**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ELECTIONS**

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS: PRE-ELECTION OBSERVATION**

**Guidance**

The following tool provides example questions that observation groups may wish to include on their data collection forms for a **pre-election observation**. It has been designed as a reference for citizen observation groups, and provides an example of what questions election observation groups may wish to ask to record incidents of violence against women in elections (VAW-E). The questions presented here should be regarded as a set of options. Depending on the process or processes a group is observing, or the priority issues and indicators its leadership has chosen to focus on, groups can select and adapt relevant VAW-E questions and response options to integrate into their forms, which should be tailored to the particular electoral context. Groups should also consider which questions should require the observer to fill out a critical incident report – some questions that may require an incident report have been marked in grey below.

Some explanations have been included to provide more detailed information about certain questions or sections. While forms should not include these details, observation groups should consider developing similar explanations to include in their training materials for observers.

**Location and General Information**

Forms should include information about the location and date or time at which the observer was recording data, as well as a way to identify the individual observer in case follow-up is needed.

**Voter Registration**

The timing and accessibility of a voter registration center can impact women’s participation and the safety of women registrants, especially in situations where there may be security concerns around the location or timing of registration centers. Registration procedures may also present concerns, if they are not applied uniformly or consistently to all voters throughout the registration period.

|  |
| --- |
| Did the voter registration center open on time? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Was the voter registration accessible to all potential voters? |
| Yes, to men | Yes, to women | Yes, to both | No, none |
| Did registration agents provide appropriate assistance to all voters requiring assistance? |
| Yes, to men | Yes, to women | Yes, to both | No |
| Did you witness any voters who did not possess the required documentation, but who were authorized to register? |
| Yes, men | Yes, women | Yes, both | No, none |
| Did you witness or hear of any voters who did possess the required documents, but who were not authorized to register? |
| Yes, men | Yes, women | Yes, both | No, none |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents of violence against voters who came to register or check their name on the registration list? |
| Yes, against men | Yes, against women | Yes, against both | No, none |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents of violence against voters attempting to obtain the necessary identity documents in order to register to vote? |
| Yes, against men | Yes, against women | Yes, against both | No, none |

|  |
| --- |
| Did you witness or hear of media reports promoting or contributing to threats against women attempting to register to vote? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of candidates or party supporters coercing or influencing women to register as a member of their party (e.g. by giving or promising money, food, gifts, etc.)? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |

|  |
| --- |
| How many registration agents were present? |
| Number of men:  |   | Number of women:  |   |

**Voter Education**

If there are voter education campaigns or outreach, violent messages or sexist bias in voter education campaigns can potentially be a form of violence against women candidates, or discourage women from participating in the election in other ways, including as voters.

|  |
| --- |
| Did you witness or hear of women being prevented or discouraged from participating in voter education activities, such as campaigns or workshops? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of incidents of violence against women attending or attempting to attend voter education activities? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did voter education campaigns or workshops reproduce gender stereotypes or sexist language? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any voter education activities that included hate speech or violent messages against women? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |

**Campaign Period**

Violence against women during the campaign period can affect the general environment and security and can have significant impacts on women’s participation in elections and their sense of whether it is safe to participate at all. Observer groups may wish to include monitoring violence at campaign events with an overall look at the campaign period, or they may wish to observe events specifically. Targeted questions about campaign events, and those focused on candidates, are included in subsequent sections.

|  |
| --- |
| Did you witness or hear of any candidate or party supporter threatening or intimidating women voters because of their political preferences or positions? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any candidate(s) inciting their supporters to commit acts of violence against women voters? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any harassment of women during the campaign period for political motives (e.g.: because of their political preferences or positions)? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where candidates or party supporters coerced or influenced women to become affiliated with a certain party (e.g.: by giving or promising money, food, gifts, etc.)? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where the private property of women voters or political supporters was vandalized or destroyed? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where a party supporter or voter was physically assaulted for political motives (e.g.: because of their political preferences or positions)? |
| Yes, men | Yes, women | Yes, both | No |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where a party supporter or voter was kidnapped for political motives (e.g.: because of their political preferences or positions)? |
| Yes, men | Yes, women | Yes, both | No, none |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where a party supporter or voter was assassinated for political motives (e.g.: because of their political preferences or positions)? |
| Yes, men | Yes, women | Yes, both | No, none |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where a party supporter or voter was sexually assaulted for political motives (e.g.: because of their political preferences or positions)? |
| Yes, men | Yes, women | Yes, both | No, none |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where a party supporter or voter was raped for political motives (e.g.: because of their political preferences or positions)? |
| Yes, men | Yes, women | Yes, both | No, none |
| Did you witness or hear of incidents of social media being used to threaten or incite violence against women voters or party supporters? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |

**Campaign Events**

|  |
| --- |
| Did you witness or hear of any campaign activities or events where candidates, supporters or organizers have excluded women? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any campaign activities or events where candidates or supporters reproduced gender stereotypes or sexist language? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any campaign activities or events where candidates or supporters used hate speech or derogatory language to describe women voters? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents of violence against women voters or supporters participating in or attending campaign activities or events? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where candidates or parties threatened women voters during campaign events? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Did you witness or hear of any incidents where candidates or parties incited their supporters to commit acts of violence against women? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any incidents where candidates or party supporters coerced or forced women to participate in political events (e.g.: by threatening them or by giving or promising money, food, gifts, etc.)? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |

**Candidates**

|  |
| --- |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any women candidates withdrawing from the race after they were nominated but before registration? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any national or local media verbally attacking women candidates or their supporters (e.g. using derogatory or sexist language)? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any national or local media outlets that have lied or made false comments about women candidates or their supporters? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any hate speech or intimidation against women candidates or their supporters because of their gender? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any physical attacks on women candidates or their supporters? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any incidents where the private property of women candidates was destroyed? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any incidents where women candidates, their family members or their supporters have been kidnapped? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any incidents where women candidates, their family members or their supporters have been assassinated? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any incidents where women candidates, their family members or their supporters have been sexually assaulted for political motives? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |
| Have you witnessed or heard of any incidents where women candidates, their family members or their supporters have been raped for political motives? |
| Yes | No | Don’t Know |