

## B

Part Two and Part Three of this chapter discuss plans and methods for monitoring registration and achieving other monitoring goals. First, consider these general suggestions about how to implement the plan.

### *Developing an Election Calendar*

An election monitoring effort must be well planned and organized in order to meet the many deadlines related to the election. As a preliminary step in your planning, you should develop a calendar that identifies dates and time periods in which the most significant election events will take place, such as when:

- 1 the election laws and political party laws are debated and adopted or decreed;
- 2 the election date is announced;
- 3 the national election commission is appointed;
- 4 organizations involved in the election process, including nonpartisan election monitoring groups, must register with the proper authorities;
- 5 voters may register;
- 6 the public may verify, appeal and amend the voter registration lists;
- 7 parties and candidates may register;
- 8 the official campaign period begins and ends, particularly noting the last date that political activities may take place (e.g., releasing public opinion polls, scheduling rallies, appearing on public media, etc.);
- 9 election officials are recruited and trained;
- 10 pollwatchers and other monitors apply for accreditation;
- 11 election materials are distributed to voting sites;
- 12 votes are cast;
- 13 votes are counted, tabulated and announced;
- 14 complaints and appeals are filed;
- 15 run-off elections (if any) are held; and
- 16 winning candidates are installed.

The election calendar provides a useful visual aid that can help you determine which events you should monitor, how your plan will be organized, what kind of personnel and financial resources

will be available, and what logistical preparations are needed.

### *Developing a Budget*

You should also draft a budget. A budget should reflect both the expected revenue<sup>9</sup> and the allocation of funds to specific tasks. Often, with a new venture, several budgets should be prepared based on high and low revenue projections. Among the expenditures you should anticipate are:

- 1 rent for office space of national and regional headquarters;
- 2 office equipment (e.g., computers, typewriters, photocopiers, etc.);
- 3 utilities (e.g., heat, water, electricity, etc.);
- 4 salaries for full-time and part-time employees;
- 5 communication (e.g., telephone bills and installation charges, fax machines, modems, other equipment, postage, etc.);
- 6 office supplies (e.g., pens, paper, tape, staplers, etc.);
- 7 printing and copying costs for stationery, brochures, identification badges, posters, training manuals and reports;
- 8 travel expenses for recruiting, training and actual monitoring;
- 9 event costs (e.g., facility rentals, food, sound equipment, etc.); and
- 10 professional services (e.g., accountants, lawyers, computer specialists, etc.)

Some of these expenditures can be avoided if you are able to acquire equipment or services that are donated without compensation.<sup>10</sup> In any event, the operation must establish a system for authorizing and documenting revenues, contributions and expenditures in order to operate effectively and efficiently. Moreover, your reputation for good management and transparent, professional bookkeeping will reflect favorably on the group's credibility as an election monitor.

### *Managing the Plan*

Limit yourself to undertaking only as many goals and related activities as you can accomplish

<sup>9</sup> See Section E, *Operating Funds*.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

while maintaining a reputation for quality and credibility. Additional goals may be added as more time and resources become available.

In a monitoring operation, there is always more work to do than there are people to do it. In such circumstances, it is imperative that you manage efficiently your time and the time of your personnel by:

- 1 *delegating* tasks to various members of your operation on the basis of geographic region, functional expertise or personal interest, particularly where you have multiple goals and a complex or a multifaceted plan; and
- 2 *coordinating* the various activities of the organization to assure that the multiple activities are carried out efficiently, consistently and in accordance with your guiding principles.

In some cases, organizations appoint a single person or group of people to coordinate information and activities among the various elements of a monitoring operation. When many activities are being conducted simultaneously at many levels, this liaison function helps to maximize the flow of information to decisionmakers and to allocate resources efficiently.

Coordination can be enhanced by scheduling frequent meetings with individuals responsible for specific tasks, including office managers and logistics staff. Through this forum, you can assure that lines of communication remain open in order to identify and resolve problems that arise during the planning or execution phases of your collective operations. Also, remember that some aspects of coordination should concentrate on the relationship between your field operations (regional and local) and your headquarters. This enables representatives in each region to learn what is happening in other areas of the operation and helps to ensure that the regions receive appropriate attention and support.

### *Evaluating and Revising the Plan*

When you develop the election calendar and plan your activities, you should also create an operations *timeline*, indicating the date(s) by

which various activities should be accomplished. From this timeline you will be able to periodically evaluate the execution of your plan and make changes based on whether you have successfully met your scheduled deadlines. One method for evaluating your plan is to answer certain questions, including:

- 1 Are you achieving initially projected results (e.g., number of volunteers recruited, brochures distributed, training sessions held, etc.)?
- 2 Are the staff and volunteers meeting their individual responsibilities?
- 3 Are the media and public responding positively to your efforts?
- 4 Do you have adequate resources to meet the needs of the program?



### **Approaches to Organizing**

Most domestic monitoring groups organize themselves by using one of three basic approaches:

- 1 transforming, or temporarily reorienting, a *pre-existing civic group* into an organization whose primary focus is to monitor an upcoming election. Such groups often include, but are not limited to: human rights leagues, trade unions, religious organizations, cultural societies, professional associations and student alliances;
- 2 creating a *new organization* dedicated to non-partisan election monitoring; or
- 3 creating a *coalition* of various organizations whose members will work together to monitor an election.

The organizational model you select will depend on many considerations. Access to resources (personnel and financial), specialized capabilities, and political reputations are only a few of the factors that are pertinent to choosing your approach. There are strengths and weaknesses associated with each model.

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*Pre-existing institutions* enjoy established organizational structures, experienced leadership and membership, public recognition and, in some



Illustration 3

The well-established Human Rights Commission (HRC) monitored the 1993 elections in Pakistan. As a pre-existing organization, the HRC chose to work alone in order to protect its image as a professional, nonpartisan institution. Given its limited membership, the HRC realized it could not monitor every aspect or

region of the country alone. Thus, HRC decided to rank its monitoring priorities and concentrated its efforts in districts in which there existed either: (1) a history of serious electoral problems, or (2) a probability of very close election results.

For the 1994 elections in Mexico, leaders of several pre-existing civic organizations decided to monitor a representative sample of the country's 95,000 voting stations (across 32 states). In order to coordinate the recruiting, training and deployment of a sufficient number of volunteers to cover the sample sites, the leaders decided to form the Civic Alliance, which comprised more than 400 individual organizations.



Illustration 4

After many years of the Socialist Party's total domination of Albania's government and civic society, the 1990 and 1992 elections were opened to multiparty competition. Every existing civic organization was somehow affiliated with the ruling party. Individuals who were interested in providing impartial observa-

tion of the 1992 elections decided that the only credible approach would be to establish a new organization. In a period of three months, the Albanian Society for Democratic Culture recruited and trained 2,100 observers, including union members, teachers, students and others. The volunteers successfully monitored the voting and counting and were the first organization to announce provisional national election results.

cases, material and financial resources. In some cases, however, these same characteristics may present problems. For example, the existence of strained relationships with other groups or political parties or having a partisan reputation may hinder future activities and alliances. Similarly, a pre-existing organization may have conflicting priorities or may be reluctant to commit the resources required to sustain a successful election monitoring effort.<sup>11</sup> In the case of a coalition, a further complication may arise if all decisions must be made through protracted negotiations with the leaders of various organizations. (See *Illustration 3*)

By comparison, establishing a *new organization* can be time consuming. Also, the infancy of any organization is likely to be a period of uncertainty. Uncertainty results naturally from the organization's preliminary efforts to recruit directors and executive officers, develop the plan, solicit financial resources, etc. One particularly difficult challenge is recruiting prominent, influential leaders—who do not have excessively partisan reputations—to participate in a new organization. Another challenge involves developing an effective organizational structure in a short timeframe.

On the other hand, compared to a coalition of multiple groups a new organization need not reconcile competing mandates and management styles. New groups may also benefit from having no pre-existing reputation or ties to partisan interests. Moreover, a new group often experiences a burst of interest and excitement that can, in certain circumstances, make easier such tasks as recruiting, mobilizing volunteers and attracting media attention. (See *Illustration 4*)

Still, establishing a new organization is rarely easy, as demonstrated in *Illustration 5*.

In addition to selecting a model for organizing, your monitoring effort must develop an organizational structure, recruit and train personnel, and collect resources. The next section discusses the role and formation of your organization's leadership.

<sup>11</sup> See Section E, *Credibility* for more discussion of this issue.



Illustration 5

When [Zambia's] President Kenneth Kaunda initially rejected the opposition's demand for international observers, a group of Zambians ... proposed the creation of the Zambian Independent Monitoring Team [ZIMT] ....

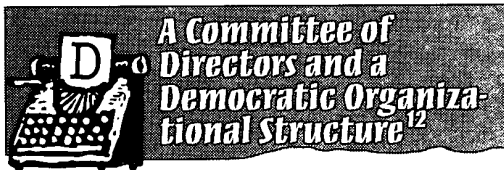
ZIMT was formally registered as a society under Zambian law in July [1991]. ZIMT recruited a board of directors comprised of prominent Zambians, including businessmen, representatives of the legal, medical, accounting and architecture professions, two student leaders and several members of the clergy.

ZIMT, however, encountered some early internal difficulties. Many of ZIMT's natural constituents, including members of the clergy, students and others, charged that ZIMT was unduly influenced by [the ruling party]. ... Although ZIMT had recruited representatives of the churches and the Law Association for its board, ZIMT insisted that it was not an umbrella organization and that all members of the board served in their individual capacities; they were not designated or chosen as representatives of other groups. Representatives of the church, the Law Association and other civic groups, however, sought an institutional role in the process. ... In early September, as dissatisfaction with ZIMT grew, three church representatives on the board resigned.

At the end of September, six Zambian organizations combined to form the Zambian Election Monitoring Coordinating Committee [ZEMCC]. ... Each of ZEMCC's constituent organizations chose two delegates to serve on the board. ZEMCC published training manuals, sent mobile teams to train volunteers around the country and used the media and the pulpit to deliver messages about their activities and the responsibilities of the citizenry. An estimated 3,500 people participated in ZEMCC training sessions....

The beneficiaries of this effort were the Zambian people, who went to the polls with great confidence. From now on, independent monitoring will be seen as an integral part of the electoral process in Zambia.

This illustration is taken from *The October 31, 1991 National Elections in Zambia*, pp. 63-64, 68-69 (NDI and The Carter Center of Emory University, 1992).



**A Committee of Directors and a Democratic Organizational Structure<sup>12</sup>**

A first step in organizing a nonpartisan domestic monitoring operation involves forming a committee that will direct all major decisions of the operation. This committee is variously called an *executive committee*, *board of directors*, *coordinating council* or *steering committee*. Monitoring organizations commonly select one person who will serve as chairman or chairwoman of the committee, as well as someone to fill the positions of vice-chair, treasurer and secretary. Subcommittees are also sometimes formed to deal with special issues such as fundraising, recruiting, government

relations, developing internal operating procedures, etc.

The importance of enlisting prominent personalities for this committee cannot be overemphasized. The reputation and personal integrity of the committee members reinforce the legitimacy of the endeavor, encourage ordinary citizens to join the effort and help guarantee that the organization is taken seriously by the government, the election commission, the contesting parties and the media. Committee members need not have a background in politics; indeed, popular sports and cultural figures may be recruited, when appropriate, in order to provide publicity. (See Illustration 6.)

Depending upon how its role is conceived, the committee of directors may have several responsibilities, including:

<sup>12</sup> See generally Appendix II.

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- 1 hiring an executive director;
- 2 developing the objectives, guiding principles and initial plan for monitoring the election;



Illustration 6

The names and professions of the chairpersons of some notable nonpartisan monitoring organizations include:<sup>13</sup>

NAMFREL, Philippines—José Concepcion, leading businessman and citizen activist, and Bishop Antonio Fortich, a prominent church leader;

Committee for Free Elections, Chile—Sergio Molina, coordinator of the National Accord and a former cabinet minister;

CED, Paraguay—René Recalde, executive secretary of a Catholic lay association;

BAFE, Bulgaria—Kevork Kevorkian, host of the country's most popular television show;

ZEMCC, Zambia—Rev. Foston Sakala, leader of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia; and

NCFE, Yemen—Mustapha Noman, former diplomat and human rights activist.

- 3 reviewing and, where necessary, refining the monitoring plan;
- 4 preparing a budget;
- 5 raising funds;
- 6 authorizing public statements;
- 7 conducting relations with members of the government, political leaders, other civic organizations and the international community; and
- 8 assuming legal responsibility for the operation (e.g., securing official registration and accreditation for the monitoring operation).

Your organization or coalition will benefit from efforts to adopt democratic structures and procedures for managing its own affairs. For example, mutually agreed upon rules of order (e.g., voting procedures to be used when making major decisions) or by-laws will help you to debate and resolve difficult issues more efficiently and effectively.<sup>14</sup> The alternative, in which non-democratic methods become characteristic of your efforts, may make you vulnerable to accusations of employing a double standard. In some cases, this phenomenon has inspired prominent committee or coalition members to withdraw from or criticize the monitoring effort. These events may prove embarrassing and diminish the group's credibility.

When creating a new organization, you should take steps to ensure that the legal statutes of your entity provide for easy incorporation of new members into the decisionmaking process. It is also desirable to encourage inclusion of members and leaders from various geographic, ethnic, racial or other sectors of the country and to have a balance of men and women. If your group is working on a national scale, it is also important to facilitate acceptance of new chapters into the organization from around the country. You should also consider adopting democratic processes by which local and national leaders, including members of the committee of directors, are eventually elected to, ratified or removed from their offices.



Committee of directors at work. From *Les Elections et Nous*, a training manual prepared by the Guinea chapter of GERDEDES.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter Two, *The Evolution of Monitoring by Nonpartisan Domestic Organizations*, for more background on the activities of these organizations.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g., H.M. Robert, *Robert's Rules of Order* (1893).



## Credibility

Projecting an image of credibility enhances the effectiveness of a monitoring operation and, therefore, must play a prominent role in your decisionmaking process. Your credibility may suffer if you:

- 1 are closely associated with partisan interests or project a partisan image;
- 2 fail to explain the objectives or methodology of your effort;
- 3 pursue an unsound methodology;
- 4 execute activities incompetently; or
- 5 withhold reports of your activities and findings.

You can take at least four affirmative steps to establish your credibility.

**MAINTAIN INDEPENDENCE FROM PARTISAN ASSOCIATIONS AND PROMOTE AN IMAGE OF IMPARTIALITY** Your monitoring effort may become associated with other institutions before or during the course of an election. These relationships arise when you: form a coalition or coordinate your operation with others; receive funding, material assistance or guidance from a particular source; or, in some environments, merely engage in frequent communications (e.g., with government officials or party leaders).

Developing and maintaining relationships with other organizations and institutions is inherent in monitoring and does not automatically impute your credibility. However, you should be careful to avoid excessive reliance on any person or group with partisan interests. If you decide that the monitoring effort should associate itself with partisan interests, take special precautions to assure that the resulting image is balanced and does not appear to favor any electoral contestant. (See *Illustration 7*)

When raising money for your monitoring operation, be aware that using resources from contributors with a personal or partisan interest in the outcome of the election may create an impression that you will consequently owe a debt of allegiance to these contributors.<sup>15</sup> This phenomenon may occur even if

the contribution is made with no expectation of something in return. If you do receive contributions from partisan interests, try to counter potential allegations of bias by insisting on, or at least inviting, equal contributions from all competitors in the election.

You should consistently promote an image of *impartiality* (also sometimes referred to as being *neutral, nonpartisan, apolitical, independent or objective*). Your credibility will be strongly affected by the composition of your committee of directors and the reputation of the chairperson as well as by the actions and reputation of senior staff.<sup>16</sup> Similar to the approach of creating a coalition or receiving contributions, you should avoid forming a committee of directors that appears, from the combined associations of its individual members, to favor one political interest. (See *Illustration 8*)



In Paraguay four domestic civic organizations formed SAKA, a coalition to monitor the 1993 presidential elections. Before the coalition was created, one of the groups was viewed as nonpartisan, two smaller groups had reputations for favoring opposition political parties, and the fourth group was known to strongly support the ruling party. Although the disparate composition of SAKA made daily operations challenging, it resulted in a balance of partisan interests that established the coalition's reputation for impartiality.



With less than 30 days before Romania's first multiparty local elections in 1992, the Pro Democracy Association (PDA) faced a crisis. PDA founder and president Adrian Moruzi accepted an invitation by a coalition of opposition parties to run as a mayoral candidate in Brasov, one of Romania's largest cities. Because he aligned himself with a partisan cause, Moruzi was asked by PDA to resign immediately. PDA subsequently designated its vice president, Marian Tata, to serve as acting president and successfully preserved its nonpartisan image.

<sup>15</sup> See Section F, *Operating Funds*.

<sup>16</sup> See Section D, *A Committee of Directors and a Democratic Organizational Structure*.