

# VOTES WITHOUT VIOLENCE

## GUIDANCE ON POST-OBSERVATION ASSESSMENTS



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for NDI's Votes Without Violence program and toolkit.

# GUIDANCE ON POST-OBSERVATION ASSESSMENTS

## Assessment Objectives

Assessing an observation focused on violence against women in elections (VAW-E) should evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the observation by:

- » Assessing the success and impact of any VAW-E trainings delivered
- » Identifying lessons from the experience, and making recommendations for improving VAW-E observation and prevention efforts in the future
- » Gathering feedback from partner organizations, observers and organizational staff

## Sample Meetings

To meet the assessment objectives, citizen election observation groups should conduct a series of meetings and/or focus groups with key stakeholders, including:

- » Citizen election observer group leadership to discuss how the VAW-E observation objectives were carried out, lessons learned and recommendations. It would be beneficial to speak with staff that participated in any VAW-E trainings, and/or conducted VAW-E trainings of their own.
- » Observers and/or regional observation supervisors who participated in VAW-E trainings and the observation.
- » Other organizations, including those involved in anti-violence work and other organizations the citizen election observation group met with during its analysis of the pre-election context.
- » Women candidates and voters to discuss their experiences during the election.
- » External actors with whom information from the observation was shared to assess the effectiveness of project information in mitigating, preventing or responding to VAW-E.

## Questions for observation leadership or staff

### *On training workshops and materials*

- » Of the initial materials or trainings you received on VAW-E, what initially stood out as particularly important? What did you expect to be the most challenging aspect of an observation of VAW-E? Did the observation meet those expectations?
- » Of the trainings you conducted with supervisors or observers, what factors contributed most to the success of those workshops? What factors could be improved upon to make future trainings more effective? Were some concepts more difficult to explain than others?
- » What materials were most effective in helping the observation achieve its goals?
- » Which checklist questions on VAW-E were the most effective for collecting data?
  - Were there questions included on the checklists that did not aid data collection?
  - Were there questions that were difficult for observers to understand or explain? Which ones?
- » What new materials or questions would you develop, if you were to conduct the observation again?

### *On communication and mitigation*

- » As reports on VAW-E were gathered, how did you coordinate a response? Please describe your process.

- What organizations did you work with to respond to violence?
- Who did you distribute reports to?
- Who was invited to/attended any press conferences you held?
- » Once a critical incident report was filed, what did you do with the information?
  - Who did you connect with? If you did not connect with anyone, why not?
- » What were the major challenges you faced in responding to the reported violence?
  - Did you face challenges in verifying information?
  - Did you face challenges in reporting the information to response organizations?
- » Was the information you passed on used to mitigate or prevent an increase in violence?
  - Describe a success where the information you collected was used to mitigate violence. What factors contributed to this success?
- » Did you face challenges in analyzing or interpreting your findings?
- » What do you plan to do with the data you have collected? Will you use it in advocacy efforts for the next elections?

## Questions for Observers

### *On training workshops and materials*

- » Do you feel the VAW-E content you received in the trainings gave you adequate preparation to conduct the observation and identify incidents of VAW-E?
  - What aspects of the training session were particularly helpful?
  - What aspects were unhelpful, confusing or needed more explanation?
- » Were the VAW-E trainings and materials appropriately designed to match your level of knowledge and experience?

### *On observing VAW-E and using checklists*

- » Were there checklist questions that were difficult to understand or use in your observation?
  - What made these questions difficult?
  - How would you have changed them?
- » Were you able to identify incidents of violence against women during the observation?
  - What helped you identify these incidents?
  - What was most challenging about identifying or reporting incidents of VAW-E?
  - What were the most difficult cases of VAW-E to identify?
- » Were there challenges to your ability to report incidents of VAW-E?
  - Did you witness or hear of incidents of VAW-E that you were unable to report through the checklist questions provided? If so, please provide examples.
- » Do you think the questions on the checklist were relevant to the context in your country or the communities you were observing?
  - If not, what questions would you recommend instead?
- » Did your organization's data collection method enable you to communicate your observation findings effectively to your organization's secretariat/leadership in a timely manner? Were there any problems with data transmission? What could be improved for subsequent observations?

## Questions for Other Organizations

- » Did you observe any violence against women during the elections or pre-election period?
  - How did you hear about or observe incidents of VAW-E?
  - How did the levels of violence compare with past elections? If you believe the levels of violence changed, what factors may have contributed to the change?
  - How did the level of violence during the election compare with general levels of violence in the country?
- » What forms of violence did you observe during the election?
  - Against whom? Were voters, candidates, election officials or observers targeted? Who were the perpetrators?
  - What were the reasons for the violence?
- » Was there an increase in private sphere violence during the election cycle? At what point: before the election? On election day? Following the announcement of results?
- » How did you identify signs or incidents of violence?
- » Did violence impact women's participation in the election? How?
- » What services or resources, if any, did you provide to victims of VAW-E?

## Questions for Candidates and Voters

- » Did you observe violent incidents during the election (on election day or during the pre-election period)?
  - If so, please describe the incident. Who was involved? Where did it take place? What happened?
- » If you were a candidate, did you face any barriers during your campaign or in seeking the nomination from your party? If so, what were they?
  - Do you believe the challenges women candidates face differ from the challenges male candidates face? In what ways?
- » If you were a voter, did you encounter any barriers in registering to vote or voting? If so, what were they?
  - Do you believe the challenges women face as voters differ from the challenges men face? How?

## Questions for External Actors with Whom Project Information May Have Been Shared

- » How did you use the information provided to you or your organization by the observation? In what ways was it most useful to you?
- » Did you take action in response to the information shared? If so, what? How did the information shared from the observation help or improve your work?
- » Did you have difficulty acting on the information that was shared from the observation? How could the information be shared in a way that would make it easier to respond to the information?
- » Is there information you believe the project should have gathered and did not?