



**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS  
DEMOCRACY FUND  
Contract NO.PD:C0110/10**

**EVALUATION REPORT**



**UDF-ZIM-08-238 Electoral Process Training for Civil Society in Zimbabwe**

**Date: 18 December 2011**

**Acknowledgements**

The evaluators thank all the people who supported this evaluation by contributing their time and insights. In particular, they express their gratitude to Helen Barnes at ERIS and Barbra Nyangairi at ZESN, who were instrumental in helping o U J D Q L ] H W K H H Y D O X D W R U V Zimbabwe. The evaluators are also grateful to the Director and other staff of ZESN. All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

**Disclaimer:**



## I. Executive Summary

### (i) Project Data

7 KLV UHSRUW LV WKH HY ELECTION PROCESS TRAINING FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN ZIMBABWE 3  
LP SOH FROM OCTOBER 2009 TO FEBRUARY 2011 BY THE ZIMBABWEAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION (NGO) ZIMBABWE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK (ZESN) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE BRITISH NGO ELECTORAL REFORM INTERNATIONAL SERVICES (ERIS). THE PROJECT BUDGET WAS US\$225,000. THE PROJECT AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF ZESN BY REINFORCING THE TRAINING OF ELECTION OBSERVERS, PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO MONITORING THE USE OF STATE RESOURCES IN THE ELECTION PROCESS AND THE ISSUE OF POLITICAL PARTY FINANCING.

### (ii) Evaluation Findings

The project proposal was based on a sound analysis of the 2008 elections, which highlighted the need to develop a more professional and more skilled observer force in time for the next election. The project was **relevant** in that it addressed genuine needs on the basis of an appropriate analysis of the previous electoral cycle. However, against this generally positive background, the relevance of the project was hampered by two key factors:

x



***ii.* Make a realistic assessment of the level of support to be provided.**

The partnership between ERIS and ZESN was fruitful, but ERIS managers indicated that they devoted more energy to the partnership than they originally expected. It is recommended that this issued be carefully considered in any future partnership, including

## **II. Introduction and development context**

### ***(i) Project and evaluation objectives***

- x ZESN managers: Director, Program Coordinator;
- x Chairperson of ZESN Board, who is also head of Zimrights, one of the main Zimbabwean human rights NGOs;
- x Project manager and one of the three field coordinators;
- x Thirteen long-term observers (LTOs) and other ZESN members who participated in training sessions under the project; and
- x Representatives of intergovernmental organizations (UN and EU) dealing with governance and other election-related issues.

Although the sample of LTOs met was relatively small (6% of the total number of people trained), it was reasonably representative of the LTO population: meetings took place in Harare with LTOs based there, and in Chinhoyi with LTOs based in that province (Mashonaland West) and the province of Manicaland. Six of the LTOs met (46%) were women. The full list of people met is in Annex 3.

Each of the issues of concern listed in the Launch Note was discussed with relevant stakeholders: issues of project design, activities, management, human and financial resources and capacity building were discussed with ERIS and ZESN managers; issues of security with managers and LTOs in particular, and coordination with representatives of international organizations.

### ***(iii) Development context***

#### **Independence**

Zimbabwe became independent in April 1980, in accordance with the Lancaster House Agreement of December 1979, signed between Ian Smith's Frontline Party representing the white ruling minority and the two major African parties: ZANU-PF led by Robert Mugabe and ZAPU-PF led by Joshua Nkomo. The agreement set out a new Constitution and provided for an end to the civil war that had been lasting since 1971.

The Constitution reserved 20% of parliamentary seats to the white minority but otherwise ensured that the government was reflective of majority vote. However negotiations on land redistribution were difficult. It was agreed that compulsory land redistribution would take place for at least ten years and that land would be purchased from willing sellers at market prices; the United Kingdom committed to support the process financially. However by 2000, 75% of the land was still owned by 4% of the population. Land reform has continued ever since to fuel tensions across the country.

In this context, opposition to President Mugabe and ZANU-PF grew and gave rise to the establishment of a new political party in 1999, the Movement for Democratic change

(MDC), led by Morgan Tsvangirai, former Secretary General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). In 2000, Robert Mugabe suffered his first defeat since taking power in 1987: the constitutional reform he put forward was voted down, largely as a result of the polarization of society in relation to the expropriation of white farmers with no indemnity.

However, in 2002 Mugabe won W K H S U H V L G H Q W L D O H O H F W L R Q V Z L W K  
His campaign was based on land reform and expropriation. Despite the recognition of the elections by Africans observers and by the SADC, the international community observers assessed that elections



### III. Project strategy

#### (i) Project approach and strategy

##### Initial design

ZESN and ERIS designed the project strategy, with interviewees suggesting that ERIS took a lead role in the initial design phase while ZESN assumed a greater role in the first few months of implementation. Written in the months following the 2008 general and presidential elections, the proposal was focused on rebuilding capacity. This was justified by the situation prevailing at the time: the 2008 elections had been marred by very high levels of political violence – including the deliberate and sometimes deadly targeting of election observers and those alleged to help them. In addition, Zimbabwe was gripped by unprecedented hyper-inflation, caused in part by frenetic pre-election government spending aimed at securing activist, voter and local political support.

,Q WKL V FRQWH[W WKH QHHG IRU WKH ³UHFQVWUXFWLRQ R UHVRXUFH EDVH´ DSSHUHG DV NH\ WR WKH FRQLXHG HIIH DSSURDFK WDNHQ E\ WKH SURMFW ZDV WKH ³UH SURLQFLDO OHYHO ZKR DUH WUDLQHG DQG DYDLODEOH IRU ³IUDPHZRUN IRU DGylFH DQG JXLGDQFH´ RQ HOHFWLRQ RE information, as well as electoral and constitutional reform.

##### Changes at initial stage

In the event, however, the project assumed a narrower identity, partly because the ³UHFQVWUXFWLRQ´ QHHG ZDV OHVV DFXWH WKDQ KDG EHHQ designed, and also because that need had started to be met by ZESN with support from other sources. As a result, the issue by the time the project started was not so much to rebuild the human resource base than to enhance its technical and advocacy capacity.

Training therefore assumed an even more central role in the project than was the case originally. In addition it became clear early on that the project could achieve the most significant added value by focusing on the issues of political finance and of electoral use of state resources by candidates.

Irrespective of these changes, the project objectives defined in the project document remained the same – to contribute to momentum towards democratic elections in Zimbabwe, through:

- x ³, QFUHDVHG SUHVXUH IRU DQG SXEOLF DZDUHQHV RI HO presence of Electoral Resource Officers (EROs) as information conduits across WKH FRXQWU\´ DQG
- x ³, QFUHDVHG SUHVXUH IRU HOHFWRUDO WUDQVSDUHQFH\ D domestic observer force at the provincial and local levels that is ready and available

became increasingly unlikely that they would take place within 2011 or in early 2012.<sup>2</sup> One result of that situation was that, instead of training Short-Term Observers, the project prioritized Long-Term Observers (LTOs) for training, in addition to EROs, because these were already on the ground.

The project started in October 2009 with a joint ZESN-ERIS strategy session, during which needs were reviewed. The first of two courses on election observation for EROs was planned and took place in December 2009. It is on the occasion of this course that the decision was taken by the two organizations to focus further training on the issue of campaign finance monitoring, including the use of state assets by election candidates.

According to ERIS and ZESN staff, there were three main reasons for this issue to be made a priority:

- x Although more general training on election observation was still needed and provided, both organizations, and observers themselves, were seeking to develop more innovative and cutting-edge training.
- x As the government was shared between both main parties contesting the elections (Zanu-PF and MDC), it was possible to address the use of state assets without appearing one-sided.
- x Monitoring of political finance and use of state assets is typically a long-term task, which may be carried out irrespective of the timing of elections. It therefore made sense to make it a priority in the prevailing context of uncertainty about the electoral calendar.

Another reason ecto

**(ii) Logical framework**

**xDevelopment of training course materials**

xFoundation laid for sustainable high quality domestic election observation using innovative techniques

xDevelopment of ZESN capacity to recruit, train and maintain an observer force at all levels

To work towards democratic elections in Zimbabwe through:

- x Increased pressure for and public awareness of electoral reform through presence of observers in the field
- x Increased pressure





x The two NGOs that designed the project were based far apart and did not have a

were invited more than once ensured that they were able to help review the methodologies developed initially and to adapt them to the Zimbabwean situation in a participatory way, listening to the feedback of EROs and LTOs. These experts brought international experience to bear on the challenges facing Zimbabwe.

- x **Implementation of training sessions.** This was by far (in terms of resource used) the most important set of activities under the project. Training activities have included:

syntheses, sent by email, noted that they lacked clarity and were not edited in a way that avoided repetitions. They also noted that the syntheses lacked clear conclusions and clear policy recommendations that could be used by the international community and the media.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of the project was excellent overall, and EROS, LTOs and STOs clearly drew tangible benefits from the activities. The intended outcomes were ODUJHO\ GHOLYHUG +RZHYHU WKH SURMHFW¶V HIIHFWLYHQH the lack of human resource capacity at the ZESN headquarters to provide high levels of support to the observers and to process their reports into effective material for public use.

The ZESN organizational chart reproduced below explains in part why there were capacity constraints at the central level:

- x The project coordinator wa V DOVR = (61¶V 0RQLWRULQJ DQG 2EVHUY The project budget only funded 50% of her position despite her being nominally involved in the project on a full time basis (however she confirmed to the evaluators that she spent a significant amount of her time on non-project duties, including stints abroad on election observation missions).

x

x ZESN staff costs. Again, these were reasonable (12% of operating budget). Salary







*vii. The project delivered on most of the expected short-term impacts. However the communication loop was incomplete, in that observers in the field were not systematically made aware of the use of the data they collected.* They also lacked information about the data gathered by their counterparts in other provinces or constituencies. See chapter on the findings on impact.

*viii. The project contributed to the sustainability of ZESN, both in base.* In that sense, the fact that the project took place between two elections was helpful. However the sustainability of the project would have been enhanced if it had been part of an integrated funding process, which would make funding more predictable and therefore reduce the risk of fluctuations in income.

# VI. Recommendations

In this section, recommendations are addressed separately to ERIS, ZESN and UNDEF. The recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions set out above.

## Recommendation to ERIS

**i. Be explicit about expected added value of partnership.** ERIS is encouraged to develop further partnerships on the model of the one it engaged into with ZESN. It is recommended that ERIS should be as explicit as possible, when dealing with potential partners, about the added value it expects to bring to the partnership and about the benefits it expects to draw from it. See conclusion (ii).

**ii. Make a realistic assessment of the level of support to be provided.** The partnership between ERIS and ZESN was fruitful, but ERIS managers indicated that they devoted more energy to the partnership than they originally expected. It is recommended that this issue be carefully considered in any future partnership, including by conducting an organizational audit of the partners. See conclusions (ii) and (iii).

## Recommendations to ZESN

**iii. Consider seeking new partnerships.** The joint project with ERIS benefited ZESN by improving its access to international expertise on the key topic of political finance. ZESN should develop further similar partnerships, provided they are based on a sound capacity building strategy and focus on satisfying clearly defined needs. See conclusion (ii).

**iv. Conduct an organizational audit** WR VHH KRZ =(61¶V H[L V W management capacity can best be used and what options exist to reinforce that capacity. See conclusion (iii).

**v. Improve internal and external information flows.** ZESN should ensure that observers are informed in a timely manner of the use of the data they provide, and that they also know quickly about the data gathered by their counterparts across the FRXQWU\ =(61¶V VKRXOG HQKDQFHG LWV DGYRFD\ FDSDFLW\ DOO RI WKH RUJDQLJDWV that are obtained by observers in the field, and feed into the advocacy process. See conclusions (v) and (vii).

**vi. Review the process of report production** to ensure that documents are appropriately edited in a way that is consistent with the needs of target audiences. Documents longer than a few pages should come with an executive summary and all documents should include clear, targeted and implementable recommendations. See conclusions (v) and (vii).

**vii. Develop a multi-year strategic plan,** which can be used as a framework when seeking support from funders. ZESN should attempt to identify one or two strategic

partnership donors to provide support including core funding, while other donors remain project based. ZESN should also consider dedicating more management-level resources to address fundraising issues. See conclusion (viii).

**Recommendation to UNDEF**

*viii.* &RQVLGHU KDYLQJ DQ H[SOLFLW <sup>3</sup>LQFHSWLRQ VWDJH **projects.** ERIS and ZESN made significant adjustments to the project design on the occasion of a launch strategy meeting. This allowed the organizations to take stock of changed circumstances since the project was originally designed. This was a welcome step, which enhanced the relevance of the project as it was implemented. UNDEF should FRQVLGHU HQFRXUDJLQJ JUDQWHHV WR DGRSW WKLV SUDFWLF in the first few weeks of projects. BT 1 0 0 1 7(come 4(ou)3(l)5(d)-785t)-4(ne).Tc[(l)d)-78(i)5(m)-3(pl)6(en)



## Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

Human Development Report 2010 ±the real wealth of Nations : pathways to Human Development, UNDP

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Zimbabwe Parliament website [www.parlzim.gov.zw](http://www.parlzim.gov.zw)

2010 Millenium Development Goals ±status report Zimbabwe, Ministry of Labor and social services and UNDP.

World bank website <http://web.worldbank.org>

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## Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

Name	Position
Helen BARNES	Executive Director - ERIS
Magnus OHMAN	IFES trainer on monitoring political finance
Barbra NYANGAIRI	Monitoring and Observation Programme Officer
Rindai CHIPFUNDE VAVA	ZESN National Director
Victor KAHARI	ZESN Finance Officer
Kirstine PRIMDAL	UNDP Crisis prevention, humanitarian relief and recovery
Wadzamai MADOMBWE	UNDP Programme Officer - Governance
Ellen KANDORORO	ZESN Media and information Officer
Focus group ±3 persons anonymous at participants request	Long term observers who benefited from the training on monitoring political finance.
Isabelle RIBOT	Attaché - Crisis response & Democratic Governance ±European Union
Mary Jane NCUBE	Executive Director at Transparency International
Solomon BOBOSIBUNU	ZESN Field Officer
Isaag CHAMONYONGA	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Cluedza KOKERU	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Godwin GUTSA	Trainer in Chinoyi Province
Travor CHIWANGA	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Gloria ZIYAMBE	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Simon GARAHUSHOMA	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Sikumbuzo SIBANDA	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Karen GUAZA	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Takesure MUSIWA	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Jena NUNUAYI	Long term observer in Chinoyi Province
Tinoziva BERE	ZESN Board Chairperson
Grace FAVREL	Africa and Middle East Programme Manager

## Annex 4 : Acronyms

ERC	Electoral Resource Center
ERIS	Electoral Reform International Services
ERO	Election Resource Officer
EU	European Union
LTO	Long-Term Observer
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STO	Short-Term Observer
UN	United Nations
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZEC	Zimbabwe Election Commission
ZESN	Zimbabwe Elections Support Network