key Criteria for a Preliminary Statement
- C. Target Audience for Preliminary Statements
- D. Issuing the Preliminary Statement
- E. Preparation of the Preliminary Statement
  - Pre-Preparation
  - First Drafting Phase
  - First Review and Comments Phase
  - Second Drafting Phase
  - Final Version
  - Translation
  - Sharing the Preliminary Statement
- F. Liaison with Other Observer Delegations
  - Observer Delegations from the European Parliament
  - Other International Observer Delegations
- G. Preliminary Statements: a 'How To' Guide
  - General Guidelines

- Language of Reports
- Headline Conclusion
- Preamble
- Executive Summary
- Background
- Legal Framework
- Election Administration
- Voter Registration
- Registration of Candidates/Party Lists
- Campaign Environment
- Media Environment
- Participation of Women / Participation of National Minorities
- Civil Society
- Election Day: Polling and Counting
- Concluding Quotes
- Appreciations and Contacts
- H. Press Releases
- I. Press Conferences
- J. Second Preliminary Statements

**Model Template for a Preliminary Statements  
Examples of Preliminary Statements and Press Releases**

**Guidelines for Producing Final Reports**

- A. The Role of a Final Report
- B. Key Assessment Criteria for a Final Report
- C. Target Audience for Final Reports
- D. Preparation of the Final Report
  - Pre-Preparation
  - First Drafting Phase
  - Review and Comments Phase
  - Finalisation Phase
- E. Final Reports: a 'How To' Guide
  - General Guidelines
  - Language of Reports
  - Executive Summary
  - Introduction
  - Political Background
  - Legal Issues
  - Election Administration
  - Voter Registration
  - Registration of Candidates/Party Lists
  - Election Campaign and the Pre-Election Environment
  - Media and Elections
  - Participation of Women in the Electoral Process
  - Participation of National Minorities in the Electoral Process
  - Participation of Civil Society
  - Election Day: Polling and Counting

- Results
- Recommendations
- F. Release of the Final Report

**Model Template for a Final Report  
Examples of Final Reports**

**Guidelines for Producing EU EOM Mission Follow-Up Report**

- Drafting Final Report Recommendations
- Importance of Recommendations for Follow-Up
- (a) Political Follow-Up
- (b) Technical Advice and Assistance
- The Mission Follow-Up Report
- Format of the Mission Follow-Up Report
- Matrix for Proposed Areas of Assistance
- Level of Priority
- Background
- Possible Area(s) of EC-Assistance
- Main activities and results
- Potential Partners

**Annex 2.9.**

**Overall Objectives and Outputs of NEEDS-1 and NEEDS-2**

<b>NEEDS-1</b>	
6 seminars for CT members (90 beneficiaries);	87
Initially, 5 seminars for LTOs (75 beneficiaries) and, upon an extension approved by the European Commission, 9 seminars for 210 LTOs and STOs	211 LTOs and STOs
5 DOFs	Delivered, 110 beneficiaries
Compendium of Election Agreements and Standards	Delivered
Domestic Observer Handbook	Delivered
Public Information Pamphlet	Delivered
<b>NEEDS-2</b>	
25 LTO Coordinators	Delivered
25 Legal/Election Experts	One more seminar forthcoming
25 Media Analysts	Delivered

25 Security and Operations Experts	Delivered
A seminar for Deputy Chief Observers (DCOs)	Delivered
200 Long-Term Observers (LTOs)	In the process of accomplishing these seminars
25 Focal Points from Member States	47 so far, more to be expected (during a FP meeting in September 2007)
A seminar for Press Officers (not initially planned)	Forthcoming
Six DOFs	Four delivered, two more in the process of scoping and preparation; Some 90 beneficiaries
Identification and implementation of three TA projects	One implemented, one suspended, one more not identified.
Production of guidelines and templates	In the process of being tested and delivered (see Annex 2.8.).
Updating of publications	In the process of being delivered
A website	Delivered

## Annex 3

### Feedback from Beneficiaries

#### Annex 3.1. Feedback from Focal Points of Member States Main Findings

<b>FLOW OF INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Retrieval of information about NEEDS seminars by Focal Points?</b>	
From NEEDS	100%
From the European Commission	25.0%
<b>Retrieval of information about NEEDS seminars by observers?</b>	
Provision of information to observers by Focal Points	68.8%
Retrieval of information by observers themselves from the NEEDS website	56.3%
Other	12.5%
<b>NEEDS TRAINEES</b>	
<b>Selection procedures for NEEDS trainees?</b>	
On the basis of the standards set by the European Commission	68.8%
On the basis of standards set by NEEDS	62.5%
On the basis of standards set by the Member States	56.3%
<b>Feedback provided by trainees to Focal Points after NEEDS seminars (in 2006)</b>	
By phone	18.8%
In writing (e.g. a memo)	6.3%
A de-briefing meeting	6.3%
Other	37.5%
<b>Positive comments made by the observers after NEEDS seminars?</b>	
The curriculum of the seminar	81.3%
The venue and logistics	68.8%
The quality of the trainers	62.5%
The quality of the training material	56.3%
<b>Negative comments made by the observers after NEEDS seminars?</b>	
The quality of the trainers	25.0%
The quality of the training material	18.7%
The curriculum of the seminar	12.5%
Other (more case studies needed, selection procedures, etc.)	50.0%
<b>Frequent comments made by observers after EOMs regarding NEEDS training</b>	
Additional areas of expertise to be covered during NEEDS seminars	62.5%

NEEDS training fully appropriate and sufficient?	43.7%
Inaccurate information provided by NEEDS	18.8%
<b>Frequent comments made by observers after EOMs regarding templates needed?</b>	
Are NEEDS templates in line with templates used on EOMs	68.7%
Are NEEDS templates produced so far appropriate and up-to-date	50.0%
Do NEEDS templates cover all the necessary areas of expertise	18.8%

### NEEDS and ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS

#### Has NEEDS helped improve the quality of EOMs?

Definitely	81.3%
<b>What else could NEEDS do to help improve the quality of EOMs? (recommendations)</b>	
A larger number of trainees	62.5%
More focused training	62.5%
More accurate guidelines to be produced	43.8%
A better language balance	43.8%
Other	25.0%

### NEEDS and FOCAL POINTS

#### NEEDS assistance to Focal Points

Organising Focal Point meetings	100%
Provision of useful information	81.3%
<b>What else could NEEDS do for Focal Points? (recommendations)</b>	
Provide relevant information more frequently	81.3%
Provide Focal Points with guidelines more regularly	56.3%
Other (networking and exchange of information between FPs)	56.3%
Facilitate Focal Point meetings more frequently	37.5%

## Annex 3.2.

### Feedback from EU Experts and Observers

#### Main Findings on NEEDS Seminars

### FLOW OF INFORMATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

#### Views on selection procedures for NEEDS seminars

The selection procedures are clear and consistent	40.5%
The selection procedures are not clear	28.6%
The selection procedures are clear, but not consistently applied	14.3%
Other	11.9%

#### Quality of information provided prior to NEEDS seminars

Adequate	82.8%
Related to the training curriculum	35.9%
Logistics-oriented	31.3%

#### Feedback provided by trainees to Focal Points after NEEDS seminars

In writing (e.g. a memo)	26.8%
By phone	24.4%

A de-briefing meeting	14.6%
Other (including 'no feedback')	17.9%

### EVALUATION OF THE NEEDS SEMINARS

#### Positive aspects of the NEEDS seminars

Quality of the trainers	81.3%
Curriculum of the seminars	71.9%
Venue and logistics	60.9%
Quality of the training material	54.7%

#### Negative aspects of the NEEDS seminars

Quality of the training material	14.1%
Venue and logistics	12.5%
Quality of the trainers	7.8%
Curriculum of the seminars	4.7%

#### Appraisals produced by NEEDS staff

Objective and accurate	46.9%
Subjective and inaccurate	12.5%
Taken into account in selection for Election Observation Missions	9.4%
Other (mostly, in relation to selection for EOMs)	17.2%

### NEEDS AND ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS

#### Has NEEDS training helped improve the performance of observers on EOMs?

Definitely	73.4%
Hardly	6.3%
Other	12.5%

#### What else should NEEDS do in relation to EOMs? (recommendations)

Additional areas of expertise to be covered (e.g. e-voting)	51.6%
More cases of best practice to be presented during the seminars	45.3%
More focused training	39.1%
A stronger e-learning component (e.g. training material on the NEEDS website)	28.1%
Other training techniques (e.g. role plays)	28.1%
A higher degree of interaction during the seminars	23.4%
A better language balance (e.g. seminars in French and Spanish, too)	21.9%
More accurate guidelines to be presented in view of EOMs	18.8%
A larger number of trainees	14.1%
Other	4.7%

## Annex 3.3. NEEDS Seminar Appraisal Criteria

### A. Ability to meet demands of LTO/CT Position

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1. High Degree: The participant exhibited a high degree of knowledge of the subject matter.

2. Sufficient Degree: The participant exhibited a sufficient degree of knowledge of the subject matter and/or an ability to adapt and learn quickly, which would indicate their ability to undertake the duties required.
3. Insufficient Degree: The participant exhibited a failure to adequately grasp the subject matter.

#### **B. Ability to work as part of a team**

---

1. High Degree: Excellent sense of team work and ability to work well with others.
2. Sufficient Degree: Did not have any adverse relations and appeared to adequately get along with colleagues.
3. Insufficient Degree: Consistently failed to get along with other participants, showed a marked lack of flexibility in team dynamic.

#### **C. Seminar Language(s)**

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1. Sufficient Degree: Was able to communicate effectively during seminar and appeared to understand instructions, questions and answers.
2. Insufficient degree: Was not able to communicate effectively during seminar and appeared not to understand instructions, questions and answers.

#### **D. Behaviour/Conduct**

---

1. High Degree: Behaved well during the seminar and exhibited excellent diplomatic/political skills during the classes.
2. Sufficient degree: Behaved well during the seminar and did not exhibit any negative diplomatic / political skills during the classes.
3. Insufficient degree: Behaved poorly during seminar (cite examples) and /or exhibited very poor diplomatic/political skills which would represent a problem in undertaking their duties on an EOM.

### **Annex 3.4. Feedback from DOF Beneficiaries Main Findings**

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE COVERED**

- Themes suggested by the hosts of DOFs, not by participants.
- Themes rarely address a top priority, but one of the many priorities in the countries of the participants.
- Regional case studies – not always related to the specific country

context.

### **ORGANISATION & METHODOLOGY**

- Participants – well chosen, though some others could have been invited, too (e.g. from remote areas in the countryside).
- DOFs – properly organised and coordinated.
- Venues – not always well chosen.
- Logistics – adequate
- DOF duration – appropriate.
- Nearly all participants have the chance to express their views, but interaction and exchange of views are not fully achieved.
- Relatively low visibility of the DOFs.

### **BENEFITS AND FOLLOW-UP**

- Interesting to learn what issues are being dealt with in other regions.
- Exchange of views and transfer of know-how during the discussions.
- Useful contacts.
- In many cases confirmation of what DOF participants already know.
- Publication of the main findings of the DOF – not in all cases.
- Similar events held by beneficiaries after DOFs – in few cases
- Training courses as a result of DOFs – in few cases
- In touch with NEEDS since the DOF – in few cases.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Future DOFs to be better focused.
- DOFs could be more inclusive and representative.
- DOFs could cover smaller geographical areas.