CHAPTER THREE

Developing a
Nonpartisan Monitoring
Operation:
An A to Z Guide

This chapter describes the steps necessary to initiate and implement an effective and credible domestic monitoring operation. While the material is designed for use by nonpartisan monitors, many of the principles are applicable to projects that are conducted by political parties as well as international organizations.

Nonpartisan election monitoring organizations often emerge in a country undergoing a transition to a more democratic form of government, where the political environment is characterized by confusion and mistrust. In such a setting, citizens, political parties and candidates may have difficulty securing conditions necessary for fair and meaningful elections. In these circumstances, a nonpartisan monitoring effort strengthens public confidence by championing electoral laws that promote a fair process, by providing dependable sources of public information, and by serving as an impartial witness to the balloting and vote-counting processes.

The chapter is divided into five parts and 26 sections (A-Z) as follows:

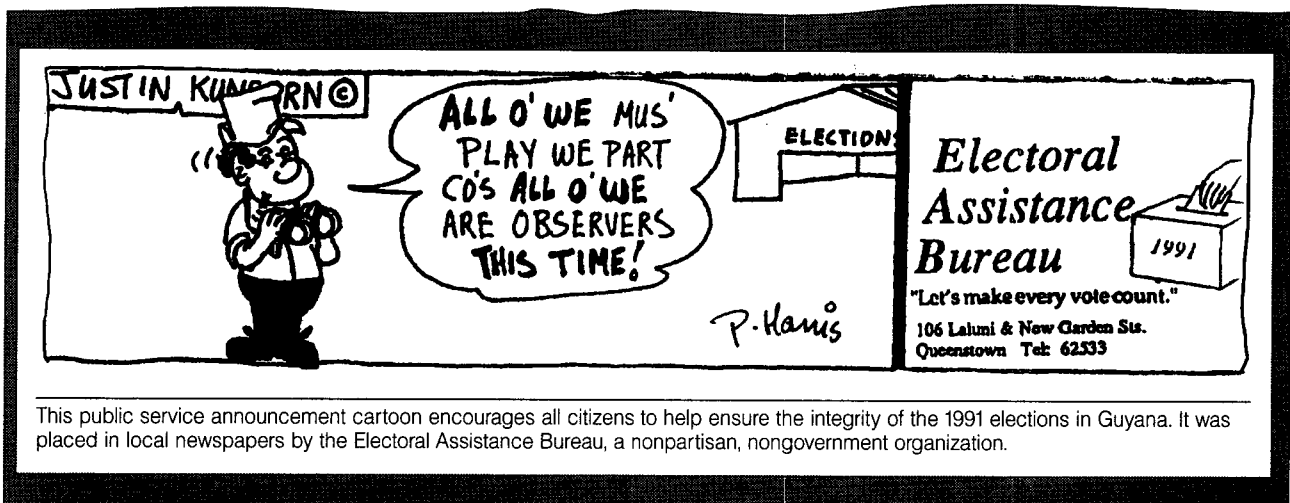|	
PART ONE	Initiating a Monitoring Effort (Sections A-G)
PART TWO	Preparing the Operation (Sections H-O)
PART THREE	Monitoring the Pre-Election Phase (Sections P-T)
PART FOUR	Monitoring the Election and Post-Election Phases (Sections U-X)
PART FIVE	Post-Election Activities (Sections Y and Z)

JUSTIN KUMORN©

ALL O' WE MUS' PLAY WE PART CO'S ALL O' WE ARE OBSERVERS THIS TIME!

ELECTIONS

Electoral Assistance Bureau
1991
"Let's make every vote count."
106 Laluni & New Garden Sts.
Queenstown Tel: 62533

P. Harris

This public service announcement cartoon encourages all citizens to help ensure the integrity of the 1991 elections in Guyana. It was placed in local newspapers by the Electoral Assistance Bureau, a nonpartisan, nongovernment organization.

PART 1

Initiating a Monitoring Effort

A. A Need
B. A General Plan
C. Approaches to Organizing
D. A Committee of Directors and a Democratic Organizational Structure
E. Credibility
F. Operating Funds
G. Office Facilities

In an uncertain electoral environment, a credible monitoring operation improves prospects for a fair election in which the public and the contestants accept the legitimacy of the process. Part One of this chapter provides a summary of the activities that should be considered when preparing to organize and execute a domestic monitoring effort.

A Need

Chapters One and Two describe in general terms the various functions that monitors can serve. These functions include encouraging an election process that is fair, that is free from fraud or intimidation, and that the voters believe is legitimate.[4] Before you decide to initiate your own effort to monitor an election, you should attempt to conclude whether there is a need that would be served by monitoring. In order to make this determination, you should consider several issues, including:

1. whether election laws are clearly defined and meet basic international standards;

2. whether these laws are understood by election officials, political contestants and the public;

3. whether election authorities are impartial and adequately trained;

4. whether there has been a history of electoral problems and/or there is a possibility of manipulation;

5. whether competing political parties and/or candidates are capable of effectively monitoring the electoral processes in order to defend their interests;

6. whether the news media have a history of balanced and objective coverage of elections; and

7. whether the public has a high degree of confidence in how the electoral authorities and political contestants will operate.

Having answered these questions, you should begin to rank the factors that pose the most serious threat to a legitimate election process, for

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[4] For further discussion on the range of activities commonly undertaken by monitors, see *Section B., A General Plan.*

B

example, intimidation during the campaign period, unbalanced treatment by the media, fraud during the voting and counting, or all of the above.

Several sources of information will help you reach a conclusion. You should analyze news reports from the media and other written or recorded studies. You should also interview representatives of institutions that are integrally involved in the election process. These institutions include all political parties, the election commission (nationally and locally), civic organizations that are conducting voter education or promoting human rights, the security forces and the media. Whenever possible, ask them to:

1. explain their role in the elections;
2. evaluate the election process, as it is designed in the abstract and as it is developing in reality; and
3. describe the major concerns of the institution they represent.

In your research efforts, do not overlook the perceptions of average voters. Their impressions, whether accurate or mistaken, represent a fundamental factor in determining an election's credibility.[5]

Once you can make an informed, preliminary assessment of the election process, you should discuss your conclusions among the leaders of your organization or coalition of organizations. Then you can begin to develop a general plan by which you will respond to those needs.

A General Plan

The *general plan* (also called a *program* or *operational plan*) is your strategy for achieving the goals of the monitoring effort, which reflects the organization's priorities based upon your assessment of needs and available resources.[6] Your plan describes the means by which you hope to achieve certain objectives. It is generally a good idea to put the major components of a plan

(including objectives, guiding principles, goals and tasks) in writing.

OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES[7]
Your organization's broad objectives are the foundation upon which any monitoring plan is built. You should begin development of your plan by reviewing the needs of the election process in conjunction with your organization's desires and capabilities. This review involves fundamental policy decisions and typically warrants participation by the organization's leaders.[8] Traditional objectives for monitoring organizations include the following: promoting public confidence in legitimate electoral process; assisting development of adequate election laws and procedures; encouraging public understanding about the election process; helping to mediate and resolve disputes; reducing levels of violence, intimidation and fear; and deterring election law violations and reporting them when they occur. The process of review helps you to conceptualize, analyze and evaluate your plan as well as to eliminate alternatives that are not directly related to achieving your objectives.

Similarly, you should enumerate the principles that will guide every decision and action of the monitoring group. Typical examples of these principles are nonpartisanship and non-violence. You may choose, as other groups have, to adopt the guiding principles of your organization in a written *code of conduct*.

SPECIFIC GOALS AND TASKS
Divide your broad objective(s) into component parts ("goals") that you intend to actively pursue. For any group that monitors elections, a few basic goals to be considered include observation, evaluation, reporting and advocating reforms. You will find that each of these goals may be applied to the various events that constitute an election process. A partial list of the major election events includes:

1. adoption of the election law;
2. registration of voters;

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[5] See *Section Q, Civic and Voter Education* for further discussion of monitoring voters' general level of understanding about an election.
[6] See *Section A., A Need.*
[7] See Appendix II, a brochure prepared by NAMFREL describing the objectives, guiding principles and other essential information about the organization.
[8] See *Section D, A Committee of Directors and a Democratic Organizational Structure.*

[3] delimitation of election constituencies (or "districts");

[4] registration and qualification of political parties and electoral contestants;

[5] the election campaign;

[6] voter education and election official training programs;

[7] voting and counting;

[8] tabulation and announcement of the official election results; and

[9] installation of the election winners.

Your goals can and should be further distilled into sub-goals and so that you can develop a list of specific activities ("tasks") to pursue in order to achieve your goals and objectives. (*See Ilustration 2.*)

Illustration 2

Suppose that your objective is to enhance public confidence in the legitimacy of the election process. In order to accomplish this objective, you may adopt the goal of pursuing a program to ensure that voters are accurately registered. As you prepare to develop your registration program, suppose also you determine that the major problems experienced in past elections have involved:

A.   long distances between registration stations; and

B.   the improper deletion of a significant number of names from the lists.

You then may decide your sub-goals for the upcoming election are:

A.1.   to change the location of registration stations (*e.g.*, from one every 100 kilometers to one every 50 kilometers) to make it easier for average citizens to register; and

B.1.   to prevent fraud in the registration process.

Therefore, you develop a plan of tasks by which you will accomplish your sub-goals and, ultimately, meet your objective. These tasks might involve:

A.1.a.   Advocating changes in the election regulations to make registration sites easier to reach by:

[1]   submitting letters or editorial articles to local newspapers;

[2]   soliciting the support of political parties;

[3]   meeting government officials to persuade them to support your proposed policies; or

[4]   organizing a mass meeting in which the issue is publicly debated.

B.1.a.   Monitoring the registration process by:

[1]   advocating that registration lists be made available to the electoral contestants and the public with sufficient time for review and consideration of amendments;

[2]   announcing your intention to monitor the process and describing your methodology;

[3]   recruiting, training and deploying volunteers to observe the inscription process at local registration centers;

[4]   checking a statistically significant random sample of registrations to verify the accuracy of the voter lists;

[5]   assuring timely access to the voter registry by all political contestants so that they may evaluate whether the registry contains names that should be removed or is missing names that should be included;

[6]   researching all names deleted from the list to determine if they were properly removed;

[7]   writing and distributing a report on the accuracy of the list; or

[8]   recommending a mechanism to ensure that those whose names were improperly removed from the list are re-registered.

B

Part Two and Part Three of this chapter discuss plans and methods for monitoring registration and achieving other monitoring goals. First, consider these general suggestions about how to implement the plan.

Developing an Election Calendar

An election monitoring effort must be well planned and organized in order to meet the many deadlines related to the election. As a preliminary step in your planning, you should develop a calendar that identifies dates and time periods in which the most significant election events will take place, such as when:

1. the election laws and political party laws are debated and adopted or decreed;
2. the election date is announced;
3. the national election commission is appointed;
4. organizations involved in the election process, including nonpartisan election monitoring groups, must register with the proper authorities;
5. voters may register;
6. the public may verify, appeal and amend the voter registration lists;
7. parties and candidates may register;
8. the official campaign period begins and ends, particularly noting the last date that political activities may take place (e.g., releasing public opinion polls, scheduling rallies, appearing on public media, etc.);
9. election officials are recruited and trained;
10. pollwatchers and other monitors apply for accreditation;
11. election materials are distributed to voting sites;
12. votes are cast;
13. votes are counted, tabulated and announced;
14. complaints and appeals are filed;
15. run-off elections (if any) are held; and
16. winning candidates are installed.

The election calendar provides a useful visual aid that can help you determine which events you should monitor, how your plan will be organized, what kind of personnel and financial resources will be available, and what logistical preparations are needed.

Developing a Budget

You should also draft a budget. A budget should reflect both the expected revenue[9] and the allocation of funds to specific tasks. Often, with a new venture, several budgets should be prepared based on high and low revenue projections. Among the expenditures you should anticipate are:

1. rent for office space of national and regional headquarters;
2. office equipment (e.g., computers, typewriters, photocopiers, etc.);
3. utilities (e.g., heat, water, electricity, etc.);
4. salaries for full-time and part-time employees;
5. communication (e.g., telephone bills and installation charges, fax machines, modems, other equipment, postage, etc.);
6. office supplies (e.g., pens, paper, tape, staplers, etc.);
7. printing and copying costs for stationery, brochures, identification badges, posters, training manuals and reports;
8. travel expenses for recruiting, training and actual monitoring;
9. event costs (e.g., facility rentals, food, sound equipment, etc.); and
10. professional services (e.g., accountants, lawyers, computer specialists, etc.)

Some of these expenditures can be avoided if you are able to acquire equipment or services that are donated without compensation.[10] In any event, the operation must establish a system for authorizing and documenting revenues, contributions and expenditures in order to operate effectively and efficiently. Moreover, your reputation for good management and transparent, professional bookkeeping will reflect favorably on the group's credibility as an election monitor.

Managing the Plan

Limit yourself to undertaking only as many goals and related activities as you can accomplish

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[9] See Section F., Operating Funds.
[10] Ibid.

C

while maintaining a reputation for quality and credibility. Additional goals may be added as more time and resources become available.

In a monitoring operation, there is always more work to do than there are people to do it. In such circumstances, it is imperative that you manage efficiently your time and the time of your personnel by:

1. *delegating* tasks to various members of your operation on the basis of geographic region, functional expertise or personal interest, particularly where you have multiple goals and a complex or a multifaceted plan; and
2. *coordinating* the various activities of the organization to assure that the multiple activities are carried out efficiently, consistently and in accordance with your guiding principles.

In some cases, organizations appoint a single person or group of people to coordinate information and activities among the various elements of a monitoring operation. When many activities are being conducted simultaneously at many levels, this liaison function helps to maximize the flow of information to decisionmakers and to allocate resources efficiently.

Coordination can be enhanced by scheduling frequent meetings with individuals responsible for specific tasks, including office managers and logistics staff. Through this forum, you can assure that lines of communication remain open in order to identify and resolve problems that arise during the planning or execution phases of your collective operations. Also, remember that some aspects of coordination should concentrate on the relationship between your field operations (regional and local) and your headquarters. This enables representatives in each region to learn what is happening in other areas of the operation and helps to ensure that the regions receive appropriate attention and support.

Evaluating and Revising the Plan

When you develop the election calendar and plan your activities, you should also create an operations *timeline,* indicating the date(s) by which various activities should be accomplished. From this timeline you will be able to periodically evaluate the execution of your plan and make changes based on whether you have successfully met your scheduled deadlines. One method for evaluating your plan is to answer certain questions, including:

1. Are you achieving initially projected results (*e.g.,* number of volunteers recruited, brochures distributed, training sessions held, etc.)?
2. Are the staff and volunteers meeting their individual responsibilities?
3. Are the media and public responding positively to your efforts?
4. Do you have adequate resources to meet the needs of the program?

Approaches to Organizing

Most domestic monitoring groups organize themselves by using one of three basic approaches:

1. transforming, or temporarily reorienting, a *pre-existing civic group* into an organization whose primary focus is to monitor an upcoming election. Such groups often include, but are not limited to: human rights leagues, trade unions, religious organizations, cultural societies, professional associations and student alliances;
2. creating a *new organization* dedicated to nonpartisan election monitoring; or
3. creating a *coalition* of various organizations whose members will work together to monitor an election.

The organizational model you select will depend on many considerations. Access to resources (personnel and financial), specialized capabilities, and political reputations are only a few of the factors that are pertinent to choosing your approach. There are strengths and weaknesses associated with each model.

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Pre-existing institutions enjoy established organizational structures, experienced leadership and membership, public recognition and, in some

The well-established Human Rights Commission (HRC) monitored the 1993 elections in Pakistan. As a pre-existing organization, the HRC chose to work alone in order to protect its image as a professional, nonpartisan institution. Given its limited membership, the HRC realized it could not monitor every aspect or region of the country alone. Thus, HRC decided to rank its monitoring priorities and concentrated its efforts in districts in which there existed either: (1) a history of serious electoral problems, or (2) a probability of very close election results.

For the 1994 elections in Mexico, leaders of several pre-existing civic organizations decided to monitor a representative sample of the country's 95,000 voting stations (across 32 states). In order to coordinate the recruiting, training and deployment of a sufficient number of volunteers to cover the sample sites, the leaders decided to form the Civic Alliance, which comprised more than 400 individual organizations.

Illustration 3

After many years of the Socialist Party's total domination of Albania's government and civic society, the 1990 and 1992 elections were opened to multiparty competition. Every existing civic organization was somehow affiliated with the ruling party. Individuals who were interested in providing impartial observation of the 1992 elections decided that the only credible approach would be to establish a new organization. In a period of three months, the Albanian Society for Democratic Culture recruited and trained 2,100 observers, including union members, teachers, students and others. The volunteers successfully monitored the voting and counting and were the first organization to announce provisional national election results.

Illustration 4

cases, material and financial resources. In some cases, however, these same characteristics may present problems. For example, the existence of strained relationships with other groups or political parties or having a partisan reputation may hinder future activities and alliances. Similarly, a pre-existing organization may have conflicting priorities or may be reluctant to commit the resources required to sustain a successful election monitoring effort.[11] In the case of a coalition, a further complication may arise if all decisions must be made through protracted negotiations with the leaders of various organizations. *(See Illustration 3.)*

By comparison, establishing a *new organization* can be time consuming. Also, the infancy of any organization is likely to be a period of uncertainty. Uncertainty results naturally from the organization's preliminary efforts to recruit directors and executive officers, develop the plan, solicit financial resources, etc. One particularly difficult challenge is recruiting prominent, influential leaders—who do not have excessively partisan reputations—to participate in a new organization. Another challenge involves developing an effective organizational structure in a short timeframe.

On the other hand, compared to a coalition of multiple groups a new organization need not reconcile competing mandates and management styles. New groups may also benefit from having no pre-existing reputation or ties to partisan interests. Moreover, a new group often experiences a burst of interest and excitement that can, in certain circumstances, make easier such tasks as recruiting, mobilizing volunteers and attracting media attention. *(See Illustration 4.)*

Still, establishing a new organization is rarely easy, as demonstrated in *Illustration 5.*

In addition to selecting a model for organizing, your monitoring effort must develop an organizational structure, recruit and train personnel, and collect resources. The next section discusses the role and formation of your organization's leadership.

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[11] See *Section E., Credibility* for more discussion of this issue.

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When [Zambia's] President Kenneth Kaunda initially rejected the opposition's demand for international observers, a group of Zambians ... proposed the creation of the Zambian Independent Monitoring Team [ZIMT] ....

ZIMT was formally registered as a society under Zambian law in July [1991]. ZIMT recruited a board of directors comprised of prominent Zambians, including businessmen, representatives of the legal, medical, accounting and architecture professions, two student leaders and several members of the clergy.

ZIMT, however, encountered some early internal difficulties. Many of ZIMT's natural constituents, including members of the clergy, students and others, charged that ZIMT was unduly influenced by [the ruling party]. ... Although ZIMT had recruited representatives of the churches and the Law Association for its board, ZIMT insisted that it was not an umbrella organization and that all members of the board served in their individual capacities; they were not designated or chosen as representatives of other groups. Representatives of the church, the Law Association and other civic groups, however, sought an institutional role in the process. ... In early September, as dissatisfaction with ZIMT grew, three church representatives on the board resigned.

At the end of September, six Zambian organizations combined to form the Zambian Election Monitoring Coordinating Committee [ZEMCC]. ... Each of ZEMCC's constituent organizations chose two delegates to serve on the board. ZEMCC published training manuals, sent mobile teams to train volunteers around the country and used the media and the pulpit to deliver messages about their activities and the responsibilities of the citizenry. An estimated 3,500 people participated in ZEMCC training sessions....

The beneficiaries of this effort were the Zambian people, who went to the polls with great confidence. From now on, independent monitoring will be seen as an integral part of the electoral process in Zambia.

This illustration is taken from *The October 31, 1991 National Elections in Zambia*, pp. 63-64, 68-69 (NDI and The Carter Center of Emory University, 1992).

A Committee of Directors and a Democratic Organizational Structure[12]
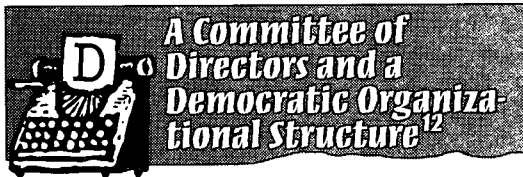
A first step in organizing a nonpartisan domestic monitoring operation involves forming a committee that will direct all major decisions of the operation. This committee is variously called an *executive committee, board of directors, coordinating council* or *steering committee.* Monitoring organizations commonly select one person who will serve as chairman or chairwoman of the committee, as well as someone to fill the positions of vice-chair, treasurer and secretary. Subcommittees are also sometimes formed to deal with special issues such as fundraising, recruiting, government relations, developing internal operating procedures, etc.

The importance of enlisting prominent personalities for this committee cannot be overemphasized. The reputation and personal integrity of the committee members reinforce the legitimacy of the endeavor, encourage ordinary citizens to join the effort and help guarantee that the organization is taken seriously by the government, the election commission, the contesting parties and the media. Committee members need not have a background in politics; indeed, popular sports and cultural figures may be recruited, when appropriate, in order to provide publicity. *(See Illustration 6.)*

Depending upon how its role is conceived, the committee of directors may have several responsibilities, including:

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[12] See generally Appendix II.

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1. hiring an executive director;
2. developing the objectives, guiding principles and initial plan for monitoring the election;

The names and professions of the chairpersons of some notable nonpartisan monitoring organizations include:[13]

NAMFREL, Philippines—José Concepcion, leading businessman and citizen activist, and Bishop Antonio Fortich, a prominent church leader;

Committee for Free Elections, Chile—Sergio Molina, coordinator of the National Accord and a former cabinet minister;

CED, Paraguay—René Recalde, executive secretary of a Catholic lay association;

BAFE, Bulgaria—Kevork Kevorkian, host of the country's most popular television show;

ZEMCC, Zambia—Rev. Foston Sakala, leader of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia; and

NCFE, Yemen—Mustapha Noman, former diplomat and human rights activist.

Committee of directors at work. From *Les Elections et Nous,* a training manual prepared by the Guinea chapter of GERDDES.

3. reviewing and, where necessary, refining the monitoring plan;
4. preparing a budget;
5. raising funds;
6. authorizing public statements;
7. conducting relations with members of the government, political leaders, other civic organizations and the international community; and
8. assuming legal responsibility for the operation (*e.g.*, securing official registration and accreditation for the monitoring operation).

Your organization or coalition will benefit from efforts to adopt democratic structures and procedures for managing its own affairs. For example, mutually agreed upon rules of order (*e.g.*, voting procedures to be used when making major decisions) or by-laws will help you to debate and resolve difficult issues more efficiently and effectively.[14] The alternative, in which non-democratic methods become characteristic of your efforts, may make you vulnerable to accusations of employing a double standard. In some cases, this phenomenon has inspired prominent committee or coalition members to withdraw from or criticize the monitoring effort. These events may prove embarrassing and diminish the group's credibility.

When creating a new organization, you should take steps to ensure that the legal statutes of your entity provide for easy incorporation of new members into the decisionmaking process. It is also desirable to encourage inclusion of members and leaders from various geographic, ethnic, racial or other sectors of the country and to have a balance of men and women. If your group is working on a national scale, it is also important to facilitate acceptance of new chapters into the organization from around the country. You should also consider adopting democratic processes by which local and national leaders, including members of the committee of directors, are eventually elected to, ratified or removed from their offices.

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[13] See *Chapter Two, The Evolution of Monitoring by Nonpartisan Domestic Organizations,* for more background on the activities of these organizations.

[14] See *e.g.,* H.M. Robert, *Robert's Rules of Order* (1893).

Credibility

Projecting an image of credibility enhances the effectiveness of a monitoring operation and, therefore, must play a prominent role in your decisionmaking process. Your credibility may suffer if you:

1. are closely associated with partisan interests or project a partisan image;
2. fail to explain the objectives or methodology of your effort;
3. pursue an unsound methodology;
4. execute activities incompetently; or
5. withhold reports of your activities and findings.

You can take at least four affirmative steps to establish your credibility.

MAINTAIN INDEPENDENCE FROM PARTISAN ASSOCIATIONS AND PROMOTE AN IMAGE OF IMPARTIALITY   Your monitoring effort may become associated with other institutions before or during the course of an election. These relationships arise when you: form a coalition or coordinate your operation with others; receive funding, material assistance or guidance from a particular source; or, in some environments, merely engage in frequent communications (*e.g.*, with government officials or party leaders).

Developing and maintaining relationships with other organizations and institutions is inherent in monitoring and does not automatically impute your credibility. However, you should be careful to avoid excessive reliance on any person or group with partisan interests. If you decide that the monitoring effort should associate itself with partisan interests, take special precautions to assure that the resulting image is balanced and does not appear to favor any electoral contestant. *(See Illustration 7.)*

When raising money for your monitoring operation, be aware that using resources from contributors with a personal or partisan interest in the outcome of the election may create an impression that you will consequently owe a debt of allegiance to these contributors.[15] This phenomenon may occur even if the contribution is made with no expectation of something in return. If you do receive contributions from partisan interests, try to counter potential allegations of bias by insisting on, or at least inviting, equal contributions from all competitors in the election.

You should consistently promote an image of *impartiality* (also sometimes referred to as being *neutral, nonpartisan, apolitical, independent* or *objective*). Your credibility will be strongly affected by the composition of your committee of directors and the reputation of the chairperson as well as by the actions and reputation of senior staff.[16] Similar to the approach of creating a coalition or receiving contributions, you should avoid forming a committee of directors that appears, from the combined associations of its individual members, to favor one political interest. *(See Illustration 8.)*

Illustration 7

In Paraguay four domestic civic organizations formed SAKA, a coalition to monitor the 1993 presidential elections. Before the coalition was created, one of the groups was viewed as nonpartisan, two smaller groups had reputations for favoring opposition political parties, and the fourth group was known to strongly support the ruling party. Although the disparate composition of SAKA made daily operations challenging, it resulted in a balance of partisan interests that established the coalition's reputation for impartiality.

Illustration 8

With less than 30 days before Romania's first multiparty local elections in 1992, the Pro Democracy Association (PDA) faced a crisis. PDA founder and president Adrian Moruzi accepted an invitation by a coalition of opposition parties to run as a mayoral candidate in Brasov, one of Romania's largest cities. Because he aligned himself with a partisan cause, Moruzi was asked by PDA to resign immediately. PDA subsequently designated its vice president, Marian Tata, to serve as acting president and successfully preserved its nonpartisan image.
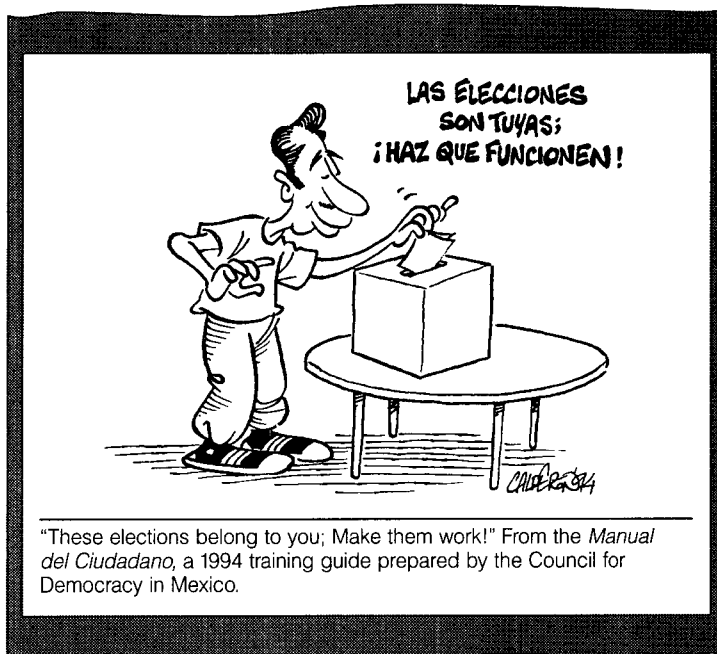
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[15] See *Section F, Operating Funds.*
[16] See *Section D, A Committee of Directors and a Democratic Organizational Structure.*

Similarly, staff and volunteers in your organization must pledge to refrain from working for, or exhibiting any public preference for, the advancement or defeat of a particular political party or candidate.[17] The primary concern of a nonpartisan monitor should be to protect the integrity of the electoral process, regardless of who wins or loses. However, this directive does not, and should not, preclude monitors from expressing their personal political choice in the privacy of the voting booth.

At the same time, you should realize that impartiality and independence from political contestants does *not* mean your organization should have no contact with political parties or candidate organizations. On the contrary, it is essential that you communicate to political contestants what your objectives and guiding principles are and what your activities will entail. (Also, you should not preclude the possibility of contributing to the level of voter education, as many nonpartisan groups have, by sponsoring policy debates and candidate forums.) Open lines of communication will help the contestants to respect and appreciate the purpose of your organization and may encourage them to provide you with information that will be useful to your monitoring efforts.

"These elections belong to you; Make them work!" From the *Manual del Ciudadano*, a 1994 training guide prepared by the Council for Democracy in Mexico.

COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND REGULARLY

Many monitoring groups are hesitant to publicize their activities. This tendency is often prevalent in environments characterized by serious repression or polarization. Nonetheless, your credibility will be enhanced to the extent that you pursue a policy of communicating openly with the political parties, the government and the media. You should clearly and openly present your objectives, goals, methodology and proposed activities in order to answer questions and clarify any misunderstandings about the nature of your effort. (*See, for example, the brochure prepared by the Philippine group NAMFREL in Appendix II.*)

These communications may take the form of press conferences, press releases, advertisements, letters, telephone calls or personal interviews. You should convey any relevant information before you conduct your activities. Such advance notice generally helps to deter fraud or intimidation and may also facilitate the execution of your activities. Moreover, demonstrating your dedication and courage through public pronouncements delivers a strong message that your monitoring effort is serious about its mission.

It is also valuable to share information about your efforts after they transpire. Distributing written and verbal reports about your activities and findings helps you to document your achievements and provides a useful reference for the media and other election observers.[18]

ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF YOUR PLAN AND METHODOLOGY

Your plan and your *methodology*[19] (the specific approach you employ to execute your activities) are liabilities if they are perceived to be unsound, unreasonable or unlikely to be achieved. This means that your plan must be logistically and financially feasible and must, assuming it is properly executed, appear capable of accomplishing your established goals. A plan and methodology can best maintain this integrity if their underlying assumptions are sensible and valid.

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[17] See also *Section I., Recruiting.*
[18] See *Section Y., Post-Election Reporting.*
[19] Issues regarding methodology are addressed in Part Two and Part Three of this chapter in the context of specific election monitoring activities.

For example, suppose that you set a goal of collecting vote count results from 100 counting stations located throughout the country and that you plan to deploy one volunteer to observe the count inside each station. If you can recruit only 10 volunteers, your plan may not be logistically feasible. If you have no money or vehicles to transport your volunteers, then your plan is similarly flawed. Alternatively, suppose that all of your volunteers have been instructed to collect vote count results by simply interviewing the first political party observer they can find who has been inside the counting center. In this situation, your methodology may be criticized because you cannot guarantee that the resulting data is convincingly trustworthy. In other words, even if it is properly executed, critics may argue that your methodology lacks integrity.

Illustration 9

NAMFREL's reputation as a credible, independent monitoring organization was tested when it publicly projected election results that contained serious mathematical errors following the May 1987 legislative elections in the Philippines. Upon discovering the mistake, NAMFREL promptly revised its announcement. Nonetheless, parties opposed to President Corazon Aquino were convinced that NAMFREL was part of a plot to ensure overwhelming victories for pro-Aquino legislators. In the end, NAMFREL's excellent reputation, the organization's prompt retraction and correction, and its willingness to subject the quick-count results to an independent audit convinced a majority of the population that the error was indeed innocent.

F

EXECUTE YOUR PLAN   The best plans and methodologies will be irrelevant if they cannot be properly executed, in which case your operation will lose credibility. Good execution requires the proper personnel and resources and, above all, good training.[20] (See Illustration 9.)

It is common for critics to accuse monitoring organizations of bias or incompetence, particularly when the organizations are new and untested. Your conduct in executing the plan represents your most potent defense against such charges. If the performance of your members is characterized by impartiality, objectivity and professionalism, all reasonable critics will eventually be silenced, and your credibility will be assured.

Operating Funds

Soliciting funds for a domestic monitoring effort poses several challenges. The often short time-frame for organizing an operation places enormous pressure on those responsible for fundraising and may compete with other, seemingly more important duties.

This urgency for raising funds, however, should not compromise the group's impartiality as stated above in *Section E., Credibility.* Depending on the circumstances, a perception of partisanship may be created if your organization accepts funds from the government, political parties or other groups that are supporting electoral contestants.

The election law may or may not provide precise directives regarding nonpartisan fundraising. Violating the terms or spirit of such legal regulations would likely contradict a fundamental goal of the operation and, therefore, should be avoided.

Common sources of funding for domestic monitoring operations include:

1. membership dues;
2. revenue from sales of your organization's paraphernalia, such as buttons, t-shirts, posters and banners;
3. contributions from businesses and wealthy individuals, some of whom may be asked to join the steering committee;
4. donations of materials or services from businesses and individuals, also called "in-kind" or *"in specie"* contributions (*e.g.*, office space, equipment, transport and communication

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[20] See *Section I., Recruiting; Section J., Training;* and *Section K., Training Manual,* for further discussion of this subject.

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devices, legal or accounting services, houses for meetings, food for election monitors, etc.); and

5. grants from domestic or international foundations interested in supporting democratic processes.

International organizations often provide domestic election monitoring groups with a large share of their initial funding needs. However, some groups refuse to accept monetary support from external sources in the belief that generating funds domestically demonstrates popular support and avoids any perception of outside control.

You should assign one or more people to concentrate on soliciting and collecting resources. Many organizations also establish a subcommittee for this purpose within the committee of directors.

As a preliminary step, you should analyze the budget to determine your estimation of expenditures needed to conduct the monitoring effort.[21] Next you should develop a plan by which you will solicit the resources. Some commonly used fundraising techniques include:

1. sponsoring entertainment events (e.g., a large dinner, musical presentations, etc.) at which you collect a fee for entrance or request voluntary contributions;

2. selling goods or services (e.g., artwork, food, cleaning services, etc.) for a profit, which is in turn donated to the monitoring operation;

3. directly soliciting contributions of money, equipment, office space, transportation, etc. (This may be accomplished by using mail, telephone, newspaper, radio, or personal appeals); or

4. writing and submitting grant proposals to foundations and other donor institutions.

In general, you should begin by soliciting resources from people who share your beliefs about the importance of the monitoring effort. Also, allocate a high priority to contacting people who can afford to contribute larger amounts of money or other resources before calling on others.

However, do not underestimate the importance of small donations received from multiple sources; the cumulative effect of many small contributions provides a basis to claim broad public support (which enhances your credibility) and provides a pool of names from which to recruit more volunteers. Finally, it is wise to record the name and address of each contributor as well as the amount and date of his or her donation. These records may be required by law, but more importantly they provide valuable information for the next time you ask for assistance.

Office Facilities

A national office or headquarters provides a place where the staff of the monitoring group can meet to work, plan and communicate among themselves, regional groups and others. Factors to consider in choosing a national office include:

1. financial resources that can be dedicated to this purpose (i.e., how much can you afford to spend?);

2. types of projects anticipated before, during and after election day (e.g., assembling materials, convening meetings, conducting training sessions, holding press conferences, etc.), and the space necessary to implement those projects efficiently;

3. electrical and structural capacity to install communications networks and other equipment (e.g., photocopy machines, telephones and computers);

4. convenience, comfort and security for staff and volunteers, since they may be working late hours under difficult conditions;

5. easy access for ordinary citizens;

6. proximity to other participants in the electoral process; and

7. the possibility of using the facilities after the election, in the event that the organization decides to continue to operate. (See Illustration 10)

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[21] See also the discussion on budgets in Section B., A General Plan.

Illustration 10

Upon its formation in April 1990, BAFE situated its offices on the ground floor of the Palace of Culture, located in the center of Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. The Palace is a well-recognized landmark in the area, with access to conference rooms and other amenities. Bulgarian television also used the Palace of Culture as the headquarters for election-night broadcasts, thus enabling BAFE to relay with ease information collected from its parallel vote tabulation to the television studio.

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Personnel

Monitoring is an activity that relies upon the eyes and ears of observers. Monitoring media coverage in newspapers or on radio may require only a limited number of such observers. By comparison, the effort to administer and carry out a nationwide operation to monitor election-day voting and ballot counting processes often requires hundreds or even thousands of observers as well as a sizable nucleus of managers, professional advisors and support staff. During the 1986 elections in the Philippines, more than 500,000 volunteers participated in NAMFREL's nationwide monitoring operation. Whether a monitoring operation uses 50 or 500,000 observers, human resources are the key to success. This section briefly outlines the different types of *personnel* you may need to recruit and their various duties.

The committee of directors has as one of its major responsibilities the selection of an *executive director* to oversee and manage the operation of the entire monitoring effort. The executive director must have the authority to:

1. direct the daily execution of the general plan;
2. recruit and manage personnel;
3. establish contacts with government officials, political party leaders, journalists and representatives of other organizations; and
4. address any serious problems of a political or administrative nature.

Other staff for a monitoring operation may include:

Administrative staff that manages other staff members and the office(s), answers the telephones, operates computers, drives vehicles and maintains correspondence;

Field coordinators who coordinate communication between centralized decisionmakers and the volunteers at the regional and local levels, and are responsible for recruiting, training, deploying and supervising volunteers;

Public information officers who answer all press questions, generate publicity for the organization and develop civic education materials and training manuals;

Logistics officers who oversee the provision of communication, transportation and certain accommodations for the operations;

Professionals (e.g., lawyers, accountants, demographers, statisticians, computer specialists, etc.) who help prepare formal submissions to the election commission and courts, receive and evaluate complaints regarding election-related problems, pay bills and salaries, ensure financial accountability and design independent, parallel vote tabulations.

Whether compensated or not, the administrative staff and the observers should commit themselves to attend training sessions, to follow instructions and to accept specific assignments. The number of people assigned to each function depends on the population and geographic size of the country, the scope of the organizational plan, and the availability of staff and volunteers.

Recruiting

Once you have determined the type and number of personnel needed to fill various functional roles in the operation, you should begin the process of recruiting. As a first step you will need to identify volunteers with relevant expertise and a willingness to devote time to your effort.

You must begin by answering several questions, similar to those that are considered when developing an organizational plan, raising funds or selecting office space.

HOW MANY PEOPLE, BOTH SKILLED AND UNSKILLED, ARE NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOALS? WHAT TYPES OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE ARE NEEDED? To answer this question you must first determine *what* you plan to monitor. From *Section B., A General Plan* you should have completed the process of analyzing what goals and tasks lie ahead. For example, will you monitor the fairness of the media, the impartiality of police, the accuracy of voter registration, voting and counting, or all of these electoral components? Next you must decide how you will

monitor these components. Will the organization read every newspaper, watch every police officer, check each entry on the voter registry, observe every voting and counting station or will you select a representative sample from which to collect your observations? Also, you must consider factors of time and location. Will you monitor for four months or four days? Will you monitor the entire country or just a few selected regions?

Having answered these questions you will begin to have a picture of how many individuals you will need to recruit. Finally, when calculating the number of workers to recruit, remember to plan for extra volunteers who will be needed to replace workers that are fatigued, sick or absent for whatever reason.

The type of people you must recruit is similarly dependent upon answers to the questions posed in the previous paragraph. In selecting personnel to observe elections, you should consider whether certain skills are necessary—such as reading, writing, speaking multiple languages, knowing simple arithmetic, using equipment (e.g., telephones, computers, facsimile machines, photocopiers, etc.) and driving. You should also think about any physical requirements necessary for the job. Do people need good vision or hearing? Will personnel need to be able to walk long distances or stand on their feet all day?

You also may determine that the services of trained professionals will benefit your efforts. For example, if you plan to monitor legislation or human rights, you may wish to recruit people with legal training; if you are monitoring campaign finance issues, you will want accountants on your team; if you are collecting information on a computer data base to conduct a parallel vote tabulation, specialists in computers and statistics will be extremely helpful.

These professionals can also help administer the operations of the monitoring organization. They may be ideally suited for developing training material, filing the proper papers to register the organization, preparing a budget and accounting for expenditures.

HOW MANY PEOPLE, AND WITH WHAT QUALIFICATIONS, ARE ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THE MONITORING OPERATION AND HOW CAN NEW RECRUITS COMPLEMENT OR IMPROVE THESE PRE-EXISTING ASSETS? You should begin by creating an *inventory* of people who have indicated a willingness to work for the monitoring effort and the skills or experience they offer. *(See Definition 5.)*

Then you should compare the inventory with a complete list of the tasks that need to be completed. Your efforts should concentrate on recruiting people who can perform the tasks for which you do not already have adequate numbers or skills in your personnel inventory. For logistical and political (or cultural) purposes, you should recruit representatives from every region or ethnic concentration in which you plan to monitor. For the more important objective of demonstrating impartiality, it is often desirable to assure that your organization has, to the extent possible, an equitable and diversified composition with regard to gender, ethnicity, religion, region and previous political affiliation.

WHERE DO YOU LOOK FOR PEOPLE TO JOIN YOUR EFFORT? Pre-existing organizations offer the simplest source to find and recruit volunteers. Religious laity groups, business associations, student or human rights organizations and social clubs are common examples. *(See Illustration 11.)*

You may also recruit volunteers from the general public. Recruiting from this source is very time consuming because it requires more effort to explain a project to someone who does not know you or is unfamiliar with your project. Nonetheless, the general public is often the only source from which to find large numbers of volunteers if you are planning an extensive operation.

HOW WILL YOU RECRUIT PEOPLE? WHAT WILL YOU TELL THEM ABOUT THE MONITORING OPERATION AND THE PLANNED ACTIVITIES IN ORDER TO CONVINCE THEM TO JOIN YOUR EFFORTS? You cannot recruit volunteers by simply asking them to appear at voting stations

in•ven•to•ry

Definition 5

An *inventory* is an itemized list, or catalog, of current assets such as property, personnel or funds. It may include descriptions of specific characteristics (*e.g.*, ages, genders and skills of people), quantities in which the assets are available, and information about where they can be found or contacted.

Illustration 11

The large number of mountain climbers who directed local clubs of Bulgaria's BAFE illustrates how a pre-existing organization was used to recruit volunteers. Miroslav Sevlievski, BAFE's executive director, was executive secretary of the Bulgarian mountain climbers association in April 1990. Sevlievski asked many of his former associates to organize BAFE clubs in their regions. Sevlievski's pre-existing contacts helped establish a nationwide network and brought to BAFE individuals with proven organizational skills and an appreciation for teamwork.

on election day to observe the events. Preparing monitors to perform their election-day responsibilities requires careful groundwork and training, which begin at the recruitment stage.

You should plan to invite prospective volunteers to a recruitment meeting. For pre-existing groups, you can ask leaders of those groups for permission to address a regularly scheduled meeting or for their assistance in arranging a special meeting. When recruiting from the general public, you should advertise your meetings through the media, posting and passing out notices, and using "word-of-mouth."

You must therefore develop a short and meaningful message to attract people. When recruiting, your message should:

1. explain the *objectives* of the monitoring operation;
2. describe the *general plan* by which the objectives will be achieved;
3. outline the *activities* for which volunteers are needed and how these activities accomplish the goals of the operational plan;
4. define the *duties and responsibilities* for recruits; and
5. ask members of the audience to *join* your effort. *(See Illustration 12.)*

Remember the importance of asking each volunteer to help recruit more volunteers. Each of them has family, friends and fellow students or co-workers. In the Philippines, NAMFREL developed its corps of 500,000 volunteers by suggesting that each new member recruit at least five other volunteers.

In order for a recruiting meeting to be successful, you should incorporate several approaches into your presentation. First, try to explain the objectives of the monitoring effort in a way that each member of your audience understands why and how these objectives are relevant to his or her life—personalize the presentation.

Second, explain to prospective volunteers that election monitoring is a way that each person can,

individually, participate directly in democratic politics and government. Third, since you are asking people to contribute time and energy for little or no monetary compensation, consider making your presentation in a manner that is appealing and enjoyable. For example, monitoring organizations often provide entertainment, such as music, dancing and food, or the promise of a pleasant social experience as additional inducement to volunteers.

Fourth, make sure that the expectations of the prospective volunteers match the reality of what they will be asked to do and what you will be able to provide them. A successful understanding between you and the volunteers requires that you speak candidly with the prospective monitors about the terms on which they are expected to participate. Tell prospective recruits what they can expect from you regarding instruction, supervision and assignments as well as prospects of payment (or nonpayment) for wages, food, transportation and other expenses.

Also, be frank about your expectations for personnel and the importance of each volunteer to the entire effort. Let them know that the monitoring operation is a team effort that requires a serious commitment. Be sure to inform volunteers about your rules regarding attendance, training, dress, nonpartisan conduct, abiding by the election laws, etc., and explain why each rule is designed to promote conduct that reflects favorably on the monitoring mission.

Finally, do not end your presentation or close the meeting until you have recorded the names and contact information for those who wish to participate in your efforts. Also, you should take this opportunity to tell the new recruits about their next assignment. For example, you might remind them to "come to our first training meeting at the same location and time as this meeting, three weeks from today." All volunteers should be asked to complete an *information card,* which solicits the following data:

1. name, address and telephone number;
2. place of employment;
3. special skills;
4. times/days available for work; and

Pro Democracy Association (PDA) made effective use of the mass media to recruit volunteers before Romania's 1992 nationwide elections for local offices. PDA obtained an agreement from the television station to broadcast a short advertisement promoting civic education. The theme of the advertisement was "Romania Needs You!" It emphasized the importance of the upcoming elections and the need for citizen involvement to monitor the process. It showed PDA volunteers as they conducted their work and asked all interested citizens to join the effort. PDA also recruited volunteers by purchasing newspaper advertisements, hanging posters and distributing leaflets.

Illustration 12

[5] names and phone numbers of other individuals who may be interested in the operation.

(See, for example, the sample information request from NAMFREL in Appendix II.)

The information contained on the cards generally should be compiled in the national headquarters files and, if possible, entered into a computer data base. Take reasonable precautions to assure that this information is not used by those who may want to intimidate volunteers or obstruct monitoring.

WHAT PROCEDURES WILL YOU IMPLEMENT TO ENSURE THAT RECRUITS WILL RESPECT AND ENHANCE THE ORGANIZATION'S REPUTATION FOR CONDUCTING QUALITY, NONPARTISAN WORK? Remember that credibility is an essential characteristic of a successful monitoring operation. One component of credibility is quality. The best way to assure quality in an operation is to recruit and train capable personnel.[22] Actively demonstrating your nonpartisan *bona fides* is another important ingredient in the formula for a credible operation. During the recruiting process, you should develop procedures that will help protect the organization's reputation for nonpartisanship and enhance understanding among volunteers of how they should conduct themselves.

A monitoring group can protect its reputation by limiting its selection of volunteers to those people who: support the group's objectives; will comply with supervision from the group's leaders; and will make a reasonable effort to fulfill their membership duties and responsibilities. Monitoring organizations can use different ways to determine a prospective volunteer's commitment to these guidelines, including a requirement for membership fees. In order to safeguard yourself or at least help insure some level of commitment from your volunteers, you may ask them to sign a pledge card wherein the participant promises to conduct all monitoring activity in a nonpartisan manner during the election period. *(See Illustration 13.)*

Having taken steps to influence the type of individual who is admitted into the monitoring effort, you should also develop procedures to control the volunteers who *remain* in the operation. Often there are some people initially recruited to join your organization who later behave in a manner that forces you to remove them from the ranks. To prepare for this eventuality, you should put into writing the criteria and procedures by which personnel will be removed. You should distribute and clearly explain your policy to all newly recruited personnel during their initial orientation or in their training sessions.

I

Illustration 13

In Guyana, the civic group called the Election Assistance Bureau (EAB) requested its observers to sign the following:

OBSERVER'S PLEDGE
Local Authorities Elections 1994

I, the undersigned, hereby pledge as follows:

1. That I agree to serve on behalf of the Election Assistance Bureau as a polling place Observer at the Local Authorities Elections on 8th August 1994.
2. That I am neither an activist no a candidate for any group or party contesting these elections.
3. That I have attended a training session and that I fully understand the duties of an Observer.
4. That I shall execute my duties impartially and objectively and to the best of my ability, and in keeping with the directions for observing provided by the Electoral Assistance Bureau.
5. That the reports I shall give, both orally and in writing shall represent an accurate account of the proceedings witnessed by me.

_____
Signature

_____
Name in Block Letters

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[22] See *Section J., Training.*

J

Training

You can help guarantee the quality and impartiality of your operation by training personnel in the skills and general information relevant to election monitoring.

Most personnel, especially the actual observers, understand their role in the monitoring effort only after they have completed a training program. Careful consideration, therefore, should be given to the design of the training program, which forms an integral part of the overall election monitoring operation. In addition to providing instruction to the prospective monitors, a training program demonstrates to the public that the group is well organized and is approaching its mission in a methodical manner. It also enables personnel to meet each other and to promote enthusiasm, loyalty and a sense of shared dedication to the mission.

Training programs for prospective monitors vary in scope, intensity and duration. The following are key questions to examine when organizing a training program:

1. Who is available to conduct the training sessions? (e.g., leaders of the organization, a trained cadre of junior officers, functional experts, international experts, local officials, etc.);

2. Who will be the audience for the training sessions? (e.g., future trainers, pre-election or election-day monitors, political party pollwatchers, government officials, journalists, etc.);

3. What training materials and documents should be prepared? (e.g., a description of the organization—including its goals, important dates, names, addresses and telephone numbers; instruction manuals; checklists or other forms; a code of conduct; election laws; other teaching devices such as sample election materials, flip charts, transparencies for an overhead projector, audio and video tapes, etc.);

4. What logistical arrangements and what costs are involved in conducting the training

program? (e.g., meeting rooms, transportation, per diem, food, lodging, etc.);

5. What information, instructions or skills do you intend to convey during the training?

6. How sophisticated are the members of your audience and how familiar are they with the objectives of the organization, the legal and administrative procedures for the elections and the constraints involved in working with a nonpartisan organization?

7. What format(s) should be used to communicate different types of information? (e.g., lectures, workshops, question and answer sessions, simulations or role-playing);

8. What systems will you employ to convey the training information to appropriate personnel?

SYSTEM OF TRAINING When you conceptualize your approach to training you will face the challenge of conveying the necessary information, instructions and skills to your personnel.[23] If you are attempting to monitor events that happen at the local level (e.g., voter registration, voting and counting, intimidation, etc.) you will probably also need to recruit and train your observers at the local level. The description offered here applies principally to training that is intended to reach the local level.

Important factors in selecting your approach include how much time you have and what type of financial resources, trainers, communications and transportation are available for this endeavor. At one extreme, you may have the time and resources to pursue a comprehensive, *"grassroots"* approach in which individual members receive personal training at the most local level. This approach has the advantage of allowing trainers to distribute materials, utilize visual aides and conduct simulations. It also provides members of the audience an opportunity to ask questions directly to the trainer. At the other extreme, you may be limited to indirect training. Using the mass media, such as newspapers or radio, is one example of indirect training. While this enables you to reach a large number of people in a short

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[23] See also *Section B., A General Plan, Section I., Recruiting* and *Section M., Logistics,* for more discussion on the subject of training personnel.

time, it severely limits the use of instructional aids and the opportunity to ask questions.

Monitoring organizations typically adopt some combination of the following three systems: (1) training the trainers (the pyramid system), (2) mobile workshops, and (3) national training days.

The *pyramid* system is so named because if you draw a picture to describe the flow of information from the original trainer to the most localized trainee (the local monitors) it looks like a pyramid. The concept behind this approach is that if you concentrate on providing information, instructions *and techniques for conducting the training* to a small group of individuals, they will learn the material well enough that they can repeat the training to others. In effect, every group that receives training is empowered to repeat the training; for example, if you train 10 people adequately, they then become trainers. If each member of this group trains 10 more people, they will have contacted 100 individuals, who can repeat the process to reach one thousand, and so on.

This system of personal contact requires transportation. In order to disperse the training information throughout the country, you must either bring the local audience to the trainers or bring the trainers to the local audience. The former system assembles individuals from outlying regions or cities in a central location (*e.g.*, the capital or other important cities) so they, in turn, can be dispatched to their homes where they will repeat the training to others. The newly trained trainers then repeat the process for individuals who are brought in from outlying villages and towns. The villagers and townspeople are, in turn, dispatched to their homes to continue the pattern.

This decentralized approach enables you to quickly build a large organization using minimal logistical and organizational resources. However, since your direct oversight is largely absent at the training conducted outside of the capital, you should realize that you will have less control over who is recruited and the quality and consistency of their training.

A second system, in which a group of trainers disperses to visit local audiences who then repeat

the training for family and friends in the same locale, is a simple variation on the approach described above. This system typically employs *mobile teams* of two or three trainers each.

This system helps preserve quality and consistency in the training from one level to the next. It may also conserve costs by minimizing the number of people who need to be transported to the training forums. One potential challenge is finding enough qualified trainers who are available to travel throughout the country for an extended period.

In a further variation, mobile teams can be used as a substitute for the system of training the trainers. Under this scheme, special teams are assigned to conduct a circuit, departing from a central location to conduct local training programs along a route of planned stops, eventually returning to the central headquarters. These trainers may represent the only source of information, instructions and skills that are conveyed to audiences even at the most local levels. This model, which depends on the continual use of experienced trainers, helps ensure that the training meets a high standard for quality and uniformity. In addition, the presence of trainers from central headquarters often generates enthusiasm locally and may encourage recruitment.

Another option involves sponsoring *national training days*, during which training sessions are conducted simultaneously throughout the country. While this approach allows the organization to create a high profile national event, it initially requires an intensified period of activity when many trainers must be trained and a massive quantity of materials must be created, produced and distributed.

TRAINERS   It is important that you identify and prepare the trainers who will, in turn, train all the individual personnel in your monitoring operation. People who have experience with speaking to large groups and conveying instructions are often ideal candidates. Many monitoring organizations have relied upon school teachers, professors, and church and civic organization leaders to serve as trainers.

AUDIENCE   You should consider inviting other groups to your training sessions in addition to your recruits and prospective recruits. Specifically, by inviting (or at least notifying) government officials, political party representatives, journalists or international observers to some of your training programs you can enhance your reputation, demonstrate the nonpartisan nature of your work, and foster relations with these important institutions. In many cases, participation by these organizations will add to the quality of the program. For example, you can invite them to explain and interpret the election laws and related procedures, to participate in question and answer sessions, or just to observe the discussion. On the other hand, there are some occasions when participation by people from outside of your organization can inhibit or interfere the training. In these cases, the

better practice is to limit participation to members or supporters only.

AGENDA   You should prepare an *agenda* for the training program that provides an opportunity to discuss the following topics:

1. introduction of trainers and participants;
2. introduction of the organization and the purpose of the training program (*e.g.*, description of the monitoring group, its mandate and objectives and its activities to date; explanation of the goals and agenda for the training session);
3. distribution of training manual and other materials;
4. review of election procedures;

J

Illustration 14

In Togo, the domestic monitoring group GERDDES conducted simulations of voting for audiences of prospective volunteers. The purpose of the simulations was to give the audience a clearer idea what problems to expect when monitoring election day. In advance of the exercise, trainers had prepared all of the necessary materials and equipment:

* the *registration list* was a sheet of lined paper with a place to mark the voters name, address and signature;
* *ballots* were made from cut up pieces of plain white paper. The symbols for three candidates—a rooster, a star and a flower—were hand-written on the ballots;
* a *ballot box* was made using a cardboard box with a small opening cut in the top;
* a felt tip marker was acquired to put ink on the fingers of those who had voted; and
* a curtain from a nearby window was stretched around a chair to make an improvised *voting booth*.

Trainers began by selecting five members of the audience to be *election officials*. The election officials sat at a table in front of the room. Their first responsibility was to conduct voter registration. Trainers then chose 20 volunteers from the audience to register as *voters*. When registration was complete, *monitors* were taken from the audience: one to represent each political party, two representing a nonpartisan domestic monitoring group and two representing international observers. Finally, one volunteer was assigned to represent the military.

Next, the voting process began according to the election law of Togo. The election officials supervised every stage of the process—opening the voting station, casting ballots, closing the voting station, resolving disputes, counting ballots and announcing results—and were closely watched by the observers.

To make the exercise more challenging, trainers conspired with some of the voters and election officials to simulate irregularities. These included attempts at double voting, voting without registering, stuffing the ballot box, campaigning inside the voting station, etc. Observers and officials were taught how to look for the problems and record any complaints. Questions from the audience were encouraged throughout the simulation.

5. discussion of monitoring techniques;
6. simulation and role-playing exercises;
7. elaboration of situations and specific challenges that monitors may encounter in the course of their work;
8. timetable for implementing plan of action; and
9. questions and answers.

Some of these topics can be discussed in five or 10 minutes. Others, such as the review of election procedures, may require one or two hours. Remember to provide brief intermissions. Experience has shown that audiences have difficulty maintaining their concentration for more than 50 minutes at a time, no matter how interesting the subject matter.

Simulations have proven to be one of the most popular and effective methods of communicating information about election processes and monitoring. A training agenda should allow sufficient time for simulation exercises and a period to exchange questions and answers. *(See Illustration 14.)*

Training Manual

If possible, you should produce a training manual (or handbook) to reinforce the information communicated during the training program. Creating a training manual assists both the organization and the volunteers. The act of writing and producing the document prompts an organization to further refine its goals and develop the plan by which these goals will be achieved. Volunteers benefit from a written resource that can be consulted and reread after the training session has ended.

A clearly and concisely written manual should outline the role, duties and responsibilities of election monitors. A good manual is easy to use, allowing readers to quickly find information on a particular topic. Pictures, graphics and anecdotal illustrations help make the text easier to understand.

The precise contents of the training manual may vary depending on the unique environment of each election and the focus of your monitoring activities. Most domestic monitors produce manuals that contain some or all of the following basic information:

1. an introduction, which briefly describes the formation of the organization and its principal goals;
2. a concise historical perspective, which explains the significance of the upcoming election;
3. a short overview on the evolution of nonpartisan election monitoring efforts, which should reassure the observers that the task before them is not an impossible one and has been accomplished by other organizations (examples may be taken from the descriptions of groups included in Chapter Two of this *Handbook*);
4. a synopsis of the election code and regulations, including a description of the responsibilities of various election officials, the election procedures, and the mechanisms for recording and filing complaints (samples of these materials are often published by the central election commission and may be copied and incorporated into your own materials);
5. a code of conduct for observers describing guidelines for acceptable behavior; and
6. a description of the activities undertaken by observers before and during election day, and the details involved in serving as an election monitor, including:

   a. when to arrive at the assigned site;
   b. with whom to speak upon arrival:
   c. what to do if problems arise; and
   d. where to deliver written or oral reports.

In addition, the training manual should include specially designed *checklists* or other forms on which the monitors may record their observations, accompanied by an explanation of how to

properly complete the forms. (See Appendix III.)

If your monitoring operation becomes more sophisticated or if teams are assigned for specialized functions, you may wish to prepare correspondingly specialized manuals. Potential topics for specialized manuals include:

1. monitoring the pre-campaign period (e.g., electoral reforms, voter registration, party registration, candidate nomination, delimitation of electoral districts, etc.);
2. monitoring the campaign period (e.g., media coverage, intimidation, voter education, political party activities, campaign finance, impartiality of election officials, etc.);
3. monitoring preparedness of election administrators;
4. monitoring the voting and counting;
5. implementing a parallel vote tabulation; and
6. monitoring the electoral complaint process.

You should carefully calculate the amount of time needed to produce training manuals from conception, to writing, to printing, to distribution. There is a tendency to underestimate the length of time required to complete this process, which may delay training and disrupt the overall monitoring plan. In any event, your budget should provide necessary funds to print and distribute the manual to all observers so they can keep it for future reference throughout their monitoring assignment.

Public Information

In your general plan, you should include a component on providing information about your monitoring effort to the public and the press as well as to members of your organization. A well conceived and properly executed public information strategy determines whether you recruit and train enough volunteers to implement your operation and whether your message is heard, understood and influential. Therefore, you must learn to effectively use letters, literature, advertise-

ments, news stories, interviews, meetings and other channels of communication.

Managing public information is one of the most difficult duties in a monitoring operation. Thus, you should assign one or more *public information officers* or *press officers* to fulfill your public information needs. Individuals who have journalistic or editing experience and the capacity to develop a message make ideal candidates for the job. Experience in using or creating artwork, designing texts and printing is also helpful. It is especially important that your public information officers can adeptly communicate in front of a television camera, a radio microphone or a large audience.

The public information office has several responsibilities. The first of these is working with the committee of directors and the executive director to identify your organization's communication needs and priorities. Then, in conjunction with developing the general plan, the public information office should design a strategy for achieving these needs. Components of a good strategy include identifying the type of communication (e.g., educational, persuasive), the audience and the method of communication that will best serve your goals.

The public information office is also responsible for developing the specific message your group wants to communicate. The message may serve to:

1. recruit or train volunteers;
2. advise the public and election officials about your methodology and proposed activities;
3. answer questions or accusations aimed at your organization; and
4. report upon your activities, findings, evaluations and/or recommendations.

All information that is distributed outside of your operation should consistently and accurately reflect your objectives and activities. For this reason, it is important that all substantial communications, from training manuals to press releases, be conceptualized and reviewed by the public information office with the assistance of other relevant members of your operation.

All other members of your organization should exercise prudence in talking to media reporters. Most organizations discourage everyone except the public information officers from speaking with the media, unless they are authorized to do so, in order to avoid sending conflicting messages or premature evaluations. In furtherance of this concern, you should consider developing and distributing media guidelines to all members of the organization so that they know how you want them to interact with the media and how to direct inquiries to the public information office.

Once the strategy and message have been developed, it is the public information office's constant obligation to convey the information inside and outside of your organization. This duty commences when the organization first announces its existence and intention to monitor the elections and continues until all of its findings are reported and questions are answered.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION   You can communicate your message through three types of channels: (1) personal contact; (2) publications; and (3) mass media.

Personal Contact

Whenever you address an audience in person, you are employing a channel of communication called *personal contact*. Private meetings, telephone calls, public rallies, conferences and interviews represent several types of personal contacts.

Personal contact conveys the style and emotion of your organization and your message. Given the immediacy and interactive nature of this medium, you can also emphasize important points and tailor your presentation based on the reactions of the audience. Most important, this channel of communication provides an opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

Personal contact is especially useful in countries where there is a low level of literacy and where the mass media reaches a limited audience. While personal contact is perhaps the most powerful method for communicating a message, it has the disadvantage of being less efficient than publications or the mass media.

Publications

Many monitoring groups employ *publications* such as posters, informational leaflets, instructional manuals and written reports in order to communicate a message. (*See Definition 6.*)

Publications can be designed, written and delivered by your organization independently. With the exception of the actual printing or reproduction process, publications offer a monitoring group the advantage of not requiring the assistance, or potential for interference, of an intermediary (such as a newspaper, radio or television).

As a first step, the public information officer should prepare materials explaining basic information about your organization. Such materials often take the form of a document (variously called a *leaflet, pamphlet* or *brochure*) of one to 10 pages that can be distributed in the mail or by hand.[24] The brochure may serve many uses. You may distribute it with press releases, hand it out at meetings, or include it in other publications. It should describe the origins, objectives and methodology of the organization, and should include basic information about the organization's leaders, associated members, location, telephone number, etc. Many organizations recycle some or all of this information by attaching it or inserting it into the text of other written materials, including proposals, training manuals, press releases and reports.

pub•li•ca•tion

The term *publication* may be used to indicate an issue of printed material that is offered for distribution. In this section of the *Handbook*, publication refers to materials prepared and made public *by the source* (in this case, the monitoring group) of the message, employing a medium within the source's control, as distinguished from those communications that are prepared and disseminated *by others* about the monitoring group or that employ a medium outside the group's control (*e.g.*, the newspapers or radio, discussed below).

Definition 6

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[24] See, for example, the NAMFREL brochure in Appendix II.

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Special attention should be placed on the task of issuing written reports. Monitoring organizations around the world have written various types of reports, including: election law analyses, proposals for reforming the election system, pre-election assessments, studies of media fairness, post-election reports (preliminary and interim), as well as comprehensive reports about the entire electoral process.

The reports about the information you collect are the public record from which your credibility is assessed and by which the election's legitimacy is evaluated. These reports contain answers to the questions about your objectives, methodology, execution, impartiality, findings, conclusions and recommendations. The information you share and the manner in which you deliver it will, in large measure, determine the influence of your organization. The reports you write and distribute are also a valuable source of information for future generations of election monitors in your country. Finally, reports provide tangible evidence of your activities and may contribute to your success in obtaining funds and recruiting volunteers in the future.[25]

It is worth noting that many fledgling organizations are unaccustomed to, or intimidated by, the prospect of publishing information about themselves or their findings. It may be wise, therefore, to address certain questions during your planning meetings. For example, you should determine what your approach to report writing is and who, within your organization, is responsible for drafting, editing and publishing.

If you decide to issue reports, you must also decide when, and to whom, they should be distributed. You must also determine how much information to share and on what topics. One option, albeit extreme, is to to share no information at all. Another approach involves relating general information about your objectives, methodology, personnel, election-related activities and future plans, but withholding any comment on your findings or evaluations. A third option may include all of these components and place heavy emphasis on your findings, evaluations and recommendations.

Mass Media

The mass media refers to the print press (newspapers) and the electronic media (radio and television).[26] The mass media's most attractive feature is its capacity to rapidly reach a wide audience. This feature is particularly salient when using radio, and to a lesser extent using television, which are not affected by the common problems of illiteracy, long distances and bad roads. On the other hand, mass media has its disadvantages. With few exceptions (discussed below), using the mass media is extremely expensive. Also, in some countries access to broadcast facilities, televisions and radios is very limited. Furthermore, since reporters, editors and publishers/producers stand between you and the dissemination of your information, they can control the timing and content of its release, and may try to challenge its credibility.

For the purposes of this *Handbook*, you should view the use of the mass media from two perspectives. The first contemplates communications that you design, produce and issue on your own initiative, pursuant to your own plan. The second relates to news coverage, which may be described as those communications that are produced and issued by the mass media—according to the initiative and interpretations of journalists, reporters and editors—about your activities.

The main advantage of a communication initiated and produced by you is that you have maximum control over its message and timing. However, owners of newspapers and broadcast stations rarely offer the use of their services or facilities for free. Thus, a notable disadvantage of the self-initiated communication is its high cost. Still, if you determine that the objective of your communication merits the cost, you may choose to purchase space in a newspaper or time on radio or television in which to issue an *advertisement*. Monitoring organizations have bought advertisements for such purposes as recruiting volunteers, announcing meetings and notifying the public about items or services (*e.g.*, literature, training, legal support, etc.) available from the organization.

Communications that are deemed to be "in the public interest" or "for the public good" are

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[25] See *Section Y, Post-Election Reporting, Section F, Operating Funds* and *Section I., Recruiting* and Appendix IV.
[26] See also *Section T, Media*, for a discussion about monitoring the mass media.

sometimes called *public service announcements* ("PSAs"). The mass media occasionally publishes or broadcasts these communications free of charge in recognition of their value to the "public good" (*i.e.*, an informed public). In other situations, the government or other sources will subsidize the costs. Such communications must nominally benefit the entire public, not just a particular segment of the community, in order to maintain the attribution of being truly in the public interest. Thus, PSA messages should be nonpartisan. PSAs often discuss issues relevant to the process rather than policies or criticisms about individual candidates. In the context of elections, PSAs may be used as a tool in conducting voter education on such topics as registration, voting, basic rights and obligations relevant to the election process, and information about all the candidates.

You may also choose to submit a public letter or a short article for publication in the newspapers. These communications, sometimes called *letters to the editor, commentary* or *opinion articles* cost nothing and they may reach a large audience. However, you have no guarantee that they will be published, so you should not rely exclusively on this mechanism.

Of course, if you purposely or otherwise attract the mass media's attention with something that merits a *news story*, the information related to this story may be printed or broadcast. Although there are little or no financial costs associated with this communication, unfortunately there is correspondingly limited opportunity for you to control the substance or timing of the message that is sent.

To the extent that news coverage by the mass media can be influenced, your public information office should make every effort to do so. This responsibility entails constant attention, including answering questions from reporters, responding to criticism, conducting interviews and briefings about your activities, and informing the media in advance about future events.

PRESS RELEASE   In order to increase attention from the media, the public information office

should know how to issue a *press release*. A press release is a very short (usually one page) written notice publicizing an event that may be of general interest to the readers, listeners or viewers.

The press release and follow-up telephone conversations should, if properly prepared and timely distributed, help to convince the media that the story and the event are, indeed, worthy of discussing in the news. The public information office must, therefore, provide adequate details about your activities (*e.g.*, recruitment meetings, rallies at which reforms are advocated, election-day monitoring, etc.) and subsequent findings and analyses.

Before you send out a press release, however, you should consider a number of factors that will improve your chances for coverage:[27]

1. Create a press list. Identify the news organizations that receive press releases, the format they prefer, and the information they require. Compile addresses, telephone/fax numbers and the names of appropriate personnel, including assignment editors and reporters, likely to cover your story.

2. Identify the deadlines for each media outlet with which you will be working. It is very important to understand that news organizations work under deadlines. For example, if a newspaper is published for distribution on Wednesday, and the deadline for receiving submissions is Tuesday morning, then a story you send them on Tuesday afternoon will be too late for publication.

3. Say something in your press statements that is newsworthy. If a reporter becomes accustomed to receiving press releases from you that do not merit news attention, the reporter may dismiss all of your future press releases without even reading them. The same is true for your prospective readers.

4. Try to limit your press release to one page that summarizes the major points or issues and their significance.

5. Prepare timely press releases. Do not send out a release a week after an event. The press is not going to print or broadcast it. Likewise,

27 Excerpted from T. King and C. Olsen, "Delivering the Message," *Uneven Paths: Advancing Democracy in Southern Africa*, (NDI, edited by Padraig O'Malley, 1993, New Namibia Books (PTY) Ltd.), Chapter 4.3.

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do not send out a release so far in advance that the recipients forget about the event before it occurs.

6. Use vivid language in the press release. Quotations are valuable especially in press and television.

7. If possible, supply the newspaper media outlets with good quality photographs of events, fully explaining what is depicted (*e.g.*, the names of those appearing in the photo, the date, location and nature of the event.) Many newspapers are more likely to use a press release if it is accompanied by a picture.

8. Follow-up on your press releases. Call those to whom the press release was sent to make sure they received it. Before an event, inquire whether someone from the news organization will be able to attend. After an event, contact the press who attended to answer any questions and emphasize important points or issues.

9. Develop relationships and good rapport with individual reporters at the news organizations. Such contact is a fundamental element of success.

11. In all press releases, be sure to list the name of your public information officer and the telephone number/address at which he or she can be contacted.
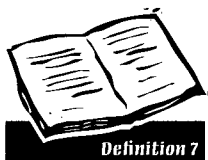
Logistics

This *Handbook* describes many activities that your monitoring operation may attempt to execute. As previous sections suggest, developing an organization and a good plan are important

lo•gis•tics

The term *logistics* is a general reference to all activities related to physically executing an operation.

Definition 7

preliminary steps. *Logistics* touch every aspect of preparing for and implementing the various components of your plan, as outlined in the following steps. (*See Definition 7.*)

First, you should consider designating a *logistics officer* or *logistics office* in your organization to take responsibility for all relevant planning and supervision. Individuals in the logistics office should, ideally, have experience in organizing large events and have working knowledge of basic communications and transportation systems. Most aspects of logistics have significant budget implications, thus it is also a good idea to encourage close cooperation between the logistics and accounting or budgeting offices. Similarly, since the execution of every activity both emanates from and impacts upon the general plan, you should ensure that the logistics office attends planning discussions and reports any logistical successes or failures in the operation.

You must consider three fundamental components of logistics: (1) communication; (2) transportation; and (3) accommodation (*i.e.*, meals and lodging). When developing or using your communication, transportation and accommodation resources, you should determine the following:

1. What *quantity* of each is needed?
2. How much will it *cost*?
3. What are the *procedures* that must be followed to prepare for and use the resource?
4. What are the *restrictions* on their use?
5. What *timeframes* or *deadlines* apply? and
6. Whom should you *contact* (*e.g.*, the driver, the hotel keeper, the caterer, etc.) regarding their use and how can they be reached?

COMMUNICATION   Communication is perhaps the single most important capability your monitoring operation needs in order to be successful. It is at the heart of your ability to invite regional field coordinators to a meeting, to receive urgent reports of election problems, or to draft a press release to announce your findings. With regard to most communications, the public

information office should decide what information needs to be shared and all the details about how and when it should be disseminated.[28] Similarly, managers at the headquarters and in the field can take responsibility for knowing what they need to communicate and how they want to do it. But they and everyone else in your organization must first have access to a system by which to communicate. It is a principal job of the logistics office to develop and maintain the infrastructure and essential information (e.g., names and telephone numbers, etc.) of the communications system.

First, you must identify everyone with whom you need to communicate and where they can be reached. In the beginning stages of the monitoring plan, you should collect the names and essential information (e.g., telephone number, address, etc.) of your steering committee members, staff and volunteers as well as representatives of the government, political parties, media and other civic organizations. Record this information so that it is secure but easy to retrieve. Where available, simple computer data bases are commonly used for this purpose.

Second, establish a comprehensive system by which participants in your operation can communicate. A partial list of mechanisms you might use in this system includes: telephone, facsimile (fax), electronic mail (by modem), regular mail, delivery services, foot and bicycle messengers, public address systems, as well as reproduction for printed materials (photocopying) and the various channels described in *Section L., Public Information.* Specialized communication systems such as those used for interpretation (verbal) or translation (written) and for mobile communication (e.g., two-way radio and cellular telephone) may also be helpful.

An efficient system may also include procedures by which individuals communicate with each other. For example, some organizations create a procedure called the *telephone tree* (referring to the trunk, which leads to the branches, which connect to the small twigs of a tree). Under this procedure, one person (at the bottom of the tree) initiates the communication of a message to five members of the operation. Each of these five

is instructed to contact five others, who in turn are instructed to repeat the process, and so on. The key to making the telephone tree work is assuring that each person has a mechanism for communicating (e.g., a telephone or a means of transporting the individual to make a personal contact) and knows where the next person can be contacted (e.g., their telephone number or address.) The tree can be used in reverse to pass information to your central headquarters when large numbers of volunteers are in action, such as on election day.

Constraints of technology, infrastructure and budget are important considerations. For example, dedicating resources to buy fax machines is not a good plan in a country where the telephones do not work well. And computers are worthless if you do not also have the proper software or trained personnel to operate them. Complexity and high cost are not the best indicators of a good communication system; mechanisms that provide speed, accuracy and reliability of communication will serve your needs better and may save you money.

TRANSPORTATION   In addition to being able to communicate, a successful election monitoring effort must have the capacity to transport materials and people. For example, transportation is needed for delivering recruitment materials to regional headquarters, taking observers to voting stations or flying trainers to remote parts of the country.

You should begin by identifying your transportation needs. Thus it may be useful to refer to, or develop, a calendar of events as discussed in *Section B., General Plan*, to determine what type, frequency and quantity of transportation is contemplated for the execution of the general plan. Activities such as recruitment, training, and election-day monitoring often place heavy reliance on transportation.

Modes of transportation can be expensive and hard to find, particularly in less economically developed countries. Therefore, you should develop an inventory of the resources available to you.[29] First, plan to make use of any means of

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[28] See *Section L., Public Information* and *Section Y., Post-Election Reporting.*
[29] See also *Section B., A General Plan*, for the discussion on budgeting.

transportation that are available free of charge (e.g. walking, bicycling, sharing a ride, borrowing temporarily donated vehicles or using volunteers' vehicles). Next, consider how public transportation can meet your needs. Taxis, buses, boats, subways and trains are relatively inexpensive options, though with regard to scheduling or availability they lack the flexibility and reliability of other means. Finally, you must decide what should be purchased or rented. This approach initially appears to require significant funds, but it may be the most economical approach if you require frequent use, flexible application or continuous availability.

Also, try to efficiently match the type of transportation needed with the demands of the duty. For example, you may need a four-wheel-drive vehicle to carry trainers into rural regions, but not to carry messages between city blocks.
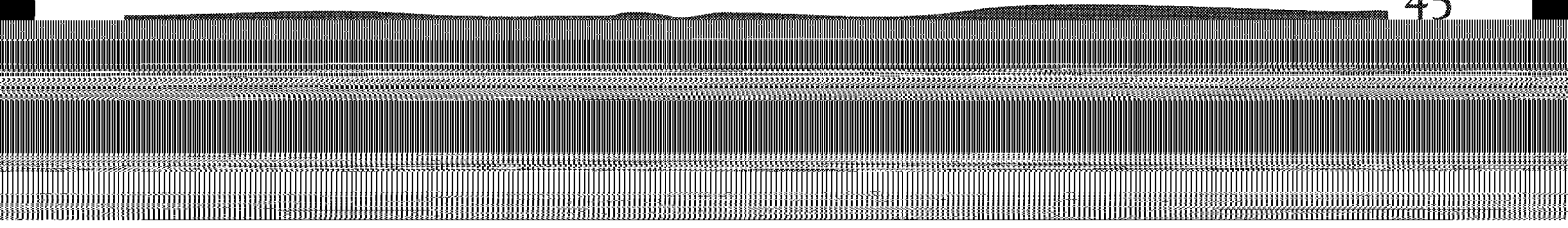

Illustration 15

At the 1994 elections in South Africa, the domestic monitoring group NEON nearly ceased to function during the critical period of the election count. Some NEON volunteers, many of whom had risked their lives in carrying out their monitoring duties, believed that NEON's leaders had promised to pay certain wages and/or food expenses. After the voting (and after much of the monitoring), when the leaders explained that this understanding was not correct, many volunteers were so disappointed and angry that they went on strike. NEON's reputation and credibility were severely damaged when the strike became violent.

con•tin•gen•cy plan

A *contingency plan* is a plan of activities to pursue if unexpected or unforeseen circumstances arise.

Definition 8

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ACCOMMODATION As already noted, executing an election monitoring effort can entail working long hours and travelling long distances. In cases where travel takes people away from home, you must be prepared to provide lodging for the night and adequate meals.

For example, when trainers make a circuit through the regional capitals in the country, they may be away from home for two or three weeks. The inexpensive solution for lodging is to find members or supporters of the monitoring effort who can make available extra rooms in their homes. Where free lodging is not an option, you may need to reserve hotel rooms.

Accommodations are also needed for meetings. Thus, you will need to identify and reserve the use of spaces in which to hold conferences, training workshops, recruitment rallies and strategy meetings. For large meetings, monitoring groups often use auditoriums, school rooms, conference halls in major hotels and in government buildings, and outdoor spaces such as soccer fields or village squares.

Where the monitors' duties keep them busy through normal meal times, monitoring operations sometimes provide food or reimbursement for the cost of purchased meals. The traditions regarding this practice vary among countries, and many organizations do not have enough money to pay for food. You will have to decide what you can afford and what is a fair policy. Experience from around the world has shown that if there is any misunderstanding about your policy or any inconsistency in its application, no matter how minor, volunteers can become extremely upset. Thus you should seriously consider developing and communicating a policy to all workers in advance of their activities, and apply the policy equitably and consistently. (See Illustration 15.)

Finally, a good logistics operation contains a *contingency plan* for the possibility of systems or procedures that fail to work as you had hoped or expected. (See Definition 8.)

Contingency plans should anticipate any number of potential problems that can undermine the logistical stability of the monitoring effort.

from election to election. In some countries, international organizations recruit, train and deploy indigenous individuals who work under the auspices of the international group. In other countries, international organizations may provide financial or technical support to the formation of a domestic monitoring group, which then operates as a fully autonomous entity. The domestic group may or may not choose to coordinate monitoring activities with its international supporters. Finally, some international observers adopt a detached attitude toward domestic monitoring groups. In these situations, the coordination between international and domestic groups may be limited to sharing reports.

You should be aware that in some circumstances coordination may compromise your monitoring group's independence and impartiality. This can occur if any of the organizations with which you are coordinating is too partisan, is not committed to conducting a quality operation, or has a tendency to employ undemocratic procedures to manage its operation.[30] In these situations you must take steps to avoid damaging the credibility of your own institution, which may mean withdrawing your participation from the coordinated effort.

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EXAMPLES OF SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- All monitors should report threats of intimidation or violence to the executive director (and/or to the police).
- The executive director should pursue all reports of intimidation or violence with the police.
- Monitors should immediately remove themselves from potentially dangerous environments and call their supervisor for further instruction.
- Where the police or government authorities are the source of the problem, their activities and their enforcement (or lack of enforcement) of complaints should be monitored and reported to the media and international institutions.

Security

Transition elections often occur in volatile environments. A polarized political setting, a tradition of violence or recent armed conflict in the region may heighten concerns about the safety of those participating in the electoral process, including domestic monitors.

For the monitoring group, security issues may raise difficult policy dilemmas. For example, publicizing the presence of monitors and challenging irregularities are activities that help promote confidence in the election process. However, accomplishing these goals may require exposing volunteers to danger. Monitors should be aware that their findings, in some circumstances, could be viewed as embarrassing or even incriminating by individuals and the institutions they represent. In order to prevent monitors from publicizing their findings, individuals or groups may attempt to intimidate or incapacitate the monitors.

There is no simple solution to this dilemma. You can, however, take steps to avoid security problems and to handle these situations prudently when they arise. First, do not pretend the issue does not exist. If you have reason to believe there are potentially dangerous situations that your monitors will face, you should discuss the issue. The discussion must begin in the committee of directors, who should adopt relevant policies and procedures. *(See Examples, at left.)*

You should then communicate and reinforce the policies and procedures that are adopted to all members of your operation. Include a discussion of the relevant information in your training manual, training workshops, and in your conversations with individual monitors. They need to know how to identify a potential problem and how you want them to respond. You may also choose to establish channels of communication between your operation and the local, regional and national offices of the security forces. At a minimum, you should give monitors a telephone number to call in the case of an emergency. *(See Illustration 18.)*

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[30] See *Section C., Approaches to Organizing* and *Section E., Credibility.*

Security issues are also relevant to evaluating the freedom with which candidates campaign, voters vote and election officials administer. How you can monitor the effect of security and intimidation on these activities is discussed more fully in *Sections P.–S., U. and V.*

Illustration 18

The Albanian Society for Democratic Culture (SDC) encountered problems with voter intimidation in the 1994 by-elections. SDC monitors documented the incidents in the face of personal threats. Following election day, SDC members received several communications attempting to discourage the group from releasing its findings. SDC carefully considered the potential consequences for individual members and took precautions to protect them (as well as sources of information who wished to remain anonymous). Then, SDC leaders concluded that the importance of releasing the information in a balanced and professional manner outweighed the risks and demonstrated the group's resilience in the face of intimidation and outside pressures. In a preemptive maneuver, SDC also mobilized support from NDI and others to demonstrate international solidarity in support of the safety of SDC members. SDC then held a press conference to release its uncensored statement on the elections.

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