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Violence Against Women in Elections: A Framework for Assessment, Monitoring, and Response



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Violence Against Women in Elections: A Framework for Assessment, Monitoring, and Response

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About IFES

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) supports citizens' right to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by:

- Providing technical assistance to election officials
- Empowering the under-represented to participate in the political process
- Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle

Since 1987, IFES has worked in 145 countries – from developing democracies, to mature democracies.

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Executive Summary: Framework Introduction

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) recognizes that violence against women in elections is a threat to the integrity of the electoral process – it can affect women’s participation as voters, candidates, election officials, activists, and political party leaders, and it undermines the free, fair, and inclusive democratic process. Through increased attention to women’s participation and women’s voices in democracy assistance, narratives of violence against women in election in their homes, political arenas, and public spaces have become more visible.

In 2011, Carter Center observer teams in Egypt reported that in several areas of the country, women were threatened with divorce if they did not vote as their husbands ordered.¹ In interviews conducted in 2010 by International Alert, women who had stood as candidates in Sierra Leone reported unequal access to political party support, verbal and physical violence, and threats to themselves, their supporters, and their husbands.² In 2013, focus group participants for this project in Bangladesh told IFES that verbal sexual harassment, as well as physical violence, is commonly directed at women in public at demonstrations and perpetrators have included police officers providing security. Online harassment is cited by many women as a serious threat; Kenyan focus group participants in 2015 noted that a female County Assembly candidate lost a race because of cyber-bullying in which she was depicted as a lesbian in doctored photos. In late 2009, months before elections, members of the paramilitary police under the ruling military junta in Guinea publicly raped scores of women inside the national soccer stadium as part of an attack on a pro-democracy demonstration that also killed at least 150.³ These examples are only cases that have been shared anecdotally with researchers or journalists; it is likely that many more incidents go unreported to service providers, let alone to the authorities, leaving survivors⁴ without any access to the services they need nor venues in which to hold perpetrators accountable. The threat of public and private violence, as well as the lack of safety in reporting, discourages and possibly prevents many women from participating in the electoral process.

As this short list of examples demonstrates, women are targeted while occupying a variety of stakeholder roles. In some cases, they are targeted because of their political actions or affiliations, and in others, they are targeted because they are women participating in politics. These examples involve many circumstances found in globally-accepted definitions of violence against women (VAW) or gender-based violence (GBV) against women, including verbal or physical sexual violence, violence by intimate partners and community leaders, gender-based discrimination against women in professional circles, and violence

¹ *Final Report of the Carter Center Mission to Witness the 2011–2012 Parliamentary Elections in Egypt*. (2012). The Carter Center. Retrieved from http://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/election_reports/egypt-2011-2012-final-rpt.pdf.

² *Women, Elections and Violence in West Africa: Assessing Women’s Political Participation in Liberia and Sierra Leone*. (2010). International Alert. Retrieved from https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/women_elections_and_violence_in_west_africa.pdf.

³ *Women and Political Violence: An Update*. (2011, July) Research and Advocacy Unit. Retrieved from <http://www.swradioafrica.com/Documents/RAU.pdf>.

⁴ IFES has made a calculated shift away from the term “victim” to use the terms “survivor” and “perpetrators” of VAWIE, consistent with GBV practitioners’ use of these terms to describe the parties to the violent act and to empower those who have experienced violence.

in private spaces.⁵ The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank and others further underscore that GBV impacts women and girls more than other populations and women with disabilities, as well as lesbian, bisexual and transgendered women suffer violence at even higher rates.⁶

The experiences of these women also reflect circumstances commonly found in globally-accepted definitions and patterns of electoral violence, including public intimidation of opposition supporters and physical and psychological violence against voters.⁷ Yet, neither the current VAW nor the current electoral violence framework is currently able to capture violence against women in elections, and women's perspectives on electoral violence remain inadequately studied, both within the literature on conflict, violence, and women, or in the literature on democratization and electoral violence.

In an effort to better understand and address the ways in which electoral violence creates a barrier to women's participation, IFES has developed the Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWIE) Framework to specifically identify and address the unique issues related to gender-based election violence. USAID provided IFES with a grant to conduct primary and desk research for the VAWIE Framework, as well as pilot the implementation of tools designed to address issues related to gender-based election violence.

The guiding definition of VAWIE is at the core of the framework, and draws upon definitions of electoral violence, violence against women, and examples from IFES' research of the acts of violence that women face on the ground:

Any harm or threat of harm committed against women with the intent and/or impact of interfering with their free and equal participation in the electoral process during the electoral period. It includes harassment, intimidation, physical harm or coercion, threats, and financial pressures, and it may be committed in the home or other private spaces, or in public spaces. These acts may be directed at women in any of their roles as electoral stakeholders (e.g. voters, media, political actors, state actors, community leaders, or electoral officials).

With this definition at its core, the VAWIE Framework flows from the project's research findings (summarized in section 1), and includes the following elements:

- **Typology of Electoral Violence/VAWIE:** The typology includes the VAWIE definition above, as well as a more nuanced and complete range of categorizations for electoral violence to better understand which types/forms/circumstances are unique to VAWIE

⁵ USAID has defined an act of GBV as one that "results in physical, sexual and psychological harm to both men and women and includes any form of violence or abuse that targets men or women on the basis of their sex, although women and girls are usually the primary victims..." and includes a list of types of violence such as "battery, marital rape, sexual violence, dowry-related violence, female infanticide, honor crimes, early marriage, forced marriage, female genital cutting, sexual harassment in the workplace and educational institutions, commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking of girls and women, and violence perpetrated against domestic workers." *A Guide to Programming Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Activities*. (2009, April). USAID. Retrieved from http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADO561.pdf. Definitions are explored in greater detail in Sections 1 and 2.

⁶ See *United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally*. (2012, August). USAID. p. 6. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/196468.pdf>.

⁷ IFES defines electoral violence as: "any harm or threat of harm to persons or property involved in the electoral process, or the process itself." This includes physical and psychological harm, as well as property damage; the United Nations Development Programme's *Guide to Elections and Conflict Prevention* defines electoral violence primarily as "acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process, or that arise in the context of electoral competition..." and USAID's 2010 *Electoral Security Framework* concludes that "electoral violence refers to physical violence and coercive intimidation directly tied to an impending electoral contest or to an announced electoral result." These definitions are fully cited in Section 1.

and which are shared across gender. This typology expands the traditional categories of electoral violence monitoring and research efforts to encompass the nuances presented by women's experiences, many of which are reflected in the examples above. The Typology is not intended to list all forms and elements of VAWIE possible, but to highlight categories and subcategories of common types and manifestations of VAWIE. It draws from categorizations of electoral violence used within IFES' Electoral Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) program (which builds civil society capacity to monitor, report, and mitigate electoral violence), as well as the those used in the Gender-based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) classification tool designed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).⁸ It also provides a method of categorizing barriers to women's participation that do not rise to the level of violence. In both the desk and field research, barriers were mentioned repeatedly, in addition to violence, when women were asked to share experiences with violence, safety, and electoral participation.

- **Assessment Methodology:** The VAWIE assessment methodology will allow for practitioners to assess, map, and program in response to the risk and/or presence of VAWIE. The assessment can stand alone or be integrated with any electoral or gender assessment. It draws upon USAID's *Electoral Security Framework*, Care's Gender Analysis Framework (GAF), and IFES' Gender and Elections Analysis (GEA).⁹ Accurate assessments of the nature of the violence against women in elections and challenges in a particular electoral context will help drive better programming aimed at mitigation and prevention.
- **Monitoring Methodology:** The monitoring methodology suggests new ways to gather trend information and incident-specific information to better document and analyze VAWIE. Monitoring can help deter and raise awareness of VAWIE in the short-term while collecting data for broader analysis and understanding of the issue in the long-run. The monitoring methodology can stand alone or function within electoral or political violence monitoring. It draws from IFES' EVER program, which has collected data through community-based monitoring in 14 countries between 2004 and 2014, as well as best practices used in methodologies to monitor and track VAW.¹⁰
- **Program Recommendations:** The recommendations section addresses both using the VAWIE Framework, and improving other ways to reduce VAWIE in general. The recommendations include tips for incorporating VAWIE's assessment and monitoring methodologies in existing electoral conflict and security frameworks and programming, as well as using it to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment programming for political and electoral systems. The recommendations also suggest ways to address VAWIE and notes linkages that can be made with related organizations and programming.

The Framework represents the culmination of intensive research and fieldwork and is intended to improve the capacity of international and domestic practitioners to understand and reduce VAWIE. As a continuation of these efforts, IFES will pilot the assessment and monitoring tools in electoral events in 2016. These pilots will further inform the issues addressed in this document and allow IFES to fine-tune the Framework.

⁸ Information about the GBVIMS and IFES' EVER program and methodology can be found in Sections 2 and 3, as well as in Annexes 2 and 3.

⁹ Information about these assessment tools can be found in Section 3.

¹⁰ Information about IFES' EVER program and methodology can be found in Sections 2 and 4, as well as in Annex 2.

1. Research Findings

The hypothesis guiding the research phase of this project was that prevailing data and analyses of electoral violence, as well as the existing strategies to respond to it, do not reflect experiential gender differences. That is, current frameworks, studies, and programming do not recognize that electoral violence may impact men and women differently as a consequence of their roles in society, as it is manifested in a given country context. Desk research on women, violence, and elections, as well as primary field research (focus groups and interviews in Bangladesh and Kenya) on contextual and societal factors impacting violence against women in the election process were conducted to prove or disprove this hypothesis, and to examine these and other guiding questions:

- How do existing frameworks and research on electoral violence address gender?
- Are there significant patterns of substantive difference between women and men in their experiences with electoral violence?
- What are the implications of increasing levels of women’s political participation when it comes to the use of electoral violence specifically targeting women?
- What specific forms of electoral violence target women who attempt to participate in formal political processes as political party candidates and party activists?
- What specific forms of electoral violence do women experience in their private spheres during election cycles?
- How can familial or social intimidation or pressures in private spaces (or that committed in less visible or overt ways in public spaces) be captured?
- Based on the findings of the study, what specific forms of intervention may be developed to reduce electoral violence directed specifically at women both in the public and in the private spheres?

The completed desk and field research answered many of these questions, and confirmed IFES’ starting hypothesis. The findings can be summarized in the following five key insights that helped guide the Framework’s development:

- 1. There is a lack of knowledge and data about VAWIE.**
- 2. There is a gender bias in current data collection, research, and programming efforts related to electoral violence.**
- 3. Women experience different types of violence in different spaces than men.**
- 4. There is often an existing relationship (e.g. familial, social, hierarchical) between perpetrator and survivor when women experience violence in elections.**
- 5. There is a lack of programming to address VAWIE specifically.**

Finding 1: There is a lack of knowledge and data about VAWIE

IFES’ original research for VAWIE has revealed that the literature on women, conflict and violence has consistently underscored significant differences in the ways in which men and women experience conflict, insecurity, and trauma. Based on this research, it can be inferred that women experience electoral violence differently than men. However, there is little data to support this assertion as existing

frameworks and interventions on electoral violence remain limited in their examination of whether, how, and to what extent electoral violence impacts women and men differently. The overarching biases present in most current understandings of electoral violence (as noted in Finding 2) have, naturally, affected the methods of data collection and the ensuing data analysis related to electoral violence. The data on VAWIE that does exist is mainly qualitative and anecdotal and found in observer reports, interviews, and other narrative sources. This lack of data complicates efforts to better characterize, understand, and address VAWIE. This gap mirrors the challenges facing VAW and GBV researchers in their examination of the ways in which women and men experience different forms of violence both at home and in public spaces. These absences underscore a critical need for greater quantitative and qualitative data collection on the specific types of risks and electoral violence experienced by women.

The VAWIE desk study cites several studies that do touch on VAWIE. In 2011, IFES published “[Breaking the Mold: Understanding Gender and Electoral Violence](#),” one of the few papers on the topic that makes use of quantitative data. The paper used data from the EVER project to reveal a number of important trends. For example, in incidents involving only men or only women as victims, women were far more likely than men to be victims of intimidation and more likely to be victims in their role as voters.¹¹ The paper also points to observation reports, as well as qualitative case-study research on electoral and political violence and women, which indicate a range of violence affecting women that is not captured in quantitative data. Rich with new directions for exploration and preliminary recommendations for various stakeholders, the paper pointed the way forward for the systematic study for VAWIE. Other important sources feature qualitative data collected by active civil society and election observation organizations around the world, including the U.S.-based Carter Center, International Alert of London, International IDEA, The Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU) based in Zimbabwe, experts with UN Women, and many others.¹²

Data is virtually non-existent when it comes to addressing the barriers faced by women who are marginalized in multiple ways and may therefore be exposed to violence on more than one level. For example, how do women who have a disability, live in a rural area, are poor, and/or belong to an oppressed ethnic minority experience election violence? Indeed, while the reports named above are an important start, they are few and disparate. A systematic approach to data collection and analysis is needed to inform cross-country comparisons and create evidence-based program design that better protects and empowers women, and the VAWIE Framework has tools to help meet this need.

¹¹ Bardall, Gabrielle. (2011, December). *Breaking the Mold: Understanding Gender and Electoral Violence*. IFES. Retrieved from http://www.ifes.org/~media/Files/Publications/White%20PaperReport/2011/Gender_and_Electoral_Violence_2011.pdf. The paper analyzed EVER data from six countries over seven projects in which those harmed and perpetrators were disaggregated by gender. The data was gathered by specially-trained community-based monitors before, during and after an election on incidents of electoral violence in their own communities.

¹² Publications by these organizations include: *Women and Political Violence: An Update*. (2011, July). Research and Advocacy Unit. Retrieved from <http://www.swradioafrica.com/Documents/RAU.pdf>; *Women, Elections and Violence in West Africa: Assessing Women's Political Participation in Liberia and Sierra Leone*. (2010). International Alert, p.8. Retrieved from http://www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/4414~v~Women_Elections_and_Violence_in_West_Africa_Assessing_Womens_Political_Participation_in_Liberia_and_Sierra_Leone.pdf. *Violence Against Women in Politics: A Study of India, Nepal and Pakistan*. (2014, May). UN Women. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomensouthasia.org/assets/VAWIP-Report.pdf>.

Finding 2: There is a gender bias in current data collection, research and programming efforts related to electoral violence

Exacerbating the problem noted above, current electoral violence definitions, frameworks, and programming are biased toward male experiences of electoral violence. IFES defines electoral violence as: “any harm or threat of harm to persons or property involved in the electoral process, or the process itself.” This includes physical and psychological harm, as well as property damage.¹³ In 2009, the United Nations Development Programme’s *Guide to Elections and Conflict Prevention* defined electoral violence primarily as “acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process, or that arise in the context of electoral competition...”¹⁴ USAID’s 2010 *Electoral Security Framework* concludes that “electoral violence refers to physical violence and coercive intimidation directly tied to an impending electoral contest or to an announced electoral result.”¹⁵

Despite their broad scope, these definitions have generally been used in a way that explicitly or implicitly privilege acts that are public or can be verified by a witness. Whether studies of electoral violence gather incidents from analysis of news, other published sources, or train monitors to report incidents verified by two sources, this dataset will contain many newsworthy, public, verifiable acts of violence, and those are more likely to take place in public spaces or events.¹⁶

Research on the status of women has shown that in most cultures, patriarchal structures and beliefs exclude, discourage, or discount women inhabiting the public sphere or taking on public roles.¹⁷ Looking at electoral violence with the lens of these definitions privileges the experience of men in most contexts. This means our theory and practice regarding electoral violence may ignore “critical distinctions between men and women in terms of socialization, experiences and identity creation, [and assume] that men and women experience the world in the same way, have the same demands, needs and expectations and

¹³ This definition was developed in the field as part of IFES’ EVER programs around the world. Further discussion of the evolution of the definition and the EVER methodology can be found in Kammerud, Lisa. *Managing Election Violence: The IFES EVER Program*. (2009, October). IFES; and online at <http://www.ifes.org>.

¹⁴ *Elections and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming*. (2009). United Nations Development Programme. Retrieved from <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/democratic-governance/dg-publications-for-website/elections-and-conflict-prevention-guide/Elections-Conflict-Prevention.pdf>. Sisk, Timothy. *Elections in Fragile States: Between Voice and Violence*. (2008, March). Paper prepared for the International Studies Association Annual Meeting in San Francisco, California, on 24–28 March 2008.

¹⁵ Straus, Scott and Taylor, Charlie. *Democratization and Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa 1997-2007*. (2009). Paper produced at the Annual Political Science Association Conference, as cited in *Electoral Security Framework: Technical Guidance Handbook for Democracy and Governance Officers*. (2010, July). USAID. Retrieved from <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/1-Electoral-Security-Framework.pdf>.

¹⁶ Data on electoral violence has been compiled by IFES through its many EVER projects (see Annex 2 and Kammerud (see above, 2009, IFES) in which monitoring teams collect verifiable, usually witnessed, incidents. Researchers at Uppsala University (http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/faq/#How_are_UCDP_data_collected), Creative Associates, and others have used news and social media content from which to pull incidents; Uppsala includes journals and case studies, and is focused on armed conflict and deaths.

¹⁷ Shredova, Nadezhda. “Obstacles to Women’s Participation in Parliament,” in *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*. (2005). Ballington, Julie and Karam, Azza (eds). International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, p. 33. Retrieved from <http://www.agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/IDEA%20-%20women%20in%20parliament,%20beyond%20numbers%20-%20EN%20-%20PD.pdf#page=31>.

the same levels of access to systems of power and decision-making.”¹⁸ For example, domestic violence is considered acceptable in many societies, and while anecdotally, there is evidence that it is one form of control over a woman’s electoral behavior, there has not been a method or even a sense of urgency to document this in wider electoral violence studies. This is just one example of a form of violence and power dynamic in place because of patriarchal beliefs and practices. The electoral violence programs, interventions, and policies built on research stemming from existing definitions, frameworks, and assumptions are unlikely to address the range of ways that women experience electoral violence.

Finding 3: Women experience different types of violence in different spaces than men

Both desk research and the primary research conducted in Bangladesh and Kenya by the VAWIE project affirmed that women, in addition to experiencing many of the same types of violence associated with electoral roles as men, experience certain types of violence in particular spaces that men do not (or have not reported).¹⁹ These specific types of violence include economic and financial intimidation, harassment regarding sexual or moral purity, threats of divorce, and other familial and social sanctions. Specific spaces in which women experience electoral violence include private spaces such as the home or other locations for family gatherings.

The particular types of violence noted above can be directed at women *because* they are women, or women can be targets in their roles as candidates, voters, political party supporters, election workers, or other electoral actors. Violence can occur in both private and public spaces. For example, violent acts against women in the public sphere include wide-scale rape of political activists, sexual slurs or harassment, and being physically attacked at rallies. Participants during fieldwork in Bangladesh and Kenya noted that women with political ambitions and/or engaged in political activism experience a great deal of verbal harassment in public by a variety of actors that specifically target their sexual “purity” or “impurity,” their religious convictions, their place in the home as a woman, or their domestic abilities. Focus group discussions in different parts of Bangladesh revealed a hostile work environment for women who work outside their homes. Activists in Sri Lanka note that women seeking nominations are often targets of “sexual bribery,” the practice of demanding sexual favors in return for nominations. These female candidates are targets of verbal and psychological abuse whether or not they comply. The gendered realities of campaign finance and corruption are also at play here. Women often do not have access to the private sources of campaign financing that men do, and male candidates often make monetary bribes to get on party lists.²⁰

Many acts of electoral violence occur in private homes or other private spaces. Desk study research, focus groups and in-depth interviews in Bangladesh and Kenya, and IFES’ EVER data indicate that during election cycles, women experience threats or restrictions around financial resources in the home, withholding of ID cards, intimidation involving family security and integrity, threats of divorce from a spouse or in-laws, domestic violence, threats against children, intimidation from mothers-in-law or community leaders, and familial or social pressures to conform to tradition or societal expectation. In Bangladesh, spousal abandonment has occurred as a result of a woman’s political activism, and family members use verbal and physical threats and intimidation tactics to dissuade women from political

¹⁸ Mertus, Julie, De Alwais, Malathi and Tazreena Sajjad, “Women and Peace Processes,” in *Women and Wars: Contested Histories, Uncertain Futures*. (2012). Cohn, Carol (ed). Malden, MA: Polity, pp. 169-193.

¹⁹ Reports on primary and secondary research can be found in the VAWIE Desk Study and field research reports. The comparison with men is drawn from IFES’ body of electoral violence data collected through its EVER project in over a dozen countries since 2004 (More information in Annex 2, and in Kammerud, Lisa. *Managing Election Violence: The IFES EVER Program*. (2009, October). IFES, and online at <http://www.ifes.org>).

²⁰ This observation is drawn from conversations between IFES and advocates of women’s rights in Sri Lanka.

participation and silence their perspectives on social, economic, and political issues. Women around the world cited similar examples of gender-specific violence in our secondary research.

Violence in private spaces presents a number of challenges for study and prevention. As is evident from studies on VAW in general, it is clear that women in many cultures continue to face violence within private spaces that is, at best, under-reported and under-addressed, and, at worst, considered socially acceptable. Outside of the United States and Western Europe, very few countries collect data on different forms of private violence other than intimate partner violence. Many surveys of other private types of violence employ less sophisticated measurement approaches than those used in monitoring intimate partner violence. Even when data is collected, there are many obstacles to documentation, including women's fear of speaking out. The use of social media to harass or intimidate is widespread, offers numerous ways for perpetrators to hide their identities, and its impact needs to be closely examined.²¹

These challenges exist for VAWIE as well, and success in understanding and bringing attention to electoral violence in private spaces will require building relationships and learning from local GBV and VAW organizations in countries in which VAWIE programming is initiated.

Finding 4: There is often an existing relationship (e.g., familial, social, hierarchical) between perpetrator and survivor when women experience violence in elections

The presence of an existing relationship, such as one that is familial, social, or hierarchical, between perpetrator and survivor is often an identifying element of VAWIE. A husband, father, other male relative, community or religious leader, or professional colleague may hold particular power over a woman's welfare, family integrity, children's safety, livelihood, or community status. The use of that power to threaten and intimidate women is particularly hard to identify or document, for several reasons. First, it often happens in private spaces or when women are otherwise alone with perpetrators. Second, psychological and physical violence in the context of familial relationships may be socially acceptable, making it less likely that any witnesses would report or corroborate it as violence. Lastly, the nature of the relationships involved makes it dangerous and daunting for survivors to report such violence. Often there is no legal framework within which to report, or even describe as a violation, violence perpetrated in private. Reporting electoral violence that happens at the hands of perpetrators with no connection to the survivor, whether it happens in public or private spaces, carries a different set of risks than reporting violence within personal or communal relationships. These relationships – whether with family members, spouses, or community leadership figures – often contain inherent expectations of obedience or complacency, and are likely to have tangible consequences for violating those expectations. For these reasons, violence within personal and communal relationships is not only hard to document, but also particularly effective in reducing women's participation.

For example, in nearly all of the countries from which anecdotal data is available, women have reported being threatened with divorce. This act happens in the home, and its power as a threat is because of power (legal, social, and psychological) in that relationship that the man has to the woman. A woman's rights within a marriage related to property, financial assets, and child custody are often compromised or even completely severed in situations of divorce in many countries. Women in Bangladesh identified the threat of *Talaq* (divorce under *Shariah* law) as both intimidation and economic violence that husbands could use to ensure a wife's compliance with his demands about electoral behavior.²² Attempting to

²¹ Bardall, Gabrielle. "Gender-Specific Election Violence: The Role of Information and Communication Technologies," in *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, Vol 2, No. 3, pp. 1-11.

²² *The Effect of Violence on Women's Political Participation in Bangladesh*. (2016). IFES. This paper drew on the 2013 focus groups held for this project, as well as supplemental focus group discussions.

report such acts of intimidation carries the risk of severing the relationship anyway, as well as the relationship or conditions worsening. Another example would be in a professional relationship, such as the sexual bribery that was reported by women in Sri Lanka, in which female candidates were often subjected to the practice of men demanding sexual favors in return for nominations. These female candidates are targets of verbal and psychological abuse whether or not they comply, and also were under pressure to not lose their opportunity to run for office.

The power dynamics in families, professional, and other relationships are often used to control women's electoral participation, and this is related to the status of women in social and political norms and practices. According to the 2012 IFES Global Survey of Women's Organizations conducted in 29 countries across the world, both male and female respondents most frequently cited "cultural beliefs/social attitudes/patriarchal mentality" as the main obstacle to advancement of the status of women. This answer, which identifies beliefs, attitudes, and mentality as barriers to women's advancement, speaks to elements of the overarching concept of "patriarchy," broadly defined as gender hierarchy based on male authority. The ways in which patriarchy is present in social, political, and economic structures and norms in any particular country context can provide the basis for understanding patterns of exclusion, oppression, and violence toward women in that country. As noted above, women in Bangladesh and Kenya provided many examples of electoral violence that involved family, community, or professional relationships.

Understanding perpetrator-survivor relationships, and how those relationships connect with the spaces and particular types of violence that occur, has implications for a gender-sensitive typology and categorization of violence and its actors, as well as how practitioners understand their roles in assessment, monitoring and analysis, and programmatic responses to VAWIE.

Finding 5: There is a lack of programming to address VAWIE specifically

Stemming in part from the gap in research and data, there are few programs that look at women and electoral violence specifically. Organizations like IFES, which traditionally work on electoral integrity, electoral security, and gender equality and women's empowerment, have only recently begun to address the connections between these elements in programming during the electoral cycle. This gap exists despite the fact that electoral violence and GBV organizations may all be conducting extensive programming in the same country.

On the observation front, several international and domestic organizations, such as the Carter Center, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), UN Women, and the Institute for Democracy in Africa (IDASA) have made efforts to document VAWIE in countries as varied as Sierra Leone, Kenya, Nigeria, Guinea, Bolivia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Libya and Egypt. The Carter Center and National Democratic Institute (NDI) have also begun attempting to document VAWIE in various countries in cooperation with domestic observers.²³ Women from various sectors of electoral and civil society work in Liberia organized the first Women's Situation Room (WSR) model, which has become a regional model for advocacy, observation,

²³ *Final Report of the Carter Center Mission to Witness the 2011–2012 Parliamentary Elections in Egypt.* (2012). The Carter Center. Retrieved from http://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/election_reports/egypt-2011-2012-final-rpt.pdf. *Key Gains and Challenges: A Gender Audit of Kenya's 2013 Election Process.* (2013). FIDA Kenya & National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). Retrieved from <http://www.ndi.org/files/Kenya-Gender-Audit-2013-Electoral-Process.pdf>. *Nigeria: Tracking Electoral Violence against Women in Real-time.* (2011, April 25). UN Women. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org/2011/04/nigeria-tracking-electoral-violence-against-women-in-real-time/>.

and information-sharing to discourage electoral violence and support women's participation.²⁴ Grassroots programming is being explored by some organizations, and women are often involved in work to prevent electoral violence in general. IFES' Women Against Electoral Violence (WAVE) Advisory Group in Bangladesh is composed of women leaders who were trained to facilitate discussion and advocacy in their communities to help reduce electoral violence.²⁵

Despite these important developments, our research did not uncover any long-term programs to understand and address the gender, conflict, and electoral dynamics that drive VAWIE. Current programs are limited to documentation, education, and general awareness-raising. VAWIE is both a distinct form of electoral violence and of violence against women, and program activities must go beyond the immediate electoral period, and beyond observation and reporting. For instance, practitioners can undertake specific gender assessments as part of pre-election or other assessments, including integration with the Electoral Security Framework and Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF); develop VAWIE initiatives in election management bodies (EMBs), parties, and communities through public education campaigns and media trainings; and build relationships to foster cross-sector initiatives bringing together actors in electoral and gender-focused assistance. In particular, building linkages between work on VAW and VAWIE could highlight the need to recognize that VAWIE, like VAW, rises from a particular social, economic, and political context that systematically marginalizes women, and especially women political actors.

Harnessing information and communication technology (ICT), which is increasingly used to monitor and report incidents of other violence as well as elections, may be helpful in documenting incidences of VAWIE. For instance, low-cost or public-domain software services such as Hootsuite, TweetReach, Klout, and Social Mention that are now being used to monitor social media traffic may be used to track ICT-based violence directed at female political activists, candidates and politicians. Open source software mash-ups such as Ushahidi²⁶ can map data collected from SMS, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, phone calls, and email. Reports of events can be seen on the website map in near real time, depending on the resources for data processing. The anonymity of the process may encourage greater reporting of VAWIE as it reduces the fear of retribution. These tools, designed to compile crowd-sourced information, could be modified to take only information from a group of trained monitors, or to include both. ICT can also be used for awareness building and activism with tools like online courses, digital story-telling projects, and online signature campaigns.²⁷

²⁴ *Women's Situation Room*. UN Women West and Central Africa. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomenwestand-centralafrica.com/womens-situation-room.html>. For Sierra Leone, see *Women's Situation Room aims to prevent conflict and ensure peaceful elections in Sierra Leone*. (2012, November 16). UN Women. Retrieved from <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2012/11/women-s-situation-room-aims-to-prevent-conflict-and-ensure-peaceful-elections-in-sierra-leone/>.

²⁵ *People Against Violence in Elections in Bangladesh*. (April 2015). IFES. Retrieved from <http://www.ifes.org/news/people-against-violence-elections-bangladesh>.

²⁶ Ushahidi, which means "testimony" in Swahili, is a web platform for mapping and managing data coming in through SMS, twitter, email, online forms, or its phone app. Generally used for conflict mapping, it began in Kenya as a tool to gather and map reports of violence during the post-election crisis in 2008. Currently a global company producing various products and software. See <https://www.usahidi.com/about>.

²⁷ Bardall, Gabrielle. "Gender-Specific Election Violence: The Role of Information and Communication Technologies," in *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, Vol 2, No. 3, pp. 1-11.

Providing a Way Forward through the VAWIE Framework

While the VAWIE project has compiled extensive, detailed data through its desk and field studies, the five findings summarized above have informed the typology, assessment, and monitoring tools, as well as the program recommendations, contained in this framework. As a whole, the VAWIE Framework provides a menu of options for anyone involved in electoral or GBV communities of practice to make a difference in their support of women facing violence in elections, and thus promote and ensure the safe, full participation of women in democratic processes.

2. VAWIE Typology

Introduction

Current typologies of electoral violence originate in definitional frameworks that tend to privilege public acts of violence and violence between stakeholders playing public, distinct roles.²⁸ This ignores personal relationships between perpetrators and survivors, the variation in spaces where violence might occur, and nuances within types of potential violence – all of which have been highlighted by VAWIE’s findings as essential for understanding VAWIE. The broad categories for physical and psychological abuse in the existing definitions also tend to conflate a variety of acts of VAWIE. The new VAWIE typology provides an expansion and revision of the forms, actors, and spaces of violence, and weaves them into existing and frequently used forms of categorizing electoral violence. Additionally, this typology suggests a way of identifying and categorizing barriers to women’s participation that, while stemming from the same root causes as VAWIE, do not rise to the level of violence.²⁹

This typology aims to reveal the presence of cultural, religious, social, misogynist, and other reasons for opposing women’s participation through identification of the nature of the physical harm, intimidation, harassment, or other specific acts that occur. It will be important in any assessment or program using this typology to place the actors, actions, and spaces of violence within the context of patriarchal structures and norms present in the communities in question. It is expected that this typology and the following tools cannot be used effectively without completing that step.

At the heart of the new typology is the VAWIE definition:

Any harm or threat of harm committed against women with the intent and/or impact of interfering with their free and equal participation in the electoral process during the electoral period. It includes harassment, intimidation, physical harm or coercion, threats, and financial pressures, and it may be committed in the home or other private spaces, or in public spaces. These acts may be directed at women in any of their roles as electoral stakeholders (e.g., voters, media, political actors, state actors, community leaders, electoral officials).

The working definition of barriers to participation is:

An act, circumstance, social norm, regulation, law, or systemic bias that has been directly linked (through anecdotal evidence, published analysis, or self-reporting) to interfering with women’s full participation in some part of the electoral process. Barriers to participation include obstacles to accessing information, resources, or opportunities, and can stem from

²⁸ IFES defines electoral violence as: “any harm or threat of harm to persons or property involved in the electoral process, or the process itself.” This includes physical and psychological harm, as well as property damage. In 2009, the UNDP *Guide to Elections and Conflict Prevention* defined electoral violence primarily as “acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process, or that arise in the context of electoral competition...” Retrieved from <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/democratic-governance/dg-publications-for-website/elections-and-conflict-prevention-guide/Elections-Conflict-Prevention.pdf>. USAID’s 2010 *Electoral Security Framework* concludes that “electoral violence refers to physical violence and coercive intimidation directly tied to an impending electoral contest or to an announced electoral result.” (2010, July). U.S. Agency for International Development. Retrieved from <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/1-Electoral-Security-Framework.pdf>. The IFES definition was developed in the field as part of IFES’s Electoral Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) programs around the world. Further discussion of the evolution of the definition and the EVER methodology can be found in Lisa Kammerud, *Managing Election Violence: The IFES EVER Program*, (IFES, October 2009) and online at <http://www.ifes.org>.

²⁹ For more details on the development of the VAWIE typology, please see Annex 3.

cultural/social/religious practices and beliefs, and may manifest in social, political, economic, or legal systems.

Drawing on the basic categories of information that IFES' EVER project has used in its monitoring and analysis methodology, this typology provides detailed categories and subcategories of perpetrators, survivors, types of violence, impact of violence, and locations of violence.³⁰

VAWIE categories

The new typology expands those categories to incorporate the types, forms, and relationships within VAWIE found through the project's research, as well as existing data management categories used by GBV practitioners. In doing so, it draws from groundbreaking efforts in the standardization of categories for GBV and VAW developed by the GBVIMS classification tool.³¹ Though the tool was designed "strictly for the purposes of standardizing GBV data collection across GBV service providers," its definitions of violence types and its incorporation of relationships between actors influenced the VAWIE typology, and the involvement of service providers in programming is highly likely in VAWIE programming regardless.³²

Below, each new VAWIE category set is shown, color-coded to the original above. Comparing these two sets of categories, we can see that:

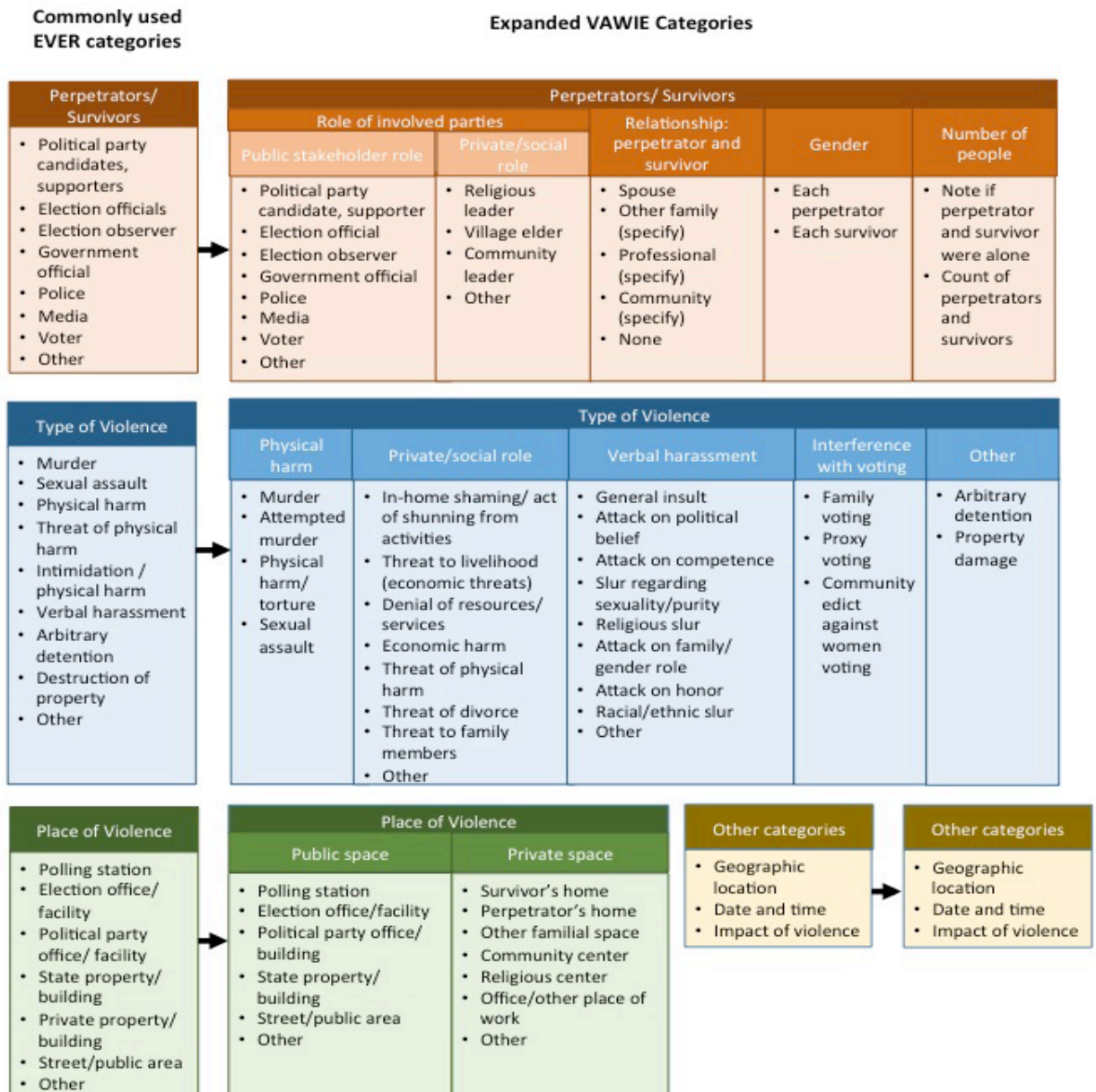
- In "Perpetrators and Survivors," we add a public and private role, as well as relationship to each other. Gender and number were generally captured in existing monitoring efforts.
- In "Type of Violence," we replace "Threat of physical harm" and "Intimidation and psychological abuse" with more detailed choices, and better sort the list of types.
- In "Place of Violence," we sort these categories by public and private spaces, and expand the choices.
- The Other categories will likely stay the same.

³⁰ Notably, in its Burundi programming in 2014-15, IFES did introduce questions regarding VAWIE in its monitoring initiative, including types and public/private space categories. Monitors used these questions to note trends in their communities overall, but not to track individual incidents.

³¹ The GBVIMS was developed through a joint effort of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). For more information, see the website for the GBVIMS, <http://www.gbvims.com>. For the specifics of the tool, please see <http://gbvims.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Annex-B-Classification-Tool.pdf>.

³² Ibid.

Figure 1: VAWIE Categories



The following scenario will help illustrate how the VAWIE categorizations will benefit future data collection and analysis efforts:

A candidate and village elder calls a female electoral official a “whore of the government” for performing that job, while the woman stood alone with the elder in her home.

Original categorization: The perpetrator is “candidate,” the place is “private property,” and the type of violence is “verbal harassment” or “intimidation,” depending on whether or not other factors were present.

VAWIE categorization: The perpetrator is “candidate,” and has a “Community” relationship with the survivor who is an “Election official.” The place is “Survivor’s home,” and the type of violence is “Slur regarding sexuality/purity.”

In the original categorization list, we know very little about the nature of this interaction. It would get analyzed as one of hundreds of acts of intimidation or verbal harassment. In the second, expanded method of documentation, we know a great deal about the nature of this interaction, and can analyze in far greater detail what is happening to women, where, and who is doing it. Adding levels of relationship, specific spaces, and specific speech or acts directed at women will add a great deal to better analysis and better prevention of VAWIE.

Two additional factors are worth noting here: (1) Women are particularly vulnerable and often known as “easy targets” in patriarchal societies that would invite persons with authority to intimidate women in private, and (2) Women whose character is questioned or abused in public face a re-victimization as patriarchal societies often assign blame to the victim, giving license to those in power to psychologically abuse women in the electoral process in public. Ensuring that the details of such violence are included in data collection and analysis is a crucial step toward bringing them out in the open for both scrutiny and prevention.

Barriers to participation

The final element of the VAWIE typology is the inclusion of barriers to participation to further assess the root causes of gender equality and discrimination as potentially predictive of but distinct from violence. As noted above, a barrier should be an identifiable circumstance, omission, or action that discourages women’s participation in some part of the electoral process, whether as a voter, candidate, party activist, or any other role. It may not have a specific date, place, survivor, or perpetrator. For example, in Kenya, some political parties scheduled meetings at times when it would be difficult for women members to attend, and therefore more difficult for them to run for office or be involved in party activities. This could be reported as a “political” barrier dealing with “timing of meetings and events.” Some tribal *jirgas* in Pakistan in 2002 signed agreements to prevent female candidates from filing nomination papers in their communities. This could be documented as a barrier, but not violence, since the document was not an act of intimidation or interference with women running for office directly. However, if the document was shown to, or seen by, women at the time, or if the tribal leaders did engage in direct intimidation or pressures against women, that should be documented as VAWIE.

3. VAWIE Assessment Tool

The VAWIE assessment tool is a comprehensive methodology for identifying potential challenges that create and exacerbate incidents of VAW in the electoral process, as well as opportunities for programming and monitoring interventions that can address these challenges. The VAWIE Framework acknowledges the complex mix of relationships, violence types, and spaces that sets violence against women in elections apart and makes it difficult to assess and track, which in turn makes such targeted violence potentially quite effective in deterring women's full political participation. This assessment uses IFES' expanded electoral violence typology that considers the unique impact of election violence on women and includes a comprehensive assessment framework to identify potential or existing trends of VAWIE.

The assessment tool recognizes and internalizes this nuanced understanding of violence targeting women to broaden the set of issues which practitioners must address in addressing violence against women in elections, and does so by including elements of several existing assessment tools related to gender, conflict, and elections.

In order to appropriately capture the intersection of violence, gender, and elections, the IFES VAWIE assessment tool draws upon a combination of assessment methodologies, as well as new concepts drawn from the VAWIE original research and expanded typology.

- The USAID Electoral Security Framework (ESF)
- The USAID Interagency Conflict Analysis Framework (ICAF)
- Care's Gender Analysis Framework (GAF)
- IFES' Gender and Elections Analysis (GEA)

This approach provides a comprehensive assessment to identify trends and factors related to VAWIE, and provides a blueprint for programmatic solutions that could mitigate and/or prevent circumstances that contribute to this violence. The assessment report contains an analysis of the factors that contribute to the understanding of violence against women in elections, which are systematically scored to help the assessment team prioritize areas of concern. The report communicates key issues identified, and contains recommendations for program interventions going forward that include tailored suggestions for program design, resources needed and stakeholders involved.

Methodology

The VAWIE assessment tool is based on the recognition that in order to effectively address violence against women in elections, practitioners must not only understand historical trends of this type of violence in a country, but also the factors that precipitate the violence. They should also develop an understanding of the cultural and socio-political norms that impact status of women in any given society, the scope and pattern of their participation in the electoral process, and societal and institutional responses to engage with violence in light of these factors. To address these needs, the assessment tool is organized around the analysis of four key factors that influence the incidence and extent of VAWIE:

Figure 2: Assessment Factors³³

Assessment Factors	
Status of Women	Addresses broad concerns related to the status of women in their local and national communities, and helps identify root causes of violence against women in general and in elections.
Women’s Access to Election Process	Examine gender dynamics specifically related to political and electoral processes, as well as democracy, rights, and governance issues more broadly. Categories of this analysis explore the gender dynamics related to the electoral legal framework, election administration, voter registration, women’s political participation as voters, candidates, activists, and the role of political parties.
Trends in Violence Against Women in Elections	Identify incidents and trends of violence against women that occur within the context of the electoral cycle; examine triggers for gender-based violence against women in elections.
Responses to VAWIE	Explore responses to VAWIE being implemented by official actors and civil society, including political parties and media. Identify strategies to reduce or prevent violence against women during the electoral cycle.

The assessment tool outlines key questions that should be addressed for each of these factors by the assessment team so that relevant data can be collected, an understanding of sub-components of the factor can be developed, and key challenges and opportunities that each factor presents in addressing VAWIE can be identified. The questions sets for each factor are provided in Annex 1. The assessment methodology postulates that understanding of these challenges and opportunities for each of these factors aids practitioners in gaining a nuanced understanding of the interplay between these factors that impact violence against women in elections. This approach supports understanding of the structural, cultural and institutional barriers that may create conditions for violence against women in elections in a particular country or locality. In this approach, the assessment tool can be grounded in the specific operating environment being analyzed to ensure that the complex relationships among stakeholders and events that may specifically impact violence against women in elections are captured, which may uncover or predict potential violence against women in elections.

While the assessment tool is based on the proposition that a nuanced understanding of key factors that impact violence against women in elections is essential for developing appropriate responses, it recognizes that many of those interested may want a quick and easy method for understanding where a country stands in relation to the factors. For this reason, the assessment findings will include not only a detailed analysis of the key factors identified above, but also include a simple score based on a five-point scale for each factor. The scaled scoring will be based on data obtained during the assessment, and the scales will be constructed so that the lower the value on the scale, the more challenging that particular factor is for addressing VAWIE. The scores for the factors will also serve as a useful comparative device for follow-on assessments in a country or locality. The particular meaning of each value on the scale is outlined in the discussion of each factor in country context.

³³ These assessment factors are inspired by CARE’s GAF (retrieved from <http://gendertoolkit.care.org/Pages/Gender%20Areas%20of%20Inquiry.aspx>), IFES’ GEA tool, USAID’s Electoral Security Framework (2010, July). Retrieved from <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/1-Electoral-Security-Framework.pdf>), USAID’s Best Practices in Electoral Security Guide (March 2013). Retrieved from https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2496/Electoral_Security_Best_Practices_USAID.pdf), and original research during the IFES VAWIE project.

After gathering information on each factor, windows of vulnerability and windows of opportunity will be identified.³⁴ From this analysis, each factor will be placed on the following scale,³⁵ with one being the least gender inclusive and five being the most:

1= Gender Exploitative: decisions and attitudes based on gender stereotypes

2= Gender Blind: decisions and attitudes that ignore consequences

3= Gender Neutral: decisions and attitudes that assume everyone will benefit

4= Gender Specific: decisions and attitudes that address practical needs

5= Gender Transformative/Redistributive: decisions and attitudes that address strategic interests & power

These categories describe the level of gender integration, which is defined by the UN³⁶ as a:

- Process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action
- Strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women and men an integral part of all aspects in all political, economic and societal spheres
- Women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality

Each factor will have specific contextual data for each scale category. The gender integration scale was selected because it evaluates the level of effort being made by government and society to achieve gender equality. It assumes that this level of effort is not static, but takes into account when stakeholders are moving forward toward a positive outcome and when they are stuck in or backsliding toward a negative outcome for gender equality. This scale, derived from analysis of the windows of vulnerability and opportunity also takes into account public and private incidents of violence, as well as cultural and systemic decisions of all stakeholders.

³⁴ This analysis methodology is adapted from the U.S. Government's ICAF (U.S. Department of State, retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/187786.pdf>), which outlines windows of vulnerability and opportunity as part of a conflict diagnosis. "Windows of Vulnerability" are moments when events threaten to rapidly and fundamentally change the balance of political or economic power. Elections, devolution of power and legislative changes are examples of possible windows of vulnerability. "Key Actors" may seize on these moments to magnify the "Drivers of Conflict." "Windows of Opportunity" are moments when over-arching identities become more important than sub-group identities, for example, when natural disaster impacts multiple groups and requires a unified response. These occasions may present openings for USG efforts to provide additional support for "Mitigating Factors" within a conflict.

³⁵ This scale is adapted from the Gender Integration Continuum in use by a number of organizations, including the InterAgency Gender Working Group, a network comprising nongovernmental organizations, the U.S. Agency for International Development, cooperating agencies, and the Bureau for Global Health of USAID. More information can be found at <http://www.igwg.org/training/ProgrammaticGuidance/GenderContinuum.aspx>.

³⁶ "Agreed Conclusions on Gender Mainstreaming." A/52/3, *General Assembly, Fifty-second session, Report of The Economic and Social Council For 1997*. (1997). United Nations Economic and Social Council, Section IV A, p. 27. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/52/plenary/a52-3.htm>.

Each assessment will result in a comprehensive report to be issued within one month of the completion of the assessment. The reports will contain:

1. Description of methodology, including any specific customizations necessary for country context
2. Overall assessment of key challenges and opportunities in addressing violence against women in elections
3. Specific windows of vulnerabilities and opportunities for each factor
4. Scoring for each factor
5. Overall recommendations for strategic and programmatic responses, including prioritization of these recommendations

Given the centrality of the factors identified above in the analytical framework, the next paragraphs contain a brief description of the specific issues to be addressed in analysis of each factor.

Status of Women

Questions from this section of the assessment aim to address broad concerns related to the status of women in their local and national communities. IFES has incorporated questions drawn from CARE's gender analysis framework (GAF), as well as questions taken from existing IFES tools, including the GEA and IFES' Status of Women survey, as well as from VAWIE original research for the development of questions for this factor. These questions highlight the cultural, socio-economic, and political norms which inform gender and power dynamics for women, men, girls, and boys and draw on publically available data from the World Bank, UN Women, World Economic Forum, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Inter-parliamentary Union and other resources. For example, women's access to property, income, childcare, security, and justice could play a role in enabling the environment for greater conflict, violence, and impunity. It is particularly important to analyze the needs and barriers of women at the local level. For example, do women and men have similar levels of freedom of movement? What types of leadership roles do men and women play in their society? Is domestic violence, marital rape, and/or other types of violence against women legally or culturally sanctioned? Is harassment common for women in public? Additionally, challenges in broader society may have an impact – for example, stressful economic or political factors, including rising prices of petrol or limited availability of groceries and household essentials during an election cycle, may increase the likelihood of violence against women in public and private spaces.

A review of the structural causes of conflict and violence against women, including harmful or inequitable legislation and cultural beliefs and practices, is also captured in analysis of this factor. The factor also addresses violence against women, as well as sexual and gender-based violence against women.³⁷

Women's Access to Election Process

Questions on women's access to the election process will assist the assessment team to examine gender dynamics specifically related to political and electoral processes, as well as democracy, rights, and governance issues more broadly. This section explores the gender dynamics related to the electoral legal framework, election administration, voter registration, women's political participation, and political parties.

³⁷ CARE GAF, retrieved from <http://gendertoolkit.care.org/Pages/Gender%20Areas%20of%20Inquiry.aspx>.

Elements of IFES' GEA tool are used to provide a gender analysis of the electoral and legal framework, including domestic and international legislation that supports or hinders the rights of women and men in the country. Any recent events related to the above, such as the passage of a gender quota law, are also documented. Questions that identify barriers to participation – circumstances, omission, or action that discourages women's participation in some part of the electoral process, whether as a voter, candidate, party activist, or any other role – are also included. The questions may also help indicate the presence of conditions potentially conducive to violence against women as a factor in participation in elections.

Violence Against Women in Elections

The root causes for violence against women in elections are the same as all other occasions where violence against women occurs: gender inequality and discrimination. The additional presence of electoral conflict and competition provides a different arena for this violence to play out, and adds specific triggers. The purpose of the questions in this section is to identify incidents and trends of violence against women that occur within the context of the electoral cycle. Factors that could trigger violence against women in the specific context of politics and elections are assessed. For instance, if a gender quota is being debated in the Parliament and the public has observed heated exchanges between politicians, are female parliamentarians being harassed by their colleagues or by the media for their role in proposing the legislation? Is the pre-electoral cycle period becoming tense because of this issue, and how does it impact women running for office or women who want to register to vote? Has there been election violence in the past that has had an impact on women's participation?

Questions are also posed to understand what may be typical profiles of survivors and perpetrators of violence against women in elections (i.e., are there incidents of domestic abuse and private violence that may be tied to the electoral process?). Input from less visible and possibly marginalized stakeholders, such as non-politically engaged women, women from ethnic and religious minorities, women with disabilities, and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and others outside the mainstream must be intentionally sought as part of the analysis of violence against women in elections. Seeking their input could be particularly helpful to identify occasions or trends of private violence.

Responses to VAWIE

USAID's *Best Practices in Electoral Security Guide* references the need to prevent violence against women and articulates the need for electoral security stakeholders to focus on this issue.³⁸ The VAWIE assessment tool builds on this by analyzing the types of interventions and strategies that stakeholders may be utilizing to address this type of violence. The assessment tool includes questions from USAID's *Electoral Security Framework's* detailed descriptions of stakeholders traditionally associated with electoral security, as well as questions for these stakeholders that inform an assessment of the electoral security environment.³⁹ This is important for two reasons: 1) It assesses whether electoral security stakeholders are addressing incidents of or putting in place strategies to reduce or prevent violence against women during the electoral cycle, and 2) It assesses whether or not the structure, including the electoral, security and legal institutions, impacts violence against women in elections. For example, questions from the *Electoral Security Framework* that support the assessment include: "Are there electoral reform measures (including gender quotas) in progress?" and "Is the electoral security process considered credible by men and women?"⁴⁰

³⁸ *Best Practices in Electoral Security Guide: A Guide for Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Programming* (March 2013). USAID, p.6. Retrieved from https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2496/Electoral_Security_Best_Practices_USAID.pdf.

³⁹ *Electoral Security Framework*. (2010, July). USAID, p. 29. Retrieved from <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1866/1-Electoral-Security-Framework.pdf>.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 45

Assessment Process

The VAWIE Assessment will divide the process into five distinct steps:

- 1. Country Discussion Guide:** The Assessment team will develop discussion guides by adapting the VAWIE Assessment questions to the specific country context, as well as create interview protocols and stakeholder lists. The Country Discussion Guide will facilitate the drafting of the final assessment report.
- 2. Preparation for Deployment:** The Assessment team will communicate with the local country team to further hone the assessment methodology and discussion guide, ensuring that data collected meets needs of local partners. In addition, the VAWIE Assessment will initiate communication with VAWIE stakeholders to ensure buy-in and transparency regarding the objectives of the assessment.
- 3. In-Country Data Collection:** Assessment team members will refer to the finalized interview protocols and discussion guides during interviews and focus groups, which will allow sufficient flexibility to ask probing or clarifying questions as discussions progress while ensuring that team members gather the necessary information from each stakeholder in a uniform way. Some data may be captured in a desk study prior to deployment, but most data will need to be collected through field research.
- 4. Analysis:** Findings will cover key aspects of gender, violence and elections as covered by the assessment questions across the four assessment factors. Analysis will be based on identifying windows of opportunity and vulnerability in each factor, as well as the scoring system described above. Recommendations for response will be determined based on the overall score, as well as priorities identified in each assessment set.
- 5. Drafting of Assessment Report:** The final report will conform to the assessment report template, and a technical review of the draft final report will be conducted by the assessment team to ensure consistency with international norms and methodological rigor.

Assessment Team

- 1. Gender Expert/Team Lead:** The Gender Expert/Team Lead will be responsible for synthesizing findings and recommendations from the assessment team into a cohesive framework, ensuring those findings and recommendations are appropriate to the political and electoral context, which will be examined through a gender lens. The Gender Expert/Team Lead will also be responsible for providing general leadership and direction throughout the assessment and will act as the primary point of contact for the assessment.
- 2. Electoral Security Expert:** An Electoral Security Expert will assist in assessing the vulnerabilities and risks related to electoral violence in general, as well as with identifying confidence-building measures and milestones that could be integrated into the team's technical recommendations.
- 3. Local Elections and Gender Expert:** The assessment team will seek a colleague in-country with local knowledge of gender and elections to join the team. This person will lead the tailoring of the discussion guide and assessment questions to the local context and participate in asking questions, conducting analysis and writing the report.

Information Dissemination

The information collected during the assessment will be compiled into a comprehensive report, which includes background information, an overview of the issue of VAWIE, and the particular context and setting where the assessment has taken place. The final report will offer an evaluation of the assessment factors based on the assessment scoring scale. A summary of findings is organized in the form of “windows of opportunities” and “windows of vulnerability” under each factor in preparation for responding to various scenarios addressed in the report.

As a result of findings in the Assessment report, next steps in and priorities for programming will be recommended, including strategies for stakeholder engagement, trainings, monitoring, survivor referrals and reporting, as well as other program recommendations as described in Section 5. The reliable data and analysis collected during the Assessment can be used as trend identification information to support education and public information, advocacy, networking, security coordination, GBV response and prevention programming, conflict mitigation and resolution, and electoral reform. Additionally, recommendations for coordination and communication between these VAWIE stakeholders will also be presented. For example, if the assessment finds that there may be a link between the trend of clamping down on proxy voting and a spike in reports of domestic violence, then program recommendations may include raising awareness with EMBs, security personnel, and GBV service providers; extensive public civic and voter education campaigns on the right to secrecy of the ballot for both men and women; and further research that explores causality between proxy voting and VAWIE.

The assessment team will work with local stakeholders to decide how to disseminate the information and whom to inform, particularly in cases where sensitive and confidential information is presented by or about a survivor of gender-based violence. This Framework supports a survivor-centric approach,⁴¹ derived from the broader principle of “do no harm,”⁴² to information dissemination that keeps the identity of a survivor confidential and ensures that an individual survivor has access to services.

Who to involve in a VAWIE Assessment

In order to assess the complex intersection of gender, violence, and elections, it is important to include a range of local, national, and international stakeholders who may illuminate different facets of the issue and consider how their viewpoints dovetail to provide the most thorough understanding possible.

Additionally, in conducting the desk study and field research for this Framework, particularly during the focus group discussions, two things became clear:

1. Violence against women in elections can occur in both public and private settings for women involved in political activities.
2. There will need to be a concerted effort to bring together democracy and governance stakeholders involved in electoral processes with stakeholders involved in addressing violence against women, including, most notably, stakeholders who work to respond to and prevent gender-based violence.

⁴¹ This approach is detailed in *Caring for Survivors of Sexual Violence in Emergencies Package*. (2010). Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Sub-Working Group on Gender in Humanitarian Action with support from the Gender-based Violence Area of Responsibility, p. 2. Retrieved from http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/assets/files/tools_and_guidance/gender_based_violence/GPC_GB_Violence_Caring_Survivors_Training_Pack_2010_EN.pdf

⁴² Anderson, Mary B. “Do no harm.” *How aid can support peace or war*. (1999). Lynne Rienner Publishers. The “Do No Harm” principle challenges aid agency staff to take responsibility for the ways that their assistance affects conflicts.

On the first point, while public acts of violence may be more visible than private acts, the assessment tool is designed to uncover and understand violence in both circumstances. In order to do so, it will be critically important to include from survivors of both types of violence who are willing to shed light on their experiences. It will also be important to meet with first responders, including gender-based violence response service providers, security personnel, and medical service providers. Speaking with women and men at the household level on attitudes related to women in politics and leadership roles is vital to understanding the context in which such violence may take place. It will be useful to speak with women who may not be politically active to understand if this inactivity correlates to threats or experiences with violence, or experiences of barriers, directed toward women due to their political or electoral activity.

To understand the multiple ways that women may be negatively impacted in society, it will be crucial to gather input from women of varying socio-economic status who are also members of less visible and/or marginalized groups, such as ethnic or religious minorities, women with disabilities, and lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.

The assessment must involve a wide array of stakeholders, including democracy and governance actors, and most critically, it includes GBV response civil society organizations (CSOs) that may be focused on violence against women but not necessarily its relationship with political and electoral activity. Identifying and approaching actors who may be considering violence against women from these other perspectives is critically important. Their technical expertise will help the assessment in the following ways:

1. Determine the root causes and types of violence, as well as how violence may affect men and women differently.
2. Respond to and prevent gender-based violence. They will therefore have important viewpoints to consider in the monitoring and implementation of VAWIE programs. Most importantly, they will be an important source for treatment and referrals for individual survivors of violence.
3. Place the issue of violence against women during the electoral period and within the broader political context more effectively. These organizations can then plan accordingly for potential spikes in VAW incidents that may relate to political activities in a country.
4. Provide critical information during the VAWIE monitoring process in a way that keeps survivor information confidential.

When to conduct an Assessment

A VAWIE assessment should be conducted to address the issue of violence against women in elections or to ensure that electoral security or other election programming does not exacerbate historical, social, and cultural trends that could lead to VAWIE. The decision to conduct an assessment could be related to:

1. A history of electoral violence,
2. A history of VAW/gender inequality, and/or,
3. New or emerging trends in either of these directions that require further assessment.

In the face of any of these three factors, it is critical that an assessment is conducted to provide an evidence-based approach to programming to address violence against women in elections and to ensure any programming places the needs of survivors of election violence at the center of the approach to reducing VAWIE. Assessment results should also be periodically reviewed throughout the life of the project, especially given the different periods of the electoral process, as well as similarly reevaluated in case of political transition and other catalytic events, such as an assassination or other high-profile act of VAWIE, or if stability in general is threatened.

The scope of the assessment can be tailored to the project resources and information already available. For instance, IFES may have recently conducted a gender and elections analysis as part of existing program, and this analysis may have contributed to identifying the need to develop a program. In such a case, an elaborate assessment may be redundant, and it may instead be useful to collect supplemental information on the status of women, gender and elections and electoral security. Similarly, plans to conduct an electoral security assessment could incorporate elements of the VAWIE assessment tool to ensure the issue of violence against women in elections is thoroughly reviewed.

Where violence against women in elections analysis and programming are not planned but other electoral assessments are, questions from the assessment tool can be added to the other assessments, such as the Election Processes Diagnostic, Pre-election Technical Assessment, Gender and Elections Analysis, or pre-election survey. This is possible and encouraged, because it will provide election officials with information about trends in and risks for VAWIE, to better evaluate the need to address VAWIE more comprehensively.

Ideally, the assessment should take place a year or two in advance of an election or at least with significant time to respond to the assessment report. This would give electoral stakeholders enough time to conduct the assessment, analyze the results and put in place response and mitigation programming in advance of electoral activities. For instance, if the assessment surfaces clear concerns about internal harassment experienced by women in a particular political party, efforts to address this issue can be put in place prior to the party and candidate filing period.

4. VAWIE Monitoring Tool

Monitoring can be a crucial part of programming to potentially mitigate and prevent electoral violence against women, especially given the lack of existing data on gendered experiences of electoral violence and the lack of self-reporting associated with a huge range of private space violence. Stakeholders currently tracking electoral violence, such as EMBS, the media, and political parties are not likely to capture a great share of gender-based electoral violence unless their efforts are tailored to meet the realities of how women experience and are likely to share information about electoral violence. The VAWIE tool builds upon IFES' experience with electoral violence monitoring in over a decade of EVER programming, adding in new elements to better identify and document violence against women during the electoral period.

Monitoring can be done with various goals in mind. Monitoring that informs public reporting and advocacy can increase public accountability for perpetrators, create momentum for peacebuilding activities, help authorities direct resources to potential or escalating violence, and serve as a deterrent to perpetrators who do not want to be named. Monitoring can also be used to inform institutional or CSO activities and analysis, or as part of broad early warning programming that focuses on political and socio-economic trends as a way to better understand and predict/prevent political and electoral violence.

The following tool provides a menu of options for monitoring strategies and methods to combine, as appropriate, in the context of current gender, conflict, and political dynamics. It should be informed by the VAWIE assessment and built as a partner-led initiative. This activity can stand alone or be a seamless part of a wider EVER or other violence monitoring.

Monitoring Guidelines

Conditions for a successful monitoring program include:

- An initial review of the electoral process and calendar of events
- Potential or existing relationships with CSO partners focused on gender equality and women's empowerment
- Political, electoral, and community stakeholders understand the project and its goals
- Security situation permits some freedom of movement for monitors/partners, and security actors understand the exercise
- Communication network for sharing information via post, phone, SMS, email, online, etc.
- Plan to keep survivor-sensitive information confidential when using it for data analysis and advocacy
- A referral pathway for survivors involving medical and psycho-social support, as well as legal and security services, is in place
- Resources available for public awareness campaign if needed to promote participation in information sharing on VAWIE

Figure 3: Monitoring Guidelines

In terms of partners, it is recommended that a VAWIE monitoring team include a gender-focused partner or partners focused on a particular marginalized group, such as transgender women, as well as others involved in conflict and/or election work as possible and appropriate. It may be necessary to involve a variety of types of organizations to cover a whole country or other desired geographic areas. In VAWIE monitoring efforts, it will be especially important to hold briefings with groups who may not provide monitors but might be willing to place and monitor collection boxes for incidents and/or who could verify a monitor's credibility in local communities. Core partners who lead the project should be supplemented with a network building effort to inform and encourage cooperation from peer CSOs in gender, conflict, and electoral work.

Monitoring violence against women in elections could take place in any phase of the electoral cycle. From IFES' research, a great deal of intimidation and physical violence takes place in the pre-election period, as well as on Election Day. Depending on assessment findings, project resources, and partner capacity, the inclusion of at least these two periods is recommended.

While monitoring activities would be tailored to country context and partner needs and skills, as well as assessment results, each electoral period would contain certain core features:

Pre-election Monitoring will begin several weeks or months in advance of elections as stakeholders are building relationships, such as during the party and candidate filing period just prior to the campaign period, to determine which actors may have information about incidents of violence against women in elections. Depending on the context, goals of monitoring can include: to draw a causal link between incidents of private violence and political activity; to anticipate potential hot zones and events; to track incidents of political party or government statements or actions that discourage women from participating in political activities; to share data and information with the public or key stakeholders; and/or to establish prevention and response strategies in advance of the elections. Monitors will seek meetings with election officials, political parties, civil society, gender-based violence response and prevention organizations, women's groups and service centers, and security personnel. The trained monitors have copies of the intake and consent forms described below. A key component of the VAWIE monitoring tool, which helps it to record both public and private acts of violence against women, is an outlet for an individual survivor to anonymously register a complaint or self-report. This is especially important for increasing access to women who may fear the consequences of sharing their concerns about violence or potential violence. This can be accomplished through the establishment of an incident registry call line, SMS, or by distributing collection boxes for written statements in various locations, such as women's centers and polling stations, that are announced through media or social media.

Election Day Monitoring will deploy monitors to polling stations and other key elections sites to monitor election activities of candidates, voters, election management officials, media, and the public. The systems described above will continue to be utilized, but additional means of urgent reporting of information will need to be in place to capture fast-moving events on Election Day. Electoral, civil society, and security resources will likely be stretched thin, and strategies for response will need to be carefully planned, and tested if possible.

Post-election Monitoring is necessary to capture a phase of the electoral cycle that is extremely prone to violence. For example, there may be retaliation against losing candidates who do not have the power to protect themselves. In addition to pre-electoral monitoring activities, monitoring in this phase will also include a review of Election Day activity for trends that might indicate acts of private violence not well captured in the data gathered on specific acts of violence, such as low female voter turnout or high incidents of family or proxy voting. This review will also analyze reported incidents of violence against women that happened on Election Day or after the election took place. Similar to pre-election activities, monitors will check in with contacts and stakeholders to capture their reflections on Election Day, observe vote tabulation processes, and attend post-election events and rallies. Anonymous outlets, such as the incident registry line and collection boxes, will remain available in the immediate post-election phase for a few weeks or months.

Methodology

The VAWIE monitoring tool builds upon the established EVER methodology by integrating the challenges and experiences specifically encountered by women into each step.

Methods of gathering information

The first two areas of the methodology are consistent with the current EVER methodology, but they are enhanced to capture issues that specifically address potential violence against women in elections.

- 1. Make key contacts and build relationships:** VAWIE ensures that stakeholders include women's groups, GBV response service providers, and other stakeholders who may understand and support assistance for incidents of violence against women in elections.
- 2. Proactively seek information:** With the Assessment tool as a baseline, VAWIE monitors use new and existing relationships to gather more information about how women are or are not engaging in the electoral process. Monitors attend political events, including political events aimed specifically at women's involvement as candidates, voters, and activists. Monitors also attend women's empowerment events and trainings, as well as other broader gender-related activities, to draw a causal link between the actions of women and the electoral cycle and track incidents of violence, potential violence, and peacebuilding activities. Monitoring social media or local publications will also be done as appropriate.

VAWIE monitoring adds a third element to its methodology, which was derived from the research conducted in the first phase of this project:

- 1. Creating safe channels of communication:** A unique element of VAWIE is ensuring that survivors of violence against women in elections can report safely and confidentially. Monitors are trained to capture and report data in a way that identifies trends without exposing individual survivors of violence against women in elections, whether incidents are public or private and whether incidents are reported in person, in writing or online.

What information is gathered?

It should be noted that monitors may capture information that has the potential to lead to violence, as well as local peacebuilding activities created by electoral stakeholders to mitigate or prevent violence against women in elections.

Monitors also have consent forms on hand to obtain a survivor's consent for confidential information analysis and reporting.

Survivors who report to monitors are provided with GBV response service referrals to security, legal, and medical care should they need and want it.

What sources of information are used?

Monitors may rely on a number of sources to record violence against women in elections, potential violence, and peacebuilding activities. They may speak directly with survivors of violence against women in elections, election workers, political party members and candidates, media, official sources, community leaders, community members, CSOs, and gender-based violence response providers.

Figure 4: VAWIE Incident Monitoring Form: Partial Sample from the Haiti Women and Election Violence Call line Registry Nov. 2015

CONFIDENTIAL		Haiti's Violence Against Women in Elections Incident Report Form			
(Check all that apply unless otherwise noted)					
Incident #: _____					
Caller Code: _____			Date of Report: _____		
Does client consent to share information? Y __ N __					
Survivor DOB: _____		Survivor Sex: M __ F __ O __			
Country of Origin: _____			Municipality: _____		
Occupation _____					
Election: <input type="checkbox"/> National Assembly <input type="checkbox"/> Presidential <input type="checkbox"/> Governor/State Assembly <input type="checkbox"/> UTD					
1. Date of Incident: _____					
2. Time of Incident: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Morning? <input type="checkbox"/> Afternoon? <input type="checkbox"/> Evening? <input type="checkbox"/> Night? <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to Determine					
3. Where did the incident happen?					

How is information evaluated and analyzed?

The different types of information gathered in monitoring efforts will require different forms of analysis. In some cases, incidents can be verified through IFES’ tested methodology of having monitors find two or more independent sources (one of which is not a media source) that agree on the facts of an incident. Most of the data types gathered here will not fit this model.

Given the nature of private space violence and the difficulty in gathering information about it, other methodologies must be used. For example, in the case of incidents submitted via the collection box, via SMS or online, reports will be gathered and analyzed as they are received and considered self-reported data by survivors.

Additionally, information on tension levels/potential for violence or data on specific trends may be gathered. In these cases, the project is looking for information that can indicate areas for prevention of violence, or for areas of service needs or further investigation. These goals are well in line with electoral support and violence prevention in general, and they can and should be part of a project when the need is present and the resources are available. There are established methods within EVER and elsewhere for gathering trend data and other qualitative data on indicators of tension or potential violence.

Regardless of data type, quality control checks will be in place to weed out less credible, illogical, or otherwise suspect reports. Supervising monitors or the headquarters team would review information by looking at the sources (when available, as SMS or online reporting does not always include this data point with the incident information), the incident described, and known affiliations or conflicts in the community involving the survivors and perpetrators, as well as noting when information is incomplete or contradictory.

Types of Monitoring Activities

- 1. Research and information gathering:** Monitors will have been briefed on the VAWIE assessment conducted prior to their deployment in order to understand the context and potential trends and themes related to violence against women in elections in their local communities. In addition to this information, they will collect updates and supplemental information leading up to, during, and immediately after the election.
- 2. Site visits:** In the lead up to elections, monitors will attend campaign events, visit voter registration centers, women’s centers, polling centers, and other potential sites of election violence or peacebuilding. Monitors will look for and report any relevant incidents.
- 3. Meetings/Key Informant Interviews/Focus Group Discussions:** Prior to elections, it is important to develop relationships with stakeholders who may help report, verify and/or respond to incidents of violence against women in elections. Monitors will proactively meet with identified relevant stakeholders and collect pertinent information, including meeting with election officials, GBV service providers,⁴³ women candidates and party activists, and leaders from all parties in the local community.
- 4. Public Outreach:** At the onset of the election period and once monitors have been trained, monitors and partner organizations will produce information to highlight the issues related to violence against women in elections, including the various methods of capturing incidents and ensuring services for survivors of election violence. Press releases and reports will be generated from the VAWIE assessment and distributed through traditional and social media sites to raise awareness of the issue. Workshops and community dialogues will be held on the issue of VAWIE. Information regarding when and how incidents can be reported, including information on collection box locations and the incident registry call line, will be disseminated. When possible, electoral stakeholders will provide micro-grants to support local responses to VAWIE incidents.
- 5. Incident Registry:** A live women’s election incident registry can be set up with phone and SMS lines to focus on non-emergency documentation of incidents of violence against women in elections in the lead up and immediate aftermath of national and local elections. This information will be recorded confidentially and used, with consent, for analysis and action to be taken by election officials and other stakeholders (including medical, legal, and security services) to mitigate or prevent future incidents of violence against women in elections.⁴⁴
- 6. Collection boxes:** Clearly demarcated collection boxes will be placed in strategic locations to allow women to report incidents of violence they experienced or witnessed without

⁴³ A note on GBV service providers: To the extent possible, a monitoring organization could develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with organizations collecting GBV information. Such a MoU could indicate if and how GBV organizations are willing to share confidential and unidentifiable data that may be related to the electoral process. GBV organizations may also agree to include “elections” as part of their survivor intake form. Such a relationship would need to be carefully cultivated with clarity on standard operating procedures for both parties.

⁴⁴ Limitations of the incident registry: This call line is not an emergency hotline. Its primary focus is the policies and practices that election officials and other stakeholders can take to address the systemic problem of VAWIE. Please note that active emergencies involving survivors of violence against women in elections should contact emergency services directly. Survivors of gender-based violence need immediate assistance in order to receive counseling and be referred to medical, legal, and protective services for further help. This call line complements but does not replace case management processes for survivors of GBV.

direct contact with a monitor. The individual whose contact information was provided will be contacted to review the incident intake form that will capture the incident and be confidentially recorded for analysis and reporting, as well as to provide information about response services if they are requested. The collection boxes will be located in women's health centers, community health and family centers, political party offices, and local election sites, including polling stations and local EMB offices. The information collected will be shared, as other incidents are shared, without revealing any identifying information about the individual reporting the incident.

7. **Social Media, SMS, and other online technology:** Social media monitoring, or use of social media to provide survivors with alternate ways of reporting and seeking assistance, can also be utilized. Social media and online tools may increase the occasion for self-reporting by survivors of election violence against women. Conversely, incidents of social media, SMS or online harassment or intimidation can be reported as well.
8. **Observation:** Monitors will be deployed on Election Day and at electoral and political events leading up to and immediately after elections. Should the monitors observe first-hand incidents of violence against women in elections, they will record the information while ensuring their own personal safety.

Monitoring Forms

Intake form: The IFES EVER intake form has been modified to include gender-related information, including classifications of gender-based violence against women based on the GBVIMS.⁴⁵ This form must be filled out by the trained VAWIE monitor. The monitor should be familiar with the content of the form prior to using it to ensure vital information is recorded. To the extent possible, monitors will fill in the entire form. This can happen immediately after learning of an incident as long as thorough notes are taken in the incident description section during the call. The name of the survivor of VAWIE should not appear on the incident report form, but can be recorded on the consent form with the identical intake form ID and kept separately not for circulation. The incident number, survivor code, and demographic information will maintain a unique identity of the incident while ensuring confidentiality of the survivor. Additional information can be added to the form, and verbal consent must be recorded to share information. *Note: even with consent, a survivor's identity will not be revealed.*

Consent form: The VAWIE consent form contains the survivor's name and signature agreeing to the use of their incident information for analysis and reporting. Even with consent, recorded VAWIE incidents and data will never reveal identities of individual survivors. All forms will be available electronically should a survivor wish to report online or via SMS.

Training

Who? Community-based civil society partners will be identified in advance of elections for training on the VAWIE methodology. Trainings will strive to have gender parity and seek partners from both the election and political sectors, as well as the women's activists and service provision sectors. Efforts to include women with disabilities, women from ethnic or religious minorities, young women, gender variant women and other marginalized groups is important to incorporate the panoply of women's experiences.

⁴⁵ Illustrative examples of monitoring forms are attached in Annex 4. One is a long form to be used by a trained monitor, and the second example is for use with a collection box or similar self-reporting system.

How? The EVER training toolkit⁴⁶ has been modified to add concerns related to gender equality and violence directly impacting women and their involvement in the political and electoral process. As such, it includes modules on gender-based violence, sexual harassment, national laws related to women's rights and the political and electoral process, and international laws related to violence against women, such as Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security.

Training will also include fundamental instruction on gender equality to ensure gender-biases, assumptions, and perceptions of monitors are mitigated. Monitors will be made aware of a survivor-centric approach to protecting the identity of individual survivors and ensuring their access to services, as well as a review of the broader “do no harm” principle.

Data Analysis and Information Dissemination

Analysis: Information is documented by assigning a unique identification number to each individual incident. A report is generated, which can provide overall statistics for a given period, such as the entire length of the monitoring exercise (capturing pre-election, election, and post-election phases) or for a specific phase within the election cycle. The information captures the types of violence, perpetrators, survivors of violence, and the impact the violence has on an individual, a community, and an election cycle. Trends and themes, including occasions for violence and commonalities among perpetrators or survivors, are also identified.

Reporting: Trends and themes that emerge from the analysis are shared with key stakeholders and the public to help them improve methods for mitigating and preventing future violence. A survivor of an individual incident is anonymous and tracked only through the incident identification number. As with any electoral violence monitoring effort, public reporting of incidents does not reveal the identity of individuals involved.

If integrated with wider EVER monitoring, reporting strategies can include subsections for different types of data collected by this effort. Overall reporting strategies will vary widely, but can include:

- Frequent, periodic public reports and press conferences designed for advocacy and awareness among the public and stakeholders;
- Frequent, brief public reports on events highlighting only urgent information;
- Briefings and/or reports to key service providers and stakeholders able to take action on findings. This response is intended to mobilize action based on collected data;
- Longer, in-depth public reports before and after the election designed to report on incidents, trends, and implications for future programming; and
- Recommendations for additional programming, as described in the following section.

⁴⁶ More information can be found about EVER in Annex 2 and in Kammerud, Lisa. *Managing Election Violence: The IFES EVER Program*. (2009, October). IFES; and online at <http://www.ifes.org>.

5. VAWIE Program Recommendations

The elements that form the VAWIE Framework represent a comprehensive approach to research, analysis, and monitoring of violence against women in the electoral process consistent with an expanded and gender-responsive typology. This approach is meant to inform effective programming that reduces or prevents incidents of VAWIE and enhances women's participation in the electoral process. Programming strategies should incorporate the key lessons identified in the VAWIE assessment and respond to the key dynamics that characterize VAWIE. Programming should also incorporate broader issues related to violence against women in society and tailor that programming to the unique elements of democracy and governance work. While there is a mix of short, medium, and long-term program approaches listed below, IFES recommends a long-term view and investment in addressing VAWIE by identifying and responding to both potentially predictive trends and documented incidents of violence as the most effective approach to addressing this challenging issue, especially given the relationship and trust building work that is needed.

VAWIE Response & Prevention Programming

VAWIE Trainings for non-election stakeholders: In addition to outreach, trainings on the electoral process and the issue of violence against women in elections can be offered to development and community stakeholders typically outside the electoral process. This should include GBV prevention and response organizations, women's health and CSOs, and security, health, and legal service providers. These trainings would include an overview of gender equality and women's empowerment in the electoral process.

VAWIE Trainings for election/political/security stakeholders: In addition to public outreach, trainings for EMBs, security and judicial personnel, political parties, and other electoral stakeholders on awareness and response to violence against women in elections should be a standard part of the toolkit used to address VAWIE and ensure that it is mainstreamed throughout all election programming. As with non-electoral stakeholders, this would include an overview of gender equality and women's empowerment in the electoral process, women's rights more generally, and GBV more specifically.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with referral pathway service providers: With new relationships established between electoral stakeholders and GBV service providers as a result of incorporation of expanded typologies, it may make sense to establish SOPs between elections stakeholders and GBV service providers. For example, in advance of elections and in anticipation of a survivor's needs, an EMB or CSO monitoring VAWIE can have a referral pathway in place and SOPs with health services providers, security officials, and legal services providers in proximity to sites where monitoring will take place. The SOPs will also help reinforce roles and responsibilities of electoral stakeholders and GBV service providers in the moment a VAWIE incident occurs.

GBV Prevention and Response to VAWIE: Organizations working specifically on GBV prevention and response should develop an understanding of why and how to respond to the specific threat of violence against women in politics and elections. GBV organizations should reach out to election stakeholders to understand the electoral calendar and the potential for flare ups in violence against women related to politics and elections. This will improve their ability and preparation for response and prevention strategies aimed at survivors and the broader community.

Women's Leadership Training: IFES and other democracy stakeholders undertake gender equality mainstreaming and women's empowerment programming as part of their core mandate. These programs must integrate the concern for and challenge of addressing VAWIE. For instance, should a VAWIE assessment surface a trend where several women report feeling challenged to navigate specific

issues related to their personal security or broader issues related to the electoral and political climate, additional training support to address these trends can be added to the curriculum.

Engaging Male Allies: Engaging men to address the culturally entrenched attitudes about women’s involvement in political and electoral life that may potentially trigger election violence is a critical piece of the effort to address the full spectrum of VAWIE, which includes domestic and other kinds of private violence. Awareness-raising, coalition-building, mentoring, and other activities that make up IFES’ Male Allies for Leadership Equality (MALE) program will support this effort.

Public engagement, education, and campaigning: Efforts to prevent and mitigate violence against women in elections can be augmented by engaging a broader audience in the lead up to elections as part of civic and voter education campaigns. For example, IFES Bangladesh formed the Women Against Violence in Elections (WAVE) Advisory Group to bring together diverse groups of women to mitigate electoral and political violence against women, participate in innovative thinking on ways to engage their respective networks, and utilize their expertise to promote peaceful, violence-free elections. With IFES’ technical and capacity building support, WAVE members have conducted their own nationwide peacebuilding events and targeted advocacy. These events increase awareness around the importance of stopping violence against women throughout the election cycle and safeguarding their right to vote.

Based on the VAWIE Monitoring tool, public education on where and how to report election violence against women should also be implemented.

VAWIE and Election Observation: The National Democratic Institute’s (NDI) Gender, Women and Democracy team has undertaken an innovative new program to strengthen the capacity of election observers to monitor and mitigate VAWIE and promote a deeper understanding of the phenomenon worldwide.

Global Campaigns: Efforts to raise awareness of the impact that VAWIE has on electoral and political processes, as well as its linkages to the broader violence against women campaign, are growing. In 2016, NDI and others created a Global Action Plan to address violence against women in politics – an action plan that can be used effectively by activists, politicians and policymakers in their own countries to raise awareness, mitigate violence, and increase the accountability of perpetrators. VAWIE programming should be tied to this global call to action.

VAWIE Research & Evidence

Quantitative VAWIE data collection: To supplement existing qualitative and anecdotal VAWIE data collection, comprehensive quantitative studies should be launched specifically to understand the makeup and frequency of VAWIE in various contexts around the world. Such data would be invaluable to inform VAWIE programming and the broader electoral process in general.

Election Violence Data and Analysis: Future efforts to collect and analyze data related to all types of election violence should be gender disaggregated (and include disaggregation by other demographics such as age, disability, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation) and analyzed using VAWIE’s expanded and gender-responsive typology to ensure that all data related to election violence is collected, including incidents of private violence where possible, and all data is reviewed through a gender lens to reduce gender-biased analysis.

Assessments: The VAWIE assessment tool has been designed to deliver a comprehensive assessment of violence against women in elections using conflict, gender, and elections analysis tools. This tool can itself provide an extensive understanding of VAWIE in a particular context. It can also be used in combination with various pre-election technical assessments, conflict assessments, and other analyses

that may occur in a particular country context in the lead up to an election or to more broadly gauge the political climate.

Monitoring: Electoral violence monitoring should incorporate elements of the VAWIE monitoring tool as appropriate. Whether the tool is incorporated or used as a standalone activity, it is important to integrate the actions of monitoring, reporting, and analysis with ongoing efforts by other stakeholders and to provide information back to the communities experiencing violence. ICT mapping and communication platforms such as Ushahidi may play a role in ensuring that survivors and communities see the analysis of the data they provide, but civic education presentations, workshops, advocacy, and other public awareness activities should also be included in monitoring efforts. Providing recommendations and analysis to stakeholders and advocating action from relevant authorities is also crucial, but the feedback loop to communities is more often overlooked.

Mapping and data visualization: The term “mapping” can refer to several practices, including geographically visualizing data or engaging in a process of community-led or expert-driven analyses of specific circumstances present in geographical areas of a country. It can assist in better feedback loops to bring data and analysis back to communities, as well as allow for better analysis and visualization of data from assessments, monitoring efforts, or trends over time in any existing dataset. “Data visualization” refers to the presentation of data in graphs or pictures, including maps, which help represent the meaning of the information.

Mapping and data visualization could be useful tools in analyzing VAWIE in several ways. In a monitoring program, data captured could be plotted by location, with different types of violence and other variables shown in the city/village in which they occurred. This could be part of a platform such as Ushahidi, which gathers information via direct data entry, SMS, twitter, email, or online forms, and then maps the data using various types of mapping software, or it could be used in a more static display. A dynamic platform with the ability to receive data via social media and SMS could also be used to solicit reports from the public, allowing survivors of VAWIE to anonymously report incidents and see them mapped on a public site that shows the full range of incidents over time and by location.

In some cases, the nature of the data, such as the address of private homes, is not appropriate for mapping. It may be possible to show clusters of such incidents that avoid revealing specific locations, or it may be more appropriate to visualize trends in these types of violence through another form of visualization. For example, if a trend identified is that women are being beaten in their homes due to the clamp down on proxy voting, those incidents could be mapped in clusters, or could be visualized with a range of other identified trends in private violence.

Community-based mapping has been used as a conflict resolution or transformation activity for many years, and a similar process of community reporting to map the actors, actions, and impacts of VAWIE could help drive discussion, awareness, and a reduction of VAWIE.

A risk-assessment and conflict tracking methodology could also be used to map VAWIE over time and create room for assessment and real-time data. This methodology would involve an analyst, in consultation with local stakeholders, assigning each district or other small regional area of a country a risk level (or frequency of occurrence) for types of VAWIE that could be updated periodically as incidents or trends were tracked. All of these techniques could inform electoral, GBV/VAW, and other types of programming and planning.

Stakeholder analysis: Given the intersectionality of issues related to VAWIE, it will be important for implementers of VAWIE to carry out a complete stakeholder analysis with electoral assistance, gender-based violence, and other potentially key actors. This will reinforce clear roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder and provide VAWIE implementers with ample time for outreach and engagement.

VAWIE & Related Issues

It may be important to integrate violence against women in elections into related work, such as:

Gender equality and women’s empowerment programming in the electoral process: Election stakeholders must use evidence and technical leadership to integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment activities into democracy and governance work. They must provide gender-sensitive technical assistance and analysis throughout the electoral cycle and in every aspect of programming to ensure barriers to women’s participation and leadership are reduced. These programs are well positioned to include strategic references to preparing for and responding to challenges of election violence for women.

VAWIE and multiple marginalization: Specific programming is needed for women who have a disability, are a part of an ethnic or religious minority, are poor, are from the LGBTI community or have other barriers that generally challenge their participation in political and electoral activities, and, more specifically, may create greater risks for exposure to election violence. Research that captures multiple forms of marginalization can help strengthen programming that addresses the specific needs of women with multiple barriers to their participation, providing stronger, more sustainable solutions for VAWIE.

VAWIE and political finance: Research and subsequent programming on the relationship between political finance, election violence, and gender is needed to address concerns that women may be especially vulnerable to systemic manipulation related to electoral and political resources. Furthermore, as described by IFES’ white paper “Political Finance and Gender Equality,” while political finance is an important instrument for achieving gender equality in politics, the ongoing debates about political finance rarely consider the impact of money on the level of representation of both men and women in elected offices.⁴⁷

VAWIE and impunity: Impunity in cases of VAWIE is an injustice, as well as a potential deterrent to women’s participation in electoral and political processes. Research and subsequent programming that address how impunity could be reduced through systematic action on the part of all VAWIE stakeholders should be a priority of EMBs and other government officials responsible for election dispute resolution, as well as police and legal service providers for survivors of GBV.

VAWIE and ICT: ICT is generally considered an important tool to improve access for women to political and electoral processes. It warrants specific mention because its most critical benefit may be when self-reporting and other efforts to report public and private acts of violence against women in elections are needed. SMS technology, Ushahidi, mapping, social media, and other forms of ICT will play a critical role in real time and accurate reporting, information availability for survivors, as well as the broader community.

VAWIE and freedom of movement: Many women report that culture, religion, and security are reasons they are expected or forced to remain outside public life and often times homebound behind closed doors. Further research and subsequent programming will disclose the relationship between freedom of movement, women’s rights, and the integrity of the electoral and political process.

VAWIE and online violence: Increasingly, cyber-bullying and cyber-threats are eclipsing acts of physical violence, but are no less fearsome to those in the direct line of attack.⁴⁸ Women in public service

⁴⁷ Cigane, Lolita with Magnus Ohman, *Political Finance and Gender Equality*. (2014, August). IFES, p. 5. Retrieved from http://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/political_finance_and_gender_equality.pdf.

⁴⁸ Albright, Madeleine. “A hidden reality: Violence against women in politics.” (2016, March). *CNN*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2016/03/07/opinions/madeleine-albright-protect-women-in-politics/>

face violent encounters, including death threats and threats to their families sadly on a regular basis. Research on this topic, as well as effective strategies to counteract this growing, vicious trend, are needed in order to reduce online violence against women in elections.

Annex 1: VAWIE Assessment Question Sets

Assessment Factor 1: Status of Women

- What types of roles do women and men play within the family, local community, and at national level?
- What are positive and negative consequences for women who successfully control assets?
- How do women and men interact/negotiate household management and professional responsibilities, in relation to service providers and officials?
- Are women generally considered able to play equivalent roles as men in economic and political affairs?
- Are adequate services equally accessible to women and men (e.g., health, financial, legal, civic)?
- What policies, programs, and strategies promote women's access to public services and spaces?
- How do women envision their relationships with family, community, public service and professionals evolving and how will they be different from the current status of their relationships?
- Do women support one another across classes, ethnicities, caste, other diversities such as women with disabilities or lesbian, bisexual or transgender women, etc.?
- How effectively do women leaders negotiate their interests and remain accountable to those they represent?
- Do women have autonomy to move freely within and beyond their communities alone? How is it different for men?
- What happens to women who are active in public spaces? Are there consequences?
- Do women and girls have safety concerns when moving around in public?
- Where do women experience violence? (e.g., in their homes/private lives, in the streets, at work?)
- What are current types and rates of violence or other relevant rights abuses within the country impacting women?
- What are women's and men's attitudes or beliefs toward violence?
- Are there some uses of violence against women in public or private life that are seen as acceptable by society? What are some examples?
- What are the rates of gender-based violence against women?
- What care or support is available for survivors of violence?

- How do women avoid violence or seek protection?
- How do laws and institutions enable or prevent violence, harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, mobility and access to information?
- How does cultural practice compare with law in the case of community response to violence against women?
- What discrimination/stigma do survivors of violence face?
- Who is involved in key decision-making concerning the household?
- Who do women negotiate with to gain control over productive assets?
- What have women done collectively to promote equality in access to services and rights?
- Do family members or neighbors encourage or support women's access to services and rights?
- How do power dynamics at the household or community level prevent or facilitate access to services and rights?
- How are individuals and groups already acting to prevent and response to rights abuses? Who is doing this work?
- What attitudes, information, and skills does an individual need to prevent or address violence?
- Are there women from a particular group that are more vulnerable or facing greater challenges in society? (i.e., women with disabilities, from ethnic or religious minorities, from rural/urban areas, divorced or widowed, lesbian or transgender?)
- What are the areas that require more work to reduce the different forms of violence against women in society?

Assessment Factor 2: Women's Access to Elections

- How would you characterize participation in the election processes in your country for people from different ethnic groups, different geographic regions, women, and persons with disabilities?
- What was the voter turnout, disaggregated by gender (and other levels of disaggregation as available)?
- How many women candidates ran for office and how many were elected in the last election for the national legislature? In local elections?
- Are there fewer or more women in the current cabinet than the last one?
- Does the proportionate share of women to men on the voter lists appear to reflect the population at large?
- Are there specific geographic districts where women seem significantly underrepresented in elected office or civil service? Why?

- Do women face systematic barriers in being able to register to vote or to vote? What are these barriers?
- Besides voting, what is the level of participation of women in other electoral activities compared to men? If less, what are some reasons for this?
- What kind of barriers do women face who wish to participate in the election process as political party candidates, polling agents, political activists and voters?
- Are there constitutional provisions spelling out women’s legal and political rights?
- How do electoral regulations, legal frameworks and government institutions support or constrain women’s political participation?
- Does the electoral law specify a gender equality strategy? For example, is there a gender quota system? What type of quota system is it?
- Beyond the electoral law, are there other laws/regulations that may regulate gender parity in elections?
- Do political parties encourage participation of women as activists, party officials, or as candidates? If not, are there steps that can be taken to encourage parties to take these steps?
- What specific systems and structures in the election management body (EMB) have encouraged (or discouraged) an increase in women’s participation?
- What specific areas require more work to encourage women’s participation in political spaces and decision-making bodies?
- Do political parties have quotas for party lists that are not mandated by the law? If so, which political parties and what are those quotas?
- What kind of support do political parties give their women candidates (e.g., financial, in-kind, etc.)?
- Do requirements or conditions for voter registration or candidate registration create barriers to a women’s ability to participate in elections?
- Are there cultural practices that challenge the registration or participation of men and women equally?
- How does the use of electoral technology (such as e-voting) impact women’s political participation?
- How accessible is voter information for men and women?
- How can EMBs improve voter and civic education targeting women and the broader community on women’s political participation?
- Are women in decision-making roles in the electoral process (e.g., as election administrators, in political parties, etc.)?
- To what extent is the EMB (commissioners and staff at all levels) aware of gender considerations and take them into account in their work?

- Are particular constituencies or social groups more or less supportive of women's political participation? Which ones?
- How does the media treat women's political participation as candidates, voters and activists?
- In what specific ways can the government improve men and women's participation at all levels that have not been attempted as of yet?
- How can the voter registration process be improved to support the equal participation of men and women in the electoral process?
- How can political parties engage women in decision-making?
- How can all electoral stakeholders encourage women to participate in political processes?
- How can it be possible to achieve gender parity in the political process?

Assessment Factor 3: Violence Against Women in Elections

- Have there been reports violence against women participating in the election process (e.g., any forms of physical or psychological violence or harassment in person or online)?
- Who was targeted? Women candidates, voters, activists, CSO leaders, election administrators?
- When did the specific types of violence target women emerge: prior to the elections, Election Day, after the elections were conducted?
- Were incidents of violence targeting women different at different periods of the electoral cycle?
- When were incidents of VAWIE highest?
- Is violence targeting women candidates different from violence targeting women voters, civil society activists or party supporters? If yes, how?
- Is there a difference between types and levels of violence against women in elections based on region or other factors, such as ethnicity, disability, economic status, etc.?
- Were there reports of family or proxy voting in the last election?
- Did GBV incidents increase during the election period?
- Do you think election laws and codes of conduct for political parties and candidates are effective and useful to reduce electoral violence affecting women candidates and voters? Why or why not?
- Are there access and security issues that prevent women from voting? If so, what are they?
- Are there civic and voter education programs focused on women?
- Are there civic and voter education programs focused on challenges for women, such as election violence, family or proxy voting?

- Who is responsible for the greatest level of violence in public spaces during elections?
- Who is responsible for the greatest level of violence in private spaces during elections?
- Does the media including social media play a role in exacerbating political violence including electoral violence?
- Have any female candidates encountered intimidation or interference with their campaign efforts? If so, have these differed from problems encountered by men? Does this vary by political party?
- Do women participate in violence during election cycles? Describe what types, when, etc.
- What is the role of various actors in reducing violence toward women during electoral processes? (a) election administration; (b) security personnel; (c) legislation; (d) community and church leaders; (e) media; (f) international organizations; (g) civil society organizations, including GBV organizations; (h) media?
- Do GBV service providers recognize and respond to electoral violence against women in public and/or private spaces? If so, how?
- Have political parties and community leaders done enough to address the concerns surrounding youth mobilization around electoral violence? If not, what specific roles should be played by political and community leaders to address the concerns about electoral violence perpetrated by youth?
- How have the international organizations responded to incidents of violence against women in elections?
- What institutions/groups other than those mentioned are resources to mitigate violence against women in elections?
- How have female political leaders and candidates played a role in reducing electoral violence against women both in public and in private spaces?
- What specific strategies can different political parties adopt to reduce electoral violence against women who participate in elections as candidates, political party supporters, activists and voters?
- Based on the specific kinds of violence that women experience in the election period, what are recommendations for strategies that can be implemented by local communities and grass-roots organizations?
- Can women political leaders and activists play a vibrant role in mitigating violence against women in elections? How?
- What specific fears exist for the next electoral cycle?
- What specific measures have yet to be adopted as outlined in the legal framework that would be critical for prevention and containment of violence in the next election? What specific measures are likely to create or entrench obstacles to participation?
- What have been the most successful strategies initiated by local civil society and local communities to deal with electoral violence?

- What specific changes would you suggest in the civic and voter education programs to further limit the possibility of violence against women in elections?
- How can GBV service NGOs have a role to play in responding to violence against women in elections?

Assessment Factor 4: Responses to Violence Against Women in Elections

- What has been the nature of complaints filed related to electoral violence?
- Have any of the following stakeholders been targeted for violence in past elections? (gender disaggregate where possible):
 - Election officials
 - Security forces
 - Traditional/religious/community leaders
 - Political party leaders
 - Candidates
 - CSO representatives
 - Journalists
 - Voters
- Has the justice system (high/ordinary courts or tribunals) been employed to determine the outcome of elections or eligibility of candidates?
- Were there widespread human rights abuses in recent elections?
- Did perpetrators face justice?
- Was there redress for survivors of election violence?
- How are security forces deployed during the electoral cycle?
- What is the gender make up of security forces?
- In general, is the electoral security response process considered credible by men and women?
- Are there aspects of existing legislation that create electoral risks?
- Are there aspects of law or institutional resilience that mitigate risks of election violence?
- Have security forces been trained on electoral security (international, national militaries, police)?
- Was special training given on violence against women in elections?
- What role does the EMB play in electoral security administration, including planning and operations?

- Have government officials placed pressure on staff to vote a certain way?
- Are government officials associated with any political party?
- Has the media been accused of disseminating misinformation or provocative rhetoric?
- Is there an insurgency? If yes, what are some of its grievances against the state?
- Are electoral reform measures in progress? Describe potential impacts.
- Are security sector reforms planned or underway? Describe potential impacts.

Annex 2: EVER Project Information



IFES supports citizens' right to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to promote sustainable democracy.

My Story

"The Political Violence Monitoring project ... is something that's never been done in the Maldives, but very essential to be done in order to mitigate the political violence and also deal with the extent of political polarization of the country."

– Fathima Ibrahim Didi,
Acting Executive Director of
the Maldivian Democracy
Network

Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER)

Overview

Violence arising from the inherently competitive nature of elections, as well as existing insecure environments they frequently take place in, is a common challenge to the integrity of elections. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) works to protect the fundamental right of all people to participate in the electoral process in a peaceful and secure environment, as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international commitments. IFES' Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) methodology and projects use this holistic, human-centered approach to support local partners in their efforts to monitor, mitigate and share information on electoral violence. The EVER methodology provides a framework for systematic information gathering, standards for verification, and analysis of tensions and community indicators. Project activities bring together organizations, election officials, government leaders and security bodies to build capacity so they can work together to promote and ensure violence-free elections.

Specific EVER activities have focused on conducting risk assessments, mapping, monitoring and reporting, advocacy, early warning and public education. Training modules, online tools and data management systems, advocacy guidelines, public reporting tips and other tailored products have been implemented based on partner and country needs.

Project Activities

Monitoring: Community-based monitors are trained to document violence, track indicators, measure levels of tension, and build relationships with government, law enforcement, political and community leaders. In Burundi, indicators such as the presence of arms and level of youth group activity gave insight into rising and falling tensions.

Reporting: Collected data is analyzed and published in regular reports with alerts or calls for action as needed. Reporting increases public accountability for those who commit or fuel violence. In 2006 in Guyana, complete monitoring reports were often published in local newspapers, which contributed to the first post-election period without riots since 1991.

Mitigation: IFES often advises partners on mitigation strategies based on available data, country context and needs analyses. IFES has also worked with partners to design and implement targeted street theater programs, advocacy campaigns, rapid response teams and micro grant programs for community peace projects. In Timor-Leste, IFES partner BELUN funded over 20 community peace activities in target areas identified through monitoring data.

Technology: IFES has implemented tools such as SMS, online mapping and early warning communities to facilitate the speed and reach of information gathered by community-based monitors. Monitors in Burundi, Maldives, Nigeria and Senegal were trained to send reports via SMS as well as hard copy, which fed into public websites built on the Ushahidi platform. The sites mapped each incident down to the street level, when possible, and by category of incident, providing an overview of conflict dynamics to stakeholders and the public.

Benefits of EVER

Increased capacity, skills and tools in conflict monitoring, reporting and analysis

Improved techniques and strategies for cooperation, information sharing, early warning and advocacy

Sustainable networks and partnerships

Public accountability for perpetrators of violence

Impact & Benefits

Bangladesh: IFES supported the leading local human rights organization, Odhikar, in electoral violence monitoring in target constituencies and districts from 2006 to 2008. Election violence monitors reported a great deal of response to their work at community levels, with some local political leaders, in unmonitored areas, calling on supporters to be peaceful. Following the project, Odhikar incorporated elements of EVER data collection into its work on violence against women.

Burundi: In 2010, IFES assisted the electoral commission and local organizations in minimizing violence through innovative programming in conflict monitoring, civic education campaigns, theater skits, community festivals, a powerful documentary film and election mediation teams. The early warning project, *Amatora mu Mahoro* (elections in peace), trained over 400 community-based field monitors in the EVER methodology and included a reporting function via SMS and paper forms. The SMS reports were immediately visible to the team on the Ushahidi platform. The team analyzed data in periodic reports during the election period. This information fueled advocacy and action in response to potential conflicts and enabled local and national leaders to promote peace in identified hot spots.

Kyrgyzstan and Timor-Leste: The EVER monitoring methodology created a foundation for an early warning system in both countries. The Foundation for Tolerance International Kyrgyzstan and BELUN in Timor-Leste continue to publish crucial information in their countries. BELUN recently launched an online mapping site to display their early warning and election-related data.

Maldives: In 2011, IFES helped the Maldivian Democracy Network (MDN) develop a political violence monitoring methodology, train its existing network of human rights defenders in the methodology and launch a conflict-mapping website built on the Ushahidi platform. MDN and its website were a crucial source of information for stakeholders on the political crisis that developed in early 2012 and continued with positive feedback through the end of that year. Beginning in 2013, IFES assisted Transparency Maldives with incorporating political violence monitoring methodology and Ushahidi usage to augment their on-going election observation.

EVER projects have been implemented in 14 countries: Bangladesh, Burundi, Ghana, Guyana, Indonesia, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Timor-Leste.

Annex 3: VAWIE Typology Development

To define violence against women in elections (VAWIE), IFES incorporated elements of definitions and typologies of gender-based violence (GBV) and violence against women (VAW). The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has defined an act of GBV as one that “results in physical, sexual and psychological harm to both men and women and includes any form of violence or abuse that targets men or women on the basis of their sex, although women and girls are usually the primary victims...” and includes a list of types of violence such as “battery, marital rape, sexual violence, dowry-related violence, female infanticide, honor crimes, early marriage, forced marriage, female genital cutting, sexual harassment in the workplace and educational institutions, commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking of girls and women, and violence perpetrated against domestic workers.”¹ The term VAW is used when specifically referring to GBV affecting women, and has been defined by the UN as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”²

As more organizations talk about violence against women in politics and elections, there is movement toward a definition by each. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) frames their work around violence against women in politics, and has been developing concepts through workshops and events.³ IFES presented ways of understanding VAWIE in “Breaking the Mold.”⁴ IFES also drew from the groundbreaking efforts in the standardization of categories for GBV and VAW developed by the Gender-based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) Classification tool. The GBVIMS was developed through a joint effort of the UN Population Fund, the International Rescue Committee, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.⁵ Though the tool was designed “strictly for the purposes of standardizing GBV data collection across GBV service providers,” its definitions of types will be incorporated here, and the involvement of service providers in programming is highly likely in VAWIE programming regardless.

Understanding relationships between survivors and perpetrators of VAWIE

Currently, the IFES Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER) methodology categorizes perpetrators and survivors by their stakeholder roles – that is, as political party supporters, candidates, voters, electoral officials, law enforcement officials, other security agency officials, government officials, etc. Any personal or social relationships between perpetrators and survivors are not usually documented, even if they are known, because the stakeholder label is the unit of analysis for reports. This prioritization means that not only does information about personal relationships go undocumented, it affects the understanding of what constitutes electoral violence. In the GBVIMS, the relationship

¹ “A Guide to Programming Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Activities,” USAID, April 2009. Available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADO561.pdf (viewed on March 10, 2013).

² “Violence Against Women, Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Against Women,” World Health Organization (WHO) Fact sheet N°239 October 2013. Available at <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/> (viewed on December 23, 2013).

³ “Tackling Violence against Women In Politics: Towards A Global Consensus,” Background Paper For NDI Roundtable 1 9-10 December 2015; NDI also held a high profile event in New York City called “Not the Cost” in March 2016, noting that violence should not be the cost of women participating in politics.

⁴ Bardall, 2011.

⁵ Accessed at <http://gbvims.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Annex-B-Classification-Tool.pdf> (viewed on February 8, 2016).

between the perpetrator and the survivor is always captured. In this new typology, that relationship will be documented and additional variables will be added to incorporate social and community roles.

Understanding gender dimensions of types of violence

The usual categories in the EVER methodology, similar to most frameworks for examining electoral violence, include murder, physical harm, sexual assault, threat of physical harm, psychological harm/intimidation, verbal harassment, and property damage. While these cover a range of physical and nonphysical harm, there are no subcategories to address specific types of intimidation, such as the threat of divorce, sexual/purity attacks, shaming/silencing techniques, questions about masculinity/femininity, and economic/financial threats that are more likely to impact women. In a category called “impact of violence,” many EVER projects did examine economic or financial harm. While economic harm was considered an impact if businesses were closed in relation to strikes and street violence in Nepal, for example, the category could also include instances of someone being fired for political reasons or being subjected to other personal financial harm. Given reports from women in the primary and secondary research for this project, other types of economic/financial pressures are often directed at women, such as withholding household money, and should also be included as a subcategory of intimidation. An expanded list would be better able to identify and document these examples of gender-based violence.

GBVIMS Classification is a useful tool for determining how to add and define additional categories and subcategories to existing frameworks. The GBVIMS includes the following six mutually exclusive types of violence:

1. Rape
2. Sexual assault
3. Physical assault
4. Forced marriage
5. Denial of resources, opportunities, or services
6. Psychological/emotional abuse

Each of these six categories could be placed within a category of violence in most existing electoral violence frameworks – for example, physical assault is not necessarily GBV and denial of resources (such as money for personal or family use) could be categorized as general intimidation. Unless details such as the nature of the act, the relationship of the survivor and perpetrator, and the specific impact on the woman or women involved are included, the incident cannot be identified or documented as VAWIE. In the methodology described in the GBVIMS tool, more details would be given in narrative form and in some additional subcategories. The purpose of the tool is only reporting individual cases of GBV, and only one of the aforementioned categories can be selected at a time, because the focus of the information management is on individual case management and providing services to an individual survivor of GBV. In electoral violence monitoring, all forms of violence that occur in one incident (which is an act that occurs in a specific place at a specific date and time with identifiable survivors directly involved) are generally reported, and individual survivors are still referred to services if possible. In the context of VAWIE, survivors should always be referred to services. In terms of categorization of VAWIE, in documenting facts to assist survivors or conduct research and analysis, it would be useful to know if certain types of violence are occurring together. For example, within a forced marriage, are there also acts of denial of resources and psychological abuse?

Understanding additional nuances within both of these categorization systems is important for understanding how electoral violence affects women. The research points to particular forms of violence in which women may be attacked as women regardless of their political ideology:

- Verbal harassment regarding women’s sexuality/purity, gender, religious, or family roles (which can happen in public or private spaces);
- Intimidation related to economic or other livelihood pressures (e.g., withholding of money)
- Threats or acts related to spouse or community power, such as divorce, ostracization, and employment
- Physical violence (that when within a family may be seen as socially acceptable)
- Other sexual violence, such as assault or rape

Attacks on women, whether through direct verbal attacks, creating pressure through intimidation or threats, or physical assaults, can be different than similar violence directed at men in terms of what is being attacked/threatened and why. This expanded list of types of violence will still involve a separate step of differentiating between what is VAWIE and what is not, as the type of violence designation alone is not always determinative. These recommendations are intended to capture nuances that are missing, as well as assist, along with the other variables and the context of the act, in determining whether or not a particular act fits the definition of VAWIE.

Understanding the spaces of violence

The location of electoral violence is generally described geographically and in terms of types of likely electoral-related locations, such as “polling station” or “political party office.” This list also commonly includes terms such as: street/public area (to capture protest and political rally areas), other electoral property, state property, and private property. These locations, again, emphasized the public activities of an electoral cycle in a country.

Documenting violence in private spaces may be the most crucial piece of a more nuanced typology of violence, and among the more challenging aspects of documentation or data collection efforts. However, it is clear from the small amount of data on VAWIE that does exist now (and implied by the more established data that exists on VAW in general) that private spaces are among the more common spaces in which women are likely to face electoral violence.⁶ One of the challenges of the VAWIE Framework will be in gathering information in cases of violence that may not be observed by anyone other than the perpetrator and survivor. Such violence is therefore dependent on the willingness of the survivor to

⁶ Many anecdotal reports of violence involve family or intimate relationships, such as threats of divorce, financial repercussions, or personal violence in the home; examples from our research include “Violence Against Dalit Women,” Input to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, 2013. Available at http://idsn.org/fileadmin/user_folder/pdf/New_files/India/2013/India_submission_on_Violence_against_Dalit_Women_-_SR_on_VAW_India_2013.pdf (viewed on April 1, 2013); “Women, Elections and Violence in West Africa: Assessing Women’s Political Participation in Liberia and Sierra Leone,” International Alert (IA), 2010, p.8. Available at http://www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/4414~v~Women_Elections_and_Violence_in_West_Africa_Assessing_Womens_Political_Participation_in_Liberia_and_Sierra_Leone.pdf (viewed April 1, 2013); “Pakistan General Elections, Report of the Commonwealth Observer Mission,” May 11, 2013. Available at <http://thecommonwealth.org/Sites/Default/Files/News-Items/Documents/130520.Pdf> (viewed December 23, 2013); and Bardall, 2011. WHO statistics on global VAW indicate that nearly 1 in 3 women around the world report surviving some physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner, accessed on 2/6/16 <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/>.

share or report it. Another challenge will be understanding if and when a reported incident of private violence can be attributed to political or electoral events as distinct from other forms of violence against women. This means that any effort to monitor or otherwise gather data will also depend a great deal on the ability of those seeking information to build relationships and trust with the communities in which they work, as well as with GBV and other organizations that support survivors. As suggested in the monitoring tool in this framework, a monitoring group would likely have a system in place to proactively build those community relationships, as well as relationships with GBV or other women's organizations. This would allow survivors to choose from a variety of reporting options, such as face-to-face communication, a collection box or other indirect method, or a service organization that provides assistance to survivors. Appropriate methods of monitoring and analysis are further explained in the monitoring tool section of this Framework.

6. How did you gather information about the incident? (Check AT LEAST ONE.)

You (the monitor) saw the incident

Survivor / person harmed told you about the incident

Did any of these sources SEE the incident happen?

<input type="checkbox"/> Police person or report	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital person or report	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Election official	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Election observer	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Government official	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> NGO representative	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> People in the community	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Other (specify) _____

7. Did you read or hear about this incident in the media? (please also check a source in #6)

Newspaper(s) (which newspaper?) _____ (what date) _____

Television program (what channel) _____ (what program) _____ (what date) _____

Radio program (what channel) _____ (what program) _____ (what date) _____

Other (write what is not in the list) _____

8. Where did the incident happen? (Check only one place for the incident, it can be where it started if it moved)

In/near polling station (specify name or number) _____

Election Office / facility (specify name) _____

Political party office/facility (specify party) _____

State (Gov't) office/property (specify) _____ Media office

Survivor's home Other home (specify) _____ Other private property (specify) _____

SMS to survivor Internet message / comment / speech to survivor (specify) _____

Mass SMS Online speech / message/ comment (specify) _____

Other (specify) _____

9. All questions are about who did the violence.
Note if multiple roles for perpetrator 1, 2, etc (check all that apply - it is ok if a person who did violence is ALSO a survivor)

a) Public stakeholder role	Perpetrator type/person 1	Perpetrator type/person 2	Perpetrator type/person 3
Candidate, political party leader, party (or candidate) supporter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Which party?	_____	_____	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Which party?	_____	_____	_____
Government / State actor (specify agency)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Which agency?	_____	_____	_____
Election worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Which group?	_____	_____	_____
Voter(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Private / social role	Perpetrator type/person 1	Perpetrator type/person 2	Perpetrator type/person 3
Family member of survivor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What family member?	_____	_____	_____
Professional relationship to survivor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What relationship?	_____	_____	_____
Religious leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specify	_____	_____	_____

11. Property was a target / also damaged

Political party office or property (specify party) _____

State (Gov't) office or property (specify name) _____

Private property/building (specify name) _____

Campaign material

Election office, property, material (like ballots, trucks, warehouse, etc) (specify) _____

Other (specify) _____

12 What kind of violence happened?

<p>Physical harm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Murder How many people killed? _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Attempted murder How many people wounded? _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Physical harm / torture How many people wounded? _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual assault</p> <p>Intimidation / psychological abuse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Threat of physical harm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Threat to family members</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Threat to job / livelihood (professional sphere)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Economic threats / denial of resources (private sphere)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Threat of divorce</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Shaming/shunning</p>	<p>Verbal Harassment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality / purity slur</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Religious slur</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Racial / ethnic slur</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Attack on family role / gender role</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Insult regarding lack of competence</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Insult regarding political beliefs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> General insult</p>	<p>Interference with voting</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family voting</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proxy voting</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>
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Other type of violence (specify) _____

14 What was the impact of the violence? That is what were the results?

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Candidate withdrew from race</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Civic education event disrupted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Campaign activity disrupted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Voting disrupted/voters dispersed or left area</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disrupted vote count</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Transportation disrupted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Economic/financial loss</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cancelled election ___ locally ___ nationally</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Postponed election ___ locally ___ nationally</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Re-run election ___ locally ___ nationally</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Did not vote</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine</p>
--	--

15. Anything else you need to add or have questions about how to report? (if applicable)

16 Referral Pathway

Did you refer the survivor to health/medical/psychosocial services? Yes No

Did you refer the survivor to legal assistance services? Yes No

Did you refer the survivor to police/other security services? Yes No

11. Property was a target / also damaged

Political party office or property (specify party) _____

State (Gov't) office or property (specify name) _____

Private property/building (specify name) _____

Campaign material

Election office, property, material (like ballots, trucks, warehouse, etc) (specify) _____

Other (specify) _____

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VAWIE Monitoring - Collection box form (illustrative draft)

IF YOU NEED URGENT MEDICAL CARE, OR LEGAL PROTECTION / ACTION PLEASE CALL:

emergency number(s) here

Please tell us what happened.

Please tell us when and where this happened.

Date: _____

Geographic location

Province: _____ **District:** _____

Municipality: _____

Where specifically? *(was it in your home, or someone else's? in a public place, like a park? In a political party rally? Was it an on*

Please tell us about you:

Sex: Female Male Other

Country of origin: _____

Date of birth: _____

Occupation: _____

Resources for help or support include:

list of local resources here

Places to file a complaint / make a report include:

list of local resources here

should we ask, did you file a complaint?



Global Expertise. Local Solutions.
Sustainable Democracy.