

NATIONAL ELECTIONS OBSERVATORY

TRAINER'S GUIDE

For the Training of Voter Registration Officials

Prepared by the NEO Training Committee and Produced with Financial support
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Introduction

According to the provisions of existing legislation, the registration of voters in Cameroon is the responsibility of two sets of stakeholders: local administrative authorities on the one hand and joint commissions on the other hand. The administrative authorities include the Senior Divisional Officer (SDO), the Sub-Divisional Officer and the District Head. The SDO sets up the various joint commissions and oversees the whole voter registration process while the two other officials serve as a link between the Commission responsible for examining applications for registration and up-dating voter rolls (Revision Commission) and the voting-age public. They also draw up the final voter rolls in the administrative units, which they head.

The Revision Commission and the Divisional Supervisory Commission which, *inter alia*, settles disputes arising from voter registration, comprise representatives of the administration, of the local council and of all the political parties recognized within the administrative unit. All these stakeholders have a role to play in the registration of voters. With so many different groups of people involved in the registration process, problems frequently arise from failure by some stakeholders to master existing rules regulations and procedures, from the absence of a clearly defined methodology and from communication flaws that have marred the proper coordination of registration activities.

These recurrent problems are addressed in the document entitled **Guidelines for Voter Registration (User's Guide)**. The document is intended to serve for reference purposes and as a practical field guide for those involved in voter registration. It reviews the legal and institutional framework and highlights those legislative provisions that govern voter registration. In so doing, it also draws attention to those provisions of the laws that pose problems of interpretation and implementation. It finally lists detailed procedures, which, if adopted nationwide scale, could go a long way to addressing the methodological problems that existing legislation addresses summarily.

The global objective of the two-day workshop organised by the NEO, is to introduce stakeholders involved in the voter registration process, to the rules and regulations that govern the registration process and proposed procedures which abide by the law and are used in a consistent manner through the national territory.

The methodology of the workshop is, of course, participatory. Trainers will be dealing with stakeholders who have been active in the registration of voters for years and who have gathered considerable experience (knowledge Attitude and Practice) that the workshop should provide an opportunity for them to share with others. The duty of trainers as facilitators will thus be to introduce the various topics to be discussed, keep the discussions focused on the objectives to be attained and bring/guide participants to understand and adopt, with improvements where possible, the procedures they will be using.

Provided below are some hints which trainers will find helpful as they assist participants to become acquainted with the proposed voter registration guidelines. The hints concern the organisation of workshop activities, on the one hand, and the conduct of these activities, on the other.

Workshop on voter Registration, Rules, Regulations and Procedures

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

	Activity	Time
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening ceremony 	9.00 am - 10.00 am
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee/Tea break 	10.00 am - 10.30 am
	SESSION ONE	10.30 am - 12.30 am
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop objectives and Expectations • Review of Legal Provisions (1): Stakeholders and Duties • Problems Arising from the Distribution of Duties 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch break 	12.30 pm - 2.00 pm
	SESSION TWO	2.00 pm - 3.30 pm
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Legal Provisions (2): Voter Qualifications/Disqualifications • Problems Arising from Voter Qualifications/Disqualifications 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee/Tea break 	3.30 pm - 4.00 pm
	SESSION THREE	4.00 pm - 5.30 pm
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision Commissions: Composition and Functioning • Revision Commissions: Related Problems 	
Day 2	SESSION FOUR	8.30 am - 10.00 am
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Legal Provisions (3): Voter Registration Procedures • Practices and Problems of voter registration 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee/Tea break 	10.00 am - 10.30 am
	SESSION FIVE	10.30 am - 12.30 pm
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonization of Procedures (I): Registration of New Voters 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch break 	12.30 pm - 2.00 pm
	SESSION SIX	2.00 pm - 3.30 pm
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonization of Procedures (II): Updating of Registers 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee/Tea break 	3.30 pm - 4.00 pm
	SESSION SEVEN	4.00 pm - 5.30 pm
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Problems • Communication Strategies 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and End of Workshop 	5.30 pm – 6.00 pm

Training Guidelines

SESSION ONE

Aim 1: To introduce participants to workshop objectives and have them relate these to their expectations.

Trainer

- Remind participants of the global objective of the workshop.
- Briefly introduce the topic of voter registration, laying emphasis on the importance of the exercise as a *sine qua non* condition for free, fair and credible elections;
- Underscore the fact that the success of the voter registration exercise depends largely on the mastery by concerned stakeholders of the related regulations and procedures;
- List the following objectives on the flipchart and ask participants to complete them and relate to each objective by saying what they expect to gain from taking part in the workshop;
- Have each clear expectation written on a cardboard and posted on the board;
- Have the final list of adopted workshop objectives written on the flipchart;

Workshop Objectives: (Put up on flipchart)

1. To rehearse participants' knowledge of existing legal and regulatory provisions governing voter registration;
2. To bring out the role and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the voter registration process;
3. To identify the problems arising from the registration of voters;
4. To adopt common solutions to each of these problems;
5. To adopt common (harmonized) procedures to be used in the registration of voters;
6. To seek ways of enhancing communication sharing among stakeholders.

Aim 2: To identify the various stakeholders and their respective duties as laid down by the law.

Trainer:

- Ask participants to identify the stakeholders who are entrusted by the law to register voters;

- Have the duties of each stakeholders described and write them on the flipchart;
- Turn to the **User's Guide** to make sure that all stakeholders and their respective duties have been clearly identified;
- List problem areas (lack of clarity, overlapping duties etc.) if any;
- Ask each participant to write his/her name and specific identity as stakeholder in the voter registration process on a cardboard and use this in self-introduction.

SESSION TWO

Aim: To review voter qualifications, disqualifications and related problems.

Trainer:

- Ask participants to discuss voter qualifications and disqualifications as laid down by the electoral law;
- Write these on the flipchart;
- Turn to the **User's Guide** and make sure that these have been exhaustively discussed;
- Ask participants to raise any problems that may arise from each qualification / disqualification and list these on the flipchart.

SESSION THREE

Aim: To find out problems arising from the composition and functioning of Revision Commissions.

Trainer:

- Ask participants to state the typical composition of the Revision Commission of which they have been members;
- Match this composition with what the law prescribes in this respect;
- Ask participants to brainstorm on problems related to the composition and functioning of Revision Commissions;
- Have participants examine each problem identified in the light of existing laws and regulations;
- At the end, list those problems that have been established as genuine in the light of existing laws and regulations.

- Ask participants what they think of the idea to set-up several Revision Commissions in the same administrative unit.

SESSION FOUR

Aim: To rehearse knowledge and identify practices and problems related to prescribed voter registration procedures.

Trainer:

- Ask participants to determine the step by step procedure for the registration of new voters as laid down by the law;
- Write this on the flipchart;
- Do the same for the procedure for updating (revising voter registers /rolls);
- Match these procedures with those outlined in **User's Guide**;
- Ask participants to contrast these with the procedures they have been using for these purposes;
- Have participants establish an exhaustive list of what they consider to be the procedural problems of voter registration.

SESSION FIVE

Aim: To review and adopt proposed (harmonized) procedures for the registration of new and transfer voters.

Trainer:

- List procedures contained in **User's Guide** (New registration and transfer registration) and discuss them with participants one after the other;
- Examine, with participants, the relevant tools (forms) proposed;
- Get participants to make constructive criticisms and proposals for improvement.

SESSION SIX

Aim: To review and adopt proposed (harmonized) procedures for the revision/updating of voter rolls.

Trainer:

- List procedures for updating registers contained in **User's Guide** and discuss each of them with participants;

- Examine, with participants, the relevant tools (forms) proposed;
- Get participants to make constructive criticisms and proposals for improvement.

SESSION SEVEN

Aim: To propose and adopt measures for more effective information sharing among stakeholders.

Trainer:

- Brainstorm with participants on problems related to communication and information sharing among stakeholders in the voter registration process;
- Make a list (on flipchart) of all the problems identified;
- Examine, with participants the various communication enhancing measures proposed in **User's Guide**;
- Find out from participants how well they think the proposed measures address the problems identified;
- Ask participants to make further proposals for enhancing communication and information sharing.

EVALUATION

Aim: To find out the extent to which workshop objectives and participants expectations have been met.

Trainer:

- Asses on a daily basis the mood of participants in relation to logistical arrangements, technical content and the facilitation;
- Put up workshop objectives and expectations as adopted at the start of the workshop;
- Find out from participants the extent to which each objective and expectation has been met;
- Prepare evaluation questionnaires to seek participants' opinions corresponding to the following appreciations.

NOT MET, PARTIALLY MET, FULLY (ADEQUATELY) MET.

N.B:

- Trainers should introduce where appropriate and depending on available resources those sessions where group (participatory) activities could be introduced
- The facilitator(s) of each workshop should address to the NEO a report on the conduct and outcomes of the workshop, which particularly highlights proposals for further improvements.