

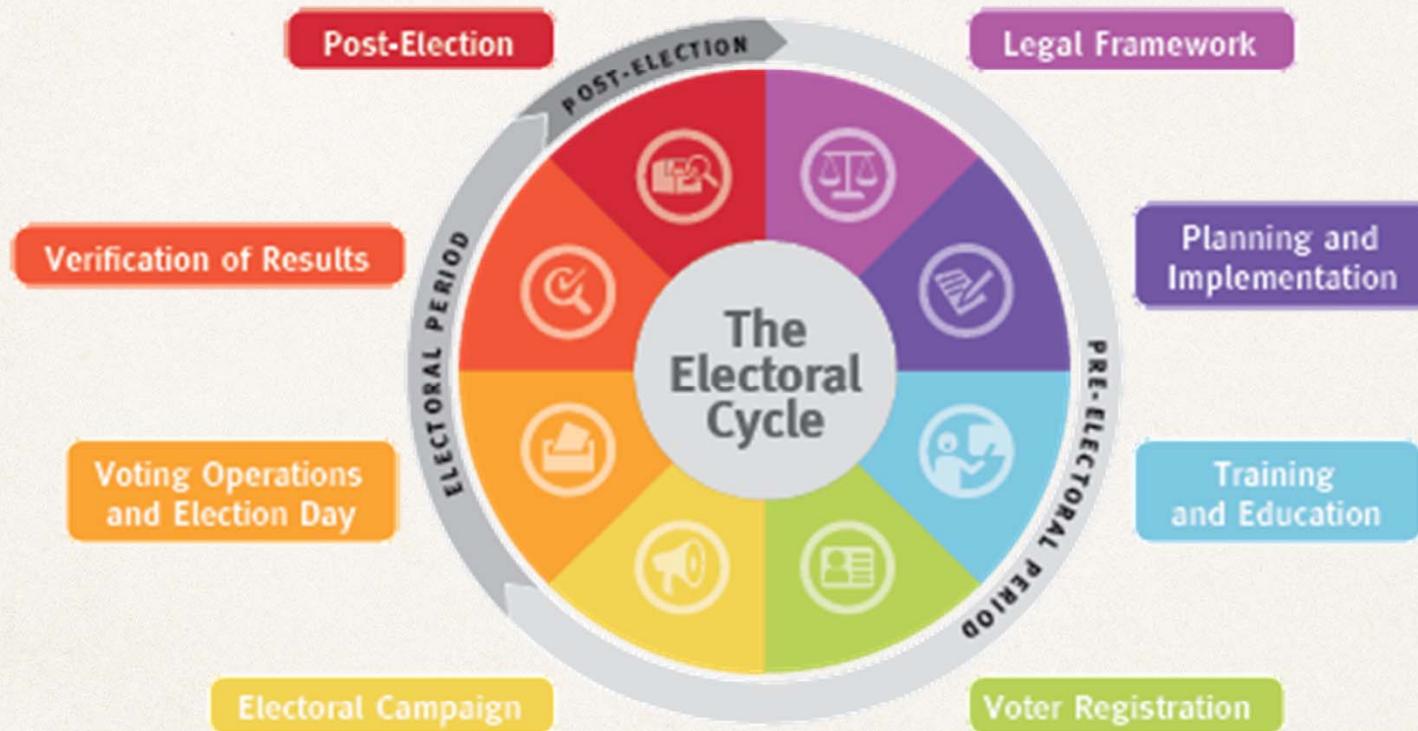
Unheard Voices: Citizens' Assessments and Electoral Integrity

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What is electoral integrity?





Guiding Frameworks

Datasets

 NELDA: National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy

 IEM: Index of Electoral Malpractice

 QED: Quality of Electoral Democracy

 PEI: Perceptions of Electoral Integrity

 V-DEM: Varieties of Democracy

Indicator Frameworks

 Elklit & Reynolds 2005

 Schedler's Menu of Manipulation

 EASI: Election Administration Systems Index

Developing Definitions

...shared international principles and standards of elections, applying universally to all countries worldwide throughout all stages in the electoral cycle, including during the pre-electoral period, the campaign, on polling day, and its aftermath...In practice, the most legitimate and authoritative standards of electoral integrity are derived from multilateral agreements, international conventions, treaties and international laws. (Norris 2014, 39)

We define an election with integrity as any election that is based on the democratic principles of universal suffrage and political equality as reflected in international standards and agreements, and is professional, impartial, and transparent in its preparation and administration throughout the electoral cycle. (Global Commission on Elections, Democracy and Security 2012, 6)

Fundamental Markers of Electoral Integrity

- ❖ Everyone has the **right to take part** in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives (UDHR, Article 21(1)).
- ❖ The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in **periodic and genuine elections** which shall be by **universal and equal suffrage** and shall be held by **secret vote** or by equivalent free voting procedures (UDHR, Article 21(3)).
- ❖ **Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity...**to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections (ICCPR, Article 25(b)).
- ❖ The legal framework should ensure that all eligible citizens are guaranteed the right to universal and equal suffrage as well as the **right to contest elections** without any discrimination (IDEA 2002, 33).

Why is electoral integrity important?

- ❖ Public Legitimacy
- ❖ Public Participation



Haitian police arrest a demonstrator with machetes at the end of a march in Port-au-Prince, on 26 November 2015 (Hector Retamal/AFP)

- ❖ Security
- ❖ Democratization

The PEI Index Rankings

(<https://sites.google.com/site/electoralintegrityproject4/home>)

- ❖ Georgia:
 - ❖ Leads in the region
 - ❖ Strengths: vote counting and results management
 - ❖ Challenges: campaign finance and media

The top 5:

Country	PEI Ranking
Finland	1
Denmark	2
Norway	3
Costa Rica	4
Sweden	5

The bottom 5:

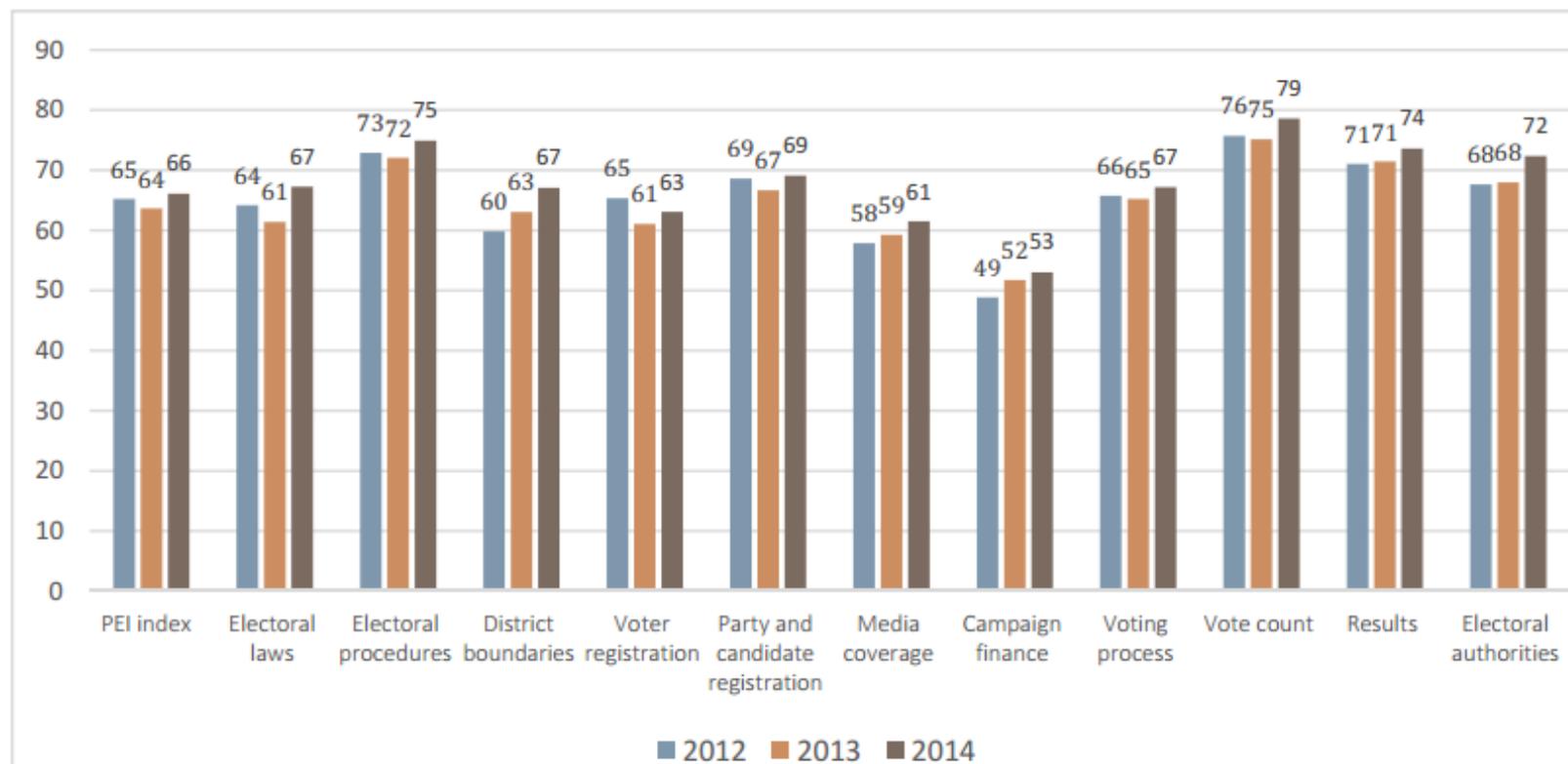
Country	PEI Ranking
Congo, Rep.	122
Syria	123
Djibouti	124
Equatorial Guinea	125
Ethiopia	126

The surprising 5:

Country	PEI Ranking
Costa Rica	4
USA	43
UK	36
Benin	25
Tonga	27

Global Trends

FIGURE 7: PROBLEMS DURING THE ELECTORAL CYCLE



Who decides?

- ❖ Non-expert citizen/voter perceptions are important because:
 - ❖ Non-expert voters may have different priorities than experts
 - ❖ Non-expert voters may catch important issues that some experts may not be able to report
 - ❖ Non-expert voters' feedback re-connects electoral authorities with the people they serve.

Some examples

- ❖ Nigeria: In Nigeria, Nicholas Kerr (2013) found that it is the performance of electoral authorities, especially EMBs that matter most to the public in their assessments of the credibility of elections
- ❖ Kenya: In Kenya, I found that ethnicity trumped other factors (such as confidence in electoral institutions, their prioritization of peace, and their personal experience with irregularities at the polling station) when voters were evaluating their elections. Perhaps more surprising was that voters' own experiences at the polls mattered the least in their evaluations.

Final Thoughts

Citizen engagement is key to the promotion of electoral integrity



A new film by International IDEA on how digital tech is helping promote transparency in elections



Election-related citizen journalism:
Send us your stories!